

PROCEEDING

The 1st Global Forum on Regenerative Tourism

Volume 1

**Reimagining Tourism: Innovation, Culture, and Communities
for Regenerative Futures**

3 December 2025

**Master of Tourism
School of Post Graduate Studies
Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia**

**THE 1ST GLOBAL FORUM ON REGENERATIVE
TOURISM VOLUME 1**

**REIMAGINING TOURISM:
INNOVATION, CULTURE, AND COMMUNITIES FOR
REGENERATIVE FUTURES**

Editor:

Dr. A.H. Galih Kusumah, MM., CHE

Heri Puspito Diah Setiyorini, Ph. D



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FOREWORD

Proceedings of the 1st Global Forum on Regenerative Tourism (GFORT) 2025

Theme: Reimagining Tourism: Innovation, Culture, and Communities for Regenerative Futures

It is with great pleasure that I present the Proceedings of the 1st Global Forum on Regenerative Tourism (GFORT) 2025, hosted by the Master of Tourism Program, School of Postgraduate Studies, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia. This inaugural forum brought together scholars, researchers, practitioners, and students from Indonesia and abroad to explore new perspectives and practical pathways toward a more regenerative future for tourism.

The theme, “Reimagining Tourism: Innovation, Culture, and Communities for Regenerative Futures,” reflects the growing recognition that tourism must move beyond conventional sustainability approaches. While sustainable tourism seeks to minimize negative impacts, regenerative tourism aspires to create positive outcomes by restoring ecosystems, strengthening cultural vitality, and enhancing community well-being. This shift requires innovative thinking, cross-sector collaboration, and a deeper understanding of the interconnected relationships between people, places, and the environment.

The papers presented in this volume highlight several important insights that contribute to the evolving discourse on regenerative tourism. First, innovation and digital transformation are increasingly recognized as strategic enablers of regenerative destinations. Research presented at the forum demonstrates how emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence, can support destination management, environmental monitoring, visitor flow optimization, and more inclusive tourism governance. These findings suggest that technological advancement should not merely improve efficiency but should be harnessed to generate meaningful social and ecological benefits.

Second, the proceedings reaffirm the central role of culture and identity in regenerative tourism. Several contributions emphasize the importance of local wisdom, heritage preservation, intercultural communication, and diaspora engagement in fostering stronger connections between visitors and destinations. These studies demonstrate that tourism can serve as a powerful vehicle for cultural revitalization, social cohesion, and the preservation of collective memory, thereby contributing to both community resilience and sustainable development.

Third, community empowerment emerges as a recurring theme throughout the conference. The papers illustrate how regenerative tourism can support local livelihoods, strengthen social capital, and encourage participatory governance. From tourism villages and community-based tourism initiatives to educational tourism and local entrepreneurship, the contributions underscore that local communities must be positioned not merely as beneficiaries but as active co-creators of tourism development.

Another notable finding concerns the growing need to understand tourism through systems thinking. Issues such as seasonality, climate change, digital disruption, cultural

transformation, and shifting consumer behavior are interconnected challenges that require integrated and adaptive solutions. The studies presented in this volume collectively suggest that regenerative tourism is not a single model or strategy, but rather an evolving framework that encourages destinations to continuously learn, adapt, and create long-term value for both people and nature.

This publication represents the first of two volumes of the GFORT 2025 Proceedings. The papers included in this volume showcase a diverse range of perspectives and research topics that contribute to the advancement of regenerative tourism theory and practice. The second volume will further expand these discussions by presenting additional empirical studies, case analyses, and innovative approaches from emerging scholars and practitioners.

On behalf of the organizing committee, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to our keynote speakers, reviewers, authors, participants, and partners whose contributions made this forum possible. I am especially grateful to the students and academic community of Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia for their dedication, enthusiasm, and commitment to advancing knowledge in tourism studies.

We hope that the ideas presented in these proceedings will inspire future research, strengthen international collaboration, and encourage the development of tourism systems that are not only sustainable but also regenerative, inclusive, and transformative. As we collectively reimagine the future of tourism, may this publication serve as a valuable resource for scholars, policymakers, industry practitioners, and communities seeking to create lasting positive impacts through tourism.

Thank you for being part of this important journey.

Bandung, June 2026

Dr. A.H. Galih Kusumah, M.M., CHE

Chairperson

The 1st Global Forum on Regenerative Tourism (GFORT) 2025

School of Postgraduate Studies

Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia (UPI)

Proceedings of 1st GFORT 2025
Hybrid (Face-to-face and Online)

December 3, 2025

SPs UPI, Bandung, Indonesia.

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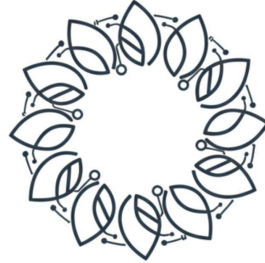
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CONFERENCE PROGRAM



THE 1ST GLOBAL FORUM ON REGENERATIVE TOURISM (GFORT)

The 1st Global Forum on Regenerative Tourism is an international event that focuses on exploring regenerative tourism, which aims to restore and maintain the quality of ecosystems and improve the welfare of local communities. This conference discusses key challenges in the global tourism industry, such as sustainability, social inequality, and environmental degradation, through innovative solutions and collaboration. The forum will bring together experts from Malaysia, Australia, Uzbekistan, and Indonesia to discuss the interrelationship between digital technology, tourist behavior, and sustainable policies in supporting long-term benefits for tourist destinations. The event provides a platform for knowledge sharing and strengthening international partnerships in building an inclusive and environmentally friendly tourism ecosystem.

Wednesday, December 3, 2025

08.30 - 09.00 : Protocol Speeches

09.00 - 09.40 : Keynote Speaker Prof. Dr. Mohd Hafiz – Universiti Teknologi MARA,
Malaysia

09.40 - 10.20 : Dr. Tingzhen Chen – James Cook University, Australia

10.20 - 11.00 : Dr. Kudratbek Makhmudov – Chirchik State Pedagogic University,
Uzbekistan

11.00 - 11.40 : Heri Puspito Diah Setiyorini, M.M., Ph.D. - Universitas Pendidikan
Indonesia

11.40 - 12.00 : Question and Answer Session

12.00 - 13.00 : Break

13.00 - 15.00 : Presentation Session

13.00 - 15.00

Room 1	Room 2	Room 3
Ashar Mubarak	Muhammad Adkha Alhazzany	Agim Abdul Hakim
Firda Amalia Putri	Achmad Fauzan Aqila	Muhammad Raihan Thariq Hidayat
Shofia Salsabila	Valerie Maharani	Restu Oktaviani
Muhammad Raihan Alfarisy	Fadillah Nur Islami	Hanifah Purwa Rahayu
Salva	Annida Rifqoh Zakiyyah	Aini Nurhasanah
Alfadiya Rizki Oksavira	Poppy	Vianitta Dewi Adjanie
Muhammad Akbar Gemilang	Tivani Carnova Nurul Inkhani	Safara Citra Aulya
	Anindita Dwi Wulandari	Reyfan Triansyah Wiriadi

13.00 - 15.00

Zoom Meeting 1	Zoom Meeting 2	Zoom Meeting 3
Eldon Ayenda	Ayesha Syahidah	Yati Sobaryati Mustaffa
Abdul Aziz Pardon	Ayu Nurharista	Inaya Laili Latifa
Budi Mulya Rasyid	Adnan Zaidan Eka Saputra	Levina Ardelia
Afghani Mahmuda Bahreisy	Clarissa Delfina Azalia	Kaiman
Alfitri Dwitami Gaus	Nur Ainun Khairiah	Risyad Muhammad Saabiq
Amanda Dian Sucia	Widi Widya Mukti	Dedy Setiyawan
Angelia Dewi	Dwi Laila Floresta	Ilham Mochammad Saputra
Izzatul Ammar Gemintang Purwadi	Regita Cahyani	Luthfi Ghani Faza
Ngadiah Safira		Putu Paramita

13.00 - 15.00

Zoom Meeting 4	Zoom Meeting 5	Zoom Meeting 6
Maharani Faivi Ningrum	Panji Alam Prabowo	Savira Tia Azzahra
Mahyana Abdullah	Audiah Rahmawati	Rosim
Radita Tullia Andani	Ardhi Hernawan	Siti Nur Amalia Sartika
Kharisma Putri Azzahra	Rais Iqbal Rabiul Awal	Gerdian Faustina
Sumarga Maulana Efendi	Elvana Amelia	Anissa Aulia Rahmasari
Muhtan Dewan Muhtadin	Sellin Alifia Krista	Syaira Ramadhani Yusuf
Prima Adhitya	Somadi	Taukhid Pramadika
Savina Azzahra	Lidia Juniati Andelina. S	Lintang Puspa Ningrum
Widiawati	Syahla Karima Mushfa	

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Tourism Futures From AI Adoption To Regenerative Destination Systems



Mohd Hafiz Hanafiah

Faculty of Hotel and Tourism Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, 40450 Shah Alam,
Selangor, Malaysia

This study discusses the future of tourism through the adoption of Artificial Intelligence (AI) toward the development of regenerative destination systems. The study is part of an APEC funded initiative aimed at identifying AI implementation in the tourism sector, understanding key challenges and best practices, and developing guidelines for AI implementation across APEC economies. The research was conducted in five economies, namely Malaysia, the People's Republic of China, the Republic of Korea, Indonesia, and Peru, focusing on institutional readiness, stakeholder experiences, technology usage, as well as barriers and enabling factors related to AI implementation. The findings indicate that AI adoption is growing rapidly and has the potential to enhance efficiency, service personalization, and destination competitiveness. However, the level of readiness across economies remains uneven and is predominantly driven by policy oriented approaches rather than user oriented needs. Major challenges identified include the digital divide, limited AI literacy, infrastructure disparities, and weak cross sector coordination. The study also highlights the risk of “invisible innovation,” where AI investments improve operational efficiency but fail to generate tourism experiences that are directly perceived by visitors. Within the context of regenerative tourism, AI is considered to have significant potential to support destination carrying capacity management, environmental monitoring, fairer distribution of economic benefits, and stronger local community engagement. In addition, AI can contribute to the creation of tourism experiences that are more personalized, adaptive, meaningful, and oriented toward social and ecological sustainability. This study emphasizes that the future of tourism lies not only in smart tourism but also in the development of regenerative tourism supported by intelligent, collaborative, and community centered systems.

**Examining The Interplay Between Tourism Seasonality
and Sustainability in Cairns**
How Seasonality and Sustainability Shape Tourist Choices



Tingzhen Chen

College of Business, Law & Governance, James Cook University, Townsville, Australia

This study examines the relationship between tourism seasonality and sustainability in shaping tourist decision-making in Cairns. Cairns experiences distinct dry and wet seasons that significantly influence visitor numbers and tourism dynamics. During peak seasons, destinations face issues related to overcrowding and environmental pressure, while off-seasons present risks of economic underutilization. The study aims to understand how seasonality factors and sustainability attributes influence tourists' preferences in selecting travel times and destinations. The research employs a discrete choice theory approach to analyze tourist decision-making processes based on the utility derived from different travel attributes. An online survey was conducted using travel choice scenarios that varied in weather conditions, crowd density, pricing, event availability, environmental certifications, support for local communities, and eco-friendly practices. The analysis utilized multinomial logit models to estimate the relative importance of each attribute and to examine the influence of nationality on tourist preferences. Preliminary findings indicate that travel cost and weather conditions are the dominant factors influencing travel decisions, while sustainability attributes affect specific segments of travelers. In addition, tourist nationality influences the level of concern toward sustainability aspects in travel decision-making. The findings provide implications for destination managers to develop marketing strategies emphasizing sustainability and off-season travel incentives in order to balance visitor flows and reduce environmental pressure on tourism destinations.

Intercultural Communication Competence as a Catalyst for Regenerative Tourism



Kudratbek Shavkat ugli Makhmudov

Chirchik State Pedagogical Institute

Teacher of Foreign Languages Department, Uzbekistan

This study examines intercultural communication competence as a catalyst for the development of regenerative tourism. Regenerative tourism extends beyond minimizing negative impacts by focusing on how destinations can flourish through the strengthening of cultural identity, community pride, and meaningful social relationships. The study emphasizes that regeneration is highly dependent on the quality of human relationships established through communication in every tourism interaction. Intercultural communication competence is understood as the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately across cultures through the dimensions of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and cultural awareness. Within the context of tourism education at Chirchik State Pedagogical University (CSPU), this competence is developed through practical learning, intercultural reflection, crisis simulations, collaboration with local stakeholders, and the use of multilingual digital platforms. The findings indicate that intercultural communication plays a significant role in shaping sustainable visitor behavior, strengthening cultural heritage preservation, building trust with local communities, and enhancing destination resilience during crisis situations. Furthermore, tourism education oriented toward intercultural communication competence contributes to the development of tourism professionals who are adaptive, innovative, and community oriented. This study highlights that meaningful communication can function as a bridge between cultures while supporting the realization of regenerative tourism that is human centered, sustainable, and socially restorative.

Diaspora Tourism: It's implication on sustainable & regenerative tourism



Heri Puspito Diah Setiyorini

Master of Tourism Study Program, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia

This study examines the role of diaspora tourism in supporting sustainable and regenerative tourism through tourism experiences, cultural identity, and souvenir purchasing behavior. Diaspora tourism is understood as the travel activities of individuals or communities living outside their ancestral homeland while maintaining emotional, cultural, and identity based attachments to their place of origin. This study employs Social Practice Theory to explain how social practices, tourism experiences, and culture based interactions shape sustainability behavior. The proposed research model connects diaspora tourism experiences with cultural identity and sustainability, with souvenir purchase acting as a mediating variable. The findings indicate that diaspora tourism experiences significantly strengthen the sense of belonging, homeland attachment, and cultural identity reinforcement. In addition, souvenir purchasing contributes to sustainability by supporting local artisans, promoting cultural products, and strengthening local economies. Cultural identity and souvenir purchasing were also found to significantly influence sustainability behavior, indicating that sustainability practices are shaped by symbolic and cultural processes. This study contributes theoretically by integrating diaspora tourism, material culture theory, and sustainability models, while emphasizing the importance of cultural symbolism in shaping sustainable behavior. Practically, diaspora tourism can be utilized to support cultural preservation, strengthen diaspora engagement, and promote regenerative tourism development in Indonesia.

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PRESENTATIONS

Integrating Sundanese Local Wisdom into Sustainable Educational Tourism: A Case Study of the Prabu Geusan Ulun Museum, Indonesia

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Abstract

*Museums play an increasingly important role as spaces for education, cultural preservation, and sustainable tourism. This study explores the integration of Sundanese local wisdom into sustainable educational tourism (edutourism) at the Prabu Geusan Ulun Museum in Sumedang, West Java, Indonesia. The research focuses on the application of the Sundanese philosophical trilogy of *silih asih* (mutual love and respect), *silih asah* (mutual learning and improvement), and *silih asuh* (mutual care and guidance) as a foundation for meaningful educational experiences. A qualitative case study approach was employed, involving semi-structured interviews with 15 social studies teachers, 3 museum managers, and 12 visitors, supported by participatory observation and document analysis. The findings indicate that the museum's collections, particularly the Binokasih Crown, serve as valuable contextual learning resources that strengthen visitors' understanding of local history and cultural identity. Community-based activities and heritage interpretation programs successfully promote collaborative learning and cultural appreciation while fostering community participation. However, challenges remain in terms of limited human resources and the need for digital innovation. Respondents highlighted the importance of augmented reality and interactive applications to enhance visitor engagement, particularly among younger generations. The study proposes a sustainable edutourism model that integrates local wisdom, community participation, and digital technology to strengthen cultural preservation and educational outcomes. The findings provide practical implications for museum managers, educators, and policymakers seeking to enhance the sustainability and relevance of regional museums.*

Keywords: Educational Tourism, Local Wisdom, Museum, Sustainable Tourism, Sundanese Culture, Digital Transformation

Introduction

Museums have evolved from repositories of historical artifacts into dynamic spaces that facilitate learning, cultural exchange, and community engagement. Contemporary museums increasingly serve as educational tourism destinations, combining heritage preservation with experiential learning opportunities for visitors (Su et al., 2018). This transformation aligns with the broader concept of sustainable educational tourism (edutourism), which emphasizes the integration of education, cultural preservation, and responsible tourism practices to generate social, cultural, and economic benefits (UNESCO, 2021).

In Indonesia, regional museums play a significant role in preserving local history and cultural identity. Among them, the Prabu Geusan Ulun Museum in Sumedang, West Java, represents an important cultural institution safeguarding the heritage of the Sumedang Larang Kingdom. Beyond its role as a conservation center, the museum functions as a learning environment where visitors can interact with historical artifacts and gain a deeper understanding of Sundanese culture. Such institutions are increasingly expected to contribute to sustainable development by promoting cultural awareness, strengthening local identity, and encouraging community participation.

The sustainability of educational tourism is closely linked to the preservation and transmission of local wisdom. Local wisdom encompasses the values, knowledge systems, and cultural practices developed by communities through long-term interaction with their social and natural environments (Sartini, 2004). In Sundanese culture, the philosophical trilogy of *silih asih* (mutual love), *silih asah* (mutual learning and improvement), and *silih asuh* (mutual care and guidance) serves as a fundamental framework for social interaction and community cohesion. These values offer a culturally grounded foundation for designing meaningful educational tourism experiences that foster not only knowledge acquisition but also social responsibility and cultural appreciation.

Previous studies have highlighted the contribution of museums to heritage interpretation, visitor learning, and destination development (Falk & Dierking, 2018; Tucker & Carnegie, 2020). Likewise, research on educational tourism has demonstrated its potential to enhance experiential learning and cultural understanding (Su et al., 2018). However, existing literature has largely focused on visitor satisfaction, economic impacts, and tourism development outcomes. Limited attention has been given to the role of local wisdom as a guiding framework for sustainable educational tourism design, particularly within regional museums in developing countries.

Furthermore, discussions concerning museum innovation increasingly emphasize digital transformation. Interactive technologies such as augmented reality (AR), virtual interpretation, and mobile applications have emerged as effective tools for engaging younger generations and enriching visitor experiences. While large national museums have begun adopting such technologies, regional museums often face challenges related to limited resources, technological capacity, and human capital (Mowforth & Munt, 2016). Consequently, there remains a need for practical models that integrate local cultural values, community participation, and digital innovation within sustainable museum-based educational tourism.

This study addresses these gaps by exploring how Sundanese local wisdom, particularly the trilogy of *silih asih*, *silih asah*, and *silih asuh*, can support the development of sustainable educational tourism at the Prabu Geusan Ulun Museum. Specifically, the study aims to: (1) examine the educational value of museum collections as contextual learning resources; (2) investigate how local wisdom is embedded in museum activities and visitor experiences; (3) analyze the role of community participation in supporting sustainable edutourism; and (4) identify opportunities and challenges related to digital transformation. By doing so, this study contributes to the growing literature on sustainable heritage tourism and offers practical insights for museum managers, educators, and policymakers seeking to strengthen the relevance of regional museums in contemporary society

Methodology

This study uses a qualitative approach with an instrumental case study design (Yin, 2018) to explore in depth how Sundanese local wisdom, particularly the trilogy of values of *silih asih*, *silih asah*, *silih asuh*, is integrated into sustainable edutourism at the Prabu Geusan Ulun Museum, Sumedang, West Java. This location was chosen based on the richness of the Sumedang Larang Kingdom artifact collection, its existing culture-based edutourism program, and its representation as a regional museum with potential for digital transformation.

Participants were selected using purposive sampling to represent various perspectives, namely: 15 junior high school social studies teachers in Region 2 Sumedang, 3 museum managers, and 12 general visitors (a total of 30 respondents). Data collection was conducted using three techniques simultaneously: (1) semi-structured in-depth interviews; (2) participatory observation of museum activities such as school visits, traditional art workshops, or collection interpretation activities; and (3) study of museum documents and archives (including visit records and management policies).

Research instruments included interview guides, observation sheets, audio recordings, and photographic documentation. Data analysis was thematic using NVivo software to code and identify key patterns, such as the implementation of Sundanese trilogy values, community participation levels, and perceptions of digital needs (e.g., augmented reality). Data validity is maintained through source triangulation (teachers, managers, visitors) and method triangulation (interviews + observation + documents), as well as member checking techniques with key participants.

The research process was systematic: preparation of instruments and literature, field data collection, thematic analysis, interpretation, and recommendation formulation. Research ethics were fulfilled by obtaining official permission from museum administrators and informed consent from all participants.

Results and Discussion

Museum Collections as Contextual Learning Resources

The findings indicate that the collections of the Prabu Geusan Ulun Museum serve as valuable contextual learning resources that support educational tourism activities. Among the museum's collections, the Binokasih Crown emerged as the most prominent attraction and educational asset. Participants consistently identified the crown as a symbol of the historical legacy of the Sumedang Larang Kingdom and a tangible representation of Sundanese cultural identity.

Teachers emphasized that the museum provides opportunities for students to experience history beyond textbook-based learning. Through direct observation of artifacts, students are able to connect historical narratives with physical evidence, thereby strengthening their understanding of local history and cultural heritage. Museum managers similarly highlighted that educational visits frequently focus on the interpretation of royal artifacts, traditional weaponry, manuscripts, and ceremonial objects that illustrate the social and political development of the Sundanese kingdom.

These findings support the principles of experiential learning proposed by Kolb (1984), which suggest that meaningful learning occurs through direct engagement with authentic experiences. Rather than merely receiving information passively, visitors actively construct knowledge through observation, reflection, and interaction with museum exhibits. The findings also align with Falk and Dierking's (2018) conception of museums as educational environments that facilitate contextual and lifelong learning.

From an educational tourism perspective, the museum functions as a living classroom where historical knowledge is embedded within a cultural landscape. Such an approach enhances the relevance of heritage education and contributes to the preservation of local identity. The strong appreciation expressed by both teachers and visitors suggests that regional museums possess significant potential to complement formal education while simultaneously promoting cultural tourism.

Integrating the Sundanese Trilogy of Values into Educational Tourism Experiences

A central finding of this study is the successful integration of the Sundanese philosophical trilogy—*silih asih*, *silih asah*, and *silih asuh*—into museum-based educational activities. Although these values are not always explicitly communicated as educational objectives, they are embedded within visitor interactions, interpretation programs, and community participation initiatives.

The value of *silih asih* (mutual love and respect) was reflected in activities that encouraged visitors to appreciate cultural diversity and develop respect for local traditions. Museum managers emphasized that educational programs aim to cultivate pride in regional heritage while fostering respect for cultural differences. Visitors reported that exposure to the history of Sumedang Larang increased their appreciation for Sundanese cultural values and strengthened their sense of belonging to local traditions.

The principle of *silih asah* (mutual learning and improvement) was evident in knowledge-sharing activities between museum guides, teachers, students, and community members. Educational tours encouraged dialogue rather than one-way information delivery. Traditional art workshops and collection interpretation sessions provided opportunities for collaborative learning, enabling participants to exchange perspectives and deepen their understanding of cultural heritage.

Meanwhile, *silih asuh* (mutual care and guidance) was reflected in mentorship-oriented interactions between museum staff, teachers, local cultural practitioners, and visitors. Educational activities were designed not only to transfer knowledge but also to nurture cultural awareness and responsibility among younger generations. This finding demonstrates how museums can contribute to intergenerational knowledge transmission and cultural continuity.

The integration of these values extends existing discussions on local wisdom and tourism sustainability. Previous studies have suggested that local wisdom can strengthen community identity and enrich visitor experiences (Tucker & Carnegie, 2020). The present study provides empirical evidence that local wisdom can also function as an operational framework for educational tourism programming. The Sundanese trilogy offers practical guidance for designing visitor experiences that are educational, participatory, and culturally meaningful.

Community Participation and Sustainable Heritage Interpretation

The study further revealed that community participation constitutes a critical component of sustainable educational tourism at the museum. Museum managers reported ongoing collaboration with schools, cultural communities, local artists, and government institutions to organize educational programs and cultural events. Such collaboration enables the museum to function as a shared cultural space rather than an isolated institution.

Participatory activities, including traditional arts workshops, storytelling sessions, and cultural demonstrations, provide visitors with opportunities to engage directly with local knowledge holders. These activities enhance authenticity and allow cultural heritage to be interpreted through lived experiences rather than static displays. Teachers noted that students responded positively to interactive learning approaches because they facilitated deeper engagement with historical and cultural content.

The importance of community participation can be understood through Wenger's (1998) concept of Communities of Practice, which emphasizes learning through social interaction and collective knowledge construction. The museum serves as a platform where multiple stakeholders collaborate to preserve and transmit cultural knowledge. Such interactions create a dynamic learning environment that strengthens both educational outcomes and community ownership of heritage resources.

From a sustainability perspective, community involvement contributes to the long-term viability of educational tourism initiatives. Sustainable heritage management requires local communities to play active roles in interpretation, conservation, and decision-making processes. The findings therefore reinforce arguments that cultural sustainability cannot be achieved solely through institutional efforts but must be supported by collaborative networks involving educators, local communities, and government agencies.

Digital Transformation as a Strategic Priority for Future Development

Despite the positive educational outcomes identified in this study, respondents highlighted several challenges that may hinder the future development of sustainable educational tourism. The most frequently mentioned concerns were limited human resources, restricted technological capacity, and the need to engage younger generations more effectively.

A significant proportion of participants expressed support for the introduction of digital technologies, particularly augmented reality (AR), interactive mobile applications, and virtual interpretation tools. Respondents believed that such technologies could enhance visitor engagement by providing immersive experiences that complement traditional exhibition methods. Teachers suggested that digital applications could facilitate curriculum integration by enabling students to access educational content before, during, and after museum visits.

The growing demand for digital innovation reflects broader changes in visitor expectations and learning preferences. Contemporary museum visitors increasingly seek interactive, technology-enhanced experiences that encourage active participation rather than passive observation. Consequently, regional museums face pressure to modernize their educational offerings while preserving the authenticity of cultural narratives.

The findings are consistent with recent discussions regarding the digital transformation of cultural institutions. Digital technologies have the potential to improve accessibility, expand audience reach, and enhance heritage interpretation. However, successful implementation requires adequate investment, staff training, and strategic planning. Without such support, regional museums may struggle to remain relevant in an increasingly digital society.

Importantly, respondents emphasized that technological innovation should complement rather than replace local cultural narratives. The value of digital transformation lies not merely in technological sophistication but in its capacity to communicate cultural heritage more effectively. Therefore, future digital initiatives should be developed around authentic stories, local wisdom, and community knowledge to ensure that technological advancement supports rather than diminishes cultural preservation objectives.

A Conceptual Model of Sustainable Edutourism Based on Sundanese Local Wisdom

The findings suggest a conceptual model in which the Sundanese trilogy serves as the cultural foundation for sustainable educational tourism. In this model, museum collections function as educational resources, community participation acts as a mechanism for knowledge transmission, and digital innovation serves as an enabling tool for visitor engagement. These elements interact to produce educational outcomes, cultural preservation, and sustainable tourism development.

The value of *silih asih* strengthens cultural appreciation and social cohesion, *silih asah* promotes collaborative learning and knowledge exchange, while *silih asuh* supports intergenerational mentoring and cultural continuity. Together, these principles create a holistic framework through which museums can balance heritage preservation, education, and tourism objectives.

This model contributes to the literature by demonstrating how indigenous cultural values can be operationalized within contemporary educational tourism practices. Rather than viewing local wisdom as a symbolic cultural resource, the study positions it as an actionable framework capable of guiding museum management, visitor interpretation, and sustainable destination development.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that Sundanese local wisdom provides a valuable cultural foundation for the development of sustainable educational tourism at the Prabu Geusan Ulun Museum. The findings reveal that museum collections serve as effective contextual learning resources, while the implementation of the Sundanese trilogy of values—*silih asih*, *silih asah*, and *silih asuh*—enhances visitor engagement, cultural understanding, and social interaction. Community participation further strengthens the museum's role as a living heritage institution that supports both educational and cultural sustainability.

The study contributes theoretically by proposing local wisdom as an integrative framework that connects heritage interpretation, experiential learning, and sustainable tourism development. Rather than functioning solely as cultural values, the Sundanese trilogy serves as a practical mechanism for designing meaningful educational experiences that promote knowledge sharing, mutual care, and cultural appreciation.

From a practical perspective, museum managers should develop structured educational programs, strengthen partnerships with schools and local communities, and invest in capacity building for museum personnel. The growing demand for digital interpretation tools, particularly augmented reality applications, highlights the importance of integrating technological innovation with local cultural narratives to enhance visitor experiences and attract younger generations.

At the policy level, stronger collaboration among museums, educational institutions, local governments, and cultural organizations is necessary to ensure the long-term sustainability of regional museums. Such collaboration can support resource mobilization, digital innovation, and curriculum integration while reinforcing the role of museums as strategic contributors to cultural preservation and sustainable development.

Future research may expand this study by comparing multiple regional museums across Indonesia, incorporating quantitative approaches to measure educational outcomes, and examining the effectiveness of digital technologies in strengthening heritage interpretation and visitor learning.

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Ecotourism Management in Supporting Environmental Conservation and Education

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Abstract

Urban conservation areas increasingly face the challenge of balancing environmental protection with growing demands for tourism, recreation, and public education. Ecotourism has emerged as a strategic approach to addressing this challenge by integrating conservation objectives with sustainable visitor experiences. This study examines how ecotourism management supports environmental conservation and environmental education at Ir. H. Djuanda Forest Park (Tahura), an urban conservation area in Bandung, Indonesia. A qualitative case study approach was employed using semi-structured interviews with park management, visitors, and local community representatives, supported by field observations and document analysis. Data were analyzed through thematic analysis. The findings reveal that ecotourism management at Tahura is guided by a conservation-first approach in which tourism functions as a complementary activity to ecosystem protection. Conservation efforts include habitat restoration, biodiversity preservation, visitor-capacity management, and routine ecosystem monitoring. The study also highlights the importance of community participation through local employment, conservation partnerships, and capacity-building programs. Environmental education is facilitated through interpretive signage, information panels, and digital interpretation tools that enhance visitor understanding of biodiversity and conservation values. However, the effectiveness of these educational initiatives is constrained by limited interpretive content and the absence of systematic evaluation of visitor learning outcomes. The study concludes that sustainable ecotourism in urban conservation areas depends on integrating conservation-oriented governance, community participation, environmental education, and responsible visitor management to maintain long-term ecological sustainability.

Keywords: *Ecotourism Management; Environmental Conservation; Environmental Education; Community Participation; Protected Areas; Urban Ecotourism*

Introduction

Protected areas increasingly face the challenge of balancing environmental conservation with growing demands for recreation, education, and local economic development. In many countries, ecotourism has emerged as a strategic approach for reconciling these competing objectives by promoting responsible nature-based tourism while maintaining ecological integrity (Fennell, 2008; Weaver, 2001). Unlike conventional tourism, ecotourism emphasizes environmental conservation, visitor education, and community participation as fundamental components of sustainable destination management (The International Ecotourism Society [TIES], 2015).

In Indonesia, conservation areas have gradually evolved from sites dedicated solely to ecosystem protection into multifunctional landscapes that accommodate tourism, environmental education, and community development (Pratiwi & Sunaryo, 2020). This transformation reflects increasing public interest in nature-based tourism and the growing recognition that conservation areas can contribute to sustainable development when managed appropriately. Nevertheless, the integration of tourism and conservation remains challenging, particularly in areas located near urban centers where development pressures, population growth, and intensive recreational use can threaten ecological sustainability (Setyowati & Nugroho, 2019).

Ecotourism has been widely promoted as a mechanism for generating conservation benefits while simultaneously supporting local livelihoods and environmental awareness (Rahmawati et al., 2021). However, previous studies suggest that achieving these outcomes requires effective governance, stakeholder collaboration, visitor management, and continuous monitoring of environmental impacts (Fitriani & Hadi, 2021). Without adequate management, tourism activities may contribute to habitat degradation, biodiversity loss, and increasing pressure on natural resources (Purnama et al., 2020).

These challenges are particularly relevant in urban conservation areas that perform multiple ecological and social functions. Urban forests and conservation parks provide critical ecosystem services, including biodiversity protection, climate regulation, environmental education, and recreational opportunities. At the same time, they are often subject to intensive visitor use and competing land-use interests. Understanding how ecotourism is managed within such contexts is therefore essential for developing sustainable conservation strategies.

The Ir. H. Djuanda Forest Park (Tahura Ir. H. Djuanda) in Bandung, West Java, provides a valuable case for examining these dynamics. Situated between the rapidly expanding urban area of Bandung and the protected North Bandung region, the park functions simultaneously as a conservation area, an educational site, and a nature-based tourism destination (Handayani & Santoso, 2022). Covering more than 500 hectares and supporting diverse flora and fauna, Tahura represents an important green infrastructure asset within an increasingly urbanized landscape. However, the area also faces challenges associated with visitor management, habitat protection, and stakeholder coordination.

While previous studies have largely focused on the ecotourism potential of conservation areas, limited attention has been given to understanding how ecotourism management practices contribute to environmental conservation through governance mechanisms, visitor regulation,

educational initiatives, and community participation. Addressing this gap, the present study examines how ecotourism management is implemented at Tahura Ir. H. Djuanda and explores its contribution to environmental conservation and environmental education. Specifically, the study investigates management strategies, stakeholder collaboration, visitor management practices, and educational initiatives that support the long-term sustainability of the conservation area.

By providing insights from an urban conservation context, this study contributes to the growing literature on sustainable ecotourism management and offers practical implications for conservation managers seeking to balance tourism utilization with environmental protection.

Literature review

Ecotourism and Conservation-Based Tourism Management

Ecotourism is commonly defined as responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment, supports local communities, and incorporates educational experiences (TIES, 2015). Unlike mass tourism, ecotourism prioritizes ecological sustainability and seeks to minimize negative environmental impacts while generating conservation benefits (Fennell, 2008). Consequently, conservation is not merely a supporting component of ecotourism but constitutes its primary objective.

Effective ecotourism management requires integrating conservation goals with tourism activities through appropriate planning, visitor regulation, and stakeholder involvement (Weaver, 2001). Conservation areas must maintain ecological integrity while accommodating visitor access and recreational opportunities. Key management mechanisms include zoning systems, carrying-capacity management, environmental monitoring, and interpretation programs designed to encourage responsible visitor behavior.

Within protected areas, ecotourism may also contribute to conservation financing and public support for environmental protection (Primack, 2010). However, tourism-related benefits can only be sustained when ecological resources remain protected. Consequently, conservation-oriented governance becomes a critical factor determining the success of ecotourism initiatives.

Environmental Education in Ecotourism

Environmental education represents a core dimension of ecotourism. UNESCO (1977) emphasizes that environmental education aims to enhance awareness, knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors related to environmental stewardship. Within ecotourism settings, educational experiences are typically delivered through interpretive signage, guided tours, visitor centers, digital technologies, and direct interaction with natural environments.

Interpretation plays a particularly important role because it transforms recreational experiences into meaningful learning opportunities. Educational interventions can strengthen visitors' understanding of ecological processes, biodiversity conservation, and sustainable behavior. Previous research suggests that environmental education can contribute to pro-environmental attitudes and increase public support for conservation initiatives when delivered effectively (Primack, 2010).

As ecotourism destinations increasingly adopt digital technologies, educational content can also be enhanced through interactive applications, QR-code systems, and multimedia interpretation. These approaches provide opportunities to expand learning experiences beyond traditional information boards and improve visitor engagement.

Community Participation and Collaborative Governance

Community involvement is widely recognized as an essential component of sustainable ecotourism management. Community-Based Tourism (CBT) emphasizes the active participation of local communities in tourism planning, implementation, and benefit-sharing processes (Scheyvens, 1999). Local participation can improve social acceptance, strengthen destination stewardship, and reduce conflicts between conservation objectives and local economic interests.

Beyond local participation, conservation-based tourism often requires collaborative governance involving government agencies, local communities, non-governmental organizations, and academic institutions. Such partnerships facilitate resource sharing, knowledge exchange, and collective decision-making (Fitriani & Hadi, 2021). Collaborative approaches are particularly important in conservation areas where environmental challenges extend beyond the capacity of a single management organization.

Drawing upon these perspectives, this study examines ecotourism management through three interrelated dimensions: conservation-oriented governance, environmental education, and community participation. Together, these dimensions provide a framework for understanding how ecotourism contributes to environmental conservation in an urban protected-area context.

Methodology

Research Context

This study was conducted at Ir. H. Djuanda Forest Park (Tahura Ir. H. Djuanda), located in Dago Pakar, Bandung, West Java. Under Government Regulation No. 28 of 2011, a Taman Hutan Raya (Tahura) is designated as a conservation area intended for research, education, biodiversity preservation, culture, tourism, and nature-based recreation. Tahura Ir. H. Djuanda is among the oldest forest parks in Indonesia and serves as an important conservation landscape within the Bandung metropolitan area.

The park was selected as the research context because it simultaneously performs conservation, educational, and tourism functions, making it an appropriate setting for examining the relationship between ecotourism management and environmental conservation.

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative case study approach. A qualitative design was considered appropriate because it enables an in-depth exploration of management practices, stakeholder interactions, and conservation strategies within their real-life context. The study focused on understanding how ecotourism management contributes to environmental conservation rather than measuring causal relationships between variables.

Data Collection

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, field observations, and document analysis. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with three key stakeholder groups to obtain multiple perspectives regarding ecotourism management and conservation practices.

The first informant was a Forest Ecosystem Controller (Pengendali Ekosistem Hutan), who provided information regarding management policies, conservation programs, and governance mechanisms. The second informant was a visitor, who contributed insights into visitor experiences, environmental education, and perceptions of conservation efforts. The third informant was a local resident operating a business within the park area, who offered perspectives on community participation and socio-economic impacts.

Field observations were conducted to document visitor facilities, educational infrastructure, conservation activities, and tourism operations. Supporting documents, including management reports, visitor statistics, policy documents, and community satisfaction surveys, were also reviewed to strengthen the analysis.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using thematic analysis. Interview transcripts, observation notes, and documentary evidence were coded and grouped into recurring themes related to conservation management, community participation, visitor management, environmental education, and collaborative governance. Thematic analysis enabled the identification of patterns across different stakeholder perspectives and facilitated the interpretation of ecotourism management practices within the broader context of sustainable conservation.

To enhance the trustworthiness of the findings, source triangulation was applied by comparing information obtained from multiple informants and documentary sources. This process helped validate emerging themes and improve the credibility of the analysis.

Result and Discussions

Ecotourism Governance as a Conservation-First Management Strategy

The findings demonstrate that ecotourism management at Tahura Ir. H. Djuanda is primarily driven by conservation objectives rather than tourism development. Interviews with management personnel revealed that protection and preservation constitute the dominant principles guiding decision-making, while tourism is positioned as a complementary function. This orientation is reflected in routine conservation activities, including habitat restoration, wildlife food-tree planting, biodiversity maintenance, and boundary monitoring.

The conservation-first approach differs from conventional tourism development models that prioritize visitor growth and revenue generation. Instead, Tahura adopts what can be described as a conservation-led ecotourism model, in which tourism activities are permitted only when they do not compromise ecological integrity. This finding supports Fennell's (2008) argument that ecotourism should place conservation outcomes above recreational objectives.

Similarly, Weaver (2001) suggests that successful ecotourism destinations maintain strict environmental controls and integrate tourism within broader conservation goals.

The management perspective also illustrates the recognition of ecosystem services beyond direct economic value. Although the park generates tourism revenue, managers emphasized the importance of maintaining Tahura as the “lungs of Bandung,” highlighting the significance of regulating services such as carbon sequestration, climate regulation, and biodiversity conservation. This reflects contemporary ecosystem-based management approaches that acknowledge both tangible and intangible conservation benefits.

Community-Based Ecotourism and Local Participation

The second major finding concerns the role of local communities in supporting ecotourism management. The study found that community participation extends beyond economic activities and includes conservation-related responsibilities through Community Forestry Partners (Masyarakat Mitra Polhut/MMP). These community representatives act as intermediaries between management authorities and surrounding villages, facilitating communication, conflict resolution, and environmental awareness.

In addition, local residents are involved through various capacity-building programs, including beekeeping, orchid cultivation, tour-guide training, and small business development. The existence of approximately 90 registered vendors under the Paguyuban Warga Pedagang (PWP) demonstrates how ecotourism contributes to local livelihoods while maintaining management control over commercial activities.

These findings align with the principles of Community-Based Tourism (CBT), which emphasize local empowerment, participation, and equitable benefit distribution (Scheyvens, 1999). Previous studies have argued that community participation increases destination sustainability by fostering local ownership and reducing conflicts between conservation objectives and economic needs. In the case of Tahura, community involvement appears to function as both a social sustainability mechanism and a practical conservation strategy.

However, the findings also suggest a cautious approach toward economic dependency. Management intentionally designs training programs to diversify community livelihoods rather than creating reliance on tourism-related income. This reflects a more resilient interpretation of CBT, where local capacity building is viewed as a long-term sustainability strategy rather than merely a tourism development tool.

Managing Visitor Pressure Through Carrying Capacity Principles

Visitor management emerged as another critical component of ecotourism governance. The findings indicate that Tahura imposes a maximum visitor threshold of 5,000 visitors at a given time, despite possessing an area exceeding 500 hectares. This policy reflects the application of ecological carrying capacity principles aimed at preventing environmental degradation associated with excessive visitation.

The management approach became particularly evident during the COVID-19 pandemic, when visitor numbers were restricted to between 2,000 and 3,000 individuals. Managers reported that the period of reduced visitation contributed to ecological recovery, highlighting the relationship between tourism pressure and ecosystem resilience.

These findings support previous studies emphasizing the importance of carrying-capacity management in protected areas (Weaver, 2001). Excessive visitation can lead to soil compaction, vegetation damage, wildlife disturbance, and increased waste generation. Consequently, the visitor limitation strategy adopted by Tahura represents a proactive measure to balance tourism utilization with ecological sustainability.

Interestingly, management expressed little concern regarding lower visitor numbers, indicating that conservation success is considered more important than tourism volume. This perspective contrasts with many tourism destinations where visitor growth is frequently used as a primary performance indicator. The Tahura case therefore illustrates how conservation-area managers may prioritize ecological indicators over tourism metrics, reinforcing the conservation-oriented nature of ecotourism management.

Environmental Education: Potential and Limitations

One of the most significant findings relates to the educational function of ecotourism. The study identified several educational facilities, including interpretive signs, conservation messages, directional boards, biodiversity information panels, and QR-code-based GeoInterpreter systems connected to the Bagendit application. These facilities provide information on biodiversity, geological heritage, historical attractions, and ecosystem services.

Field observations suggest that Tahura possesses substantial educational potential because it combines environmental, geological, and historical interpretation within a single destination. Visitors are exposed not only to ecological information but also to narratives regarding Japanese Cave history, biodiversity conservation, and ecosystem functions. Educational activities involving school groups further reinforce the role of Tahura as an outdoor learning environment.

Nevertheless, the findings reveal a gap between educational infrastructure and educational effectiveness. While information boards are widely available, many function primarily as informational rather than interpretive tools. Educational messages often lack engaging narratives that encourage deeper reflection on environmental issues. Furthermore, digital interpretation tools such as the Bagendit application remain underutilized due to limited promotion and visibility.

This finding is particularly important because environmental education represents one of the defining characteristics of ecotourism (TIES, 2015). UNESCO (1977) emphasizes that environmental education should facilitate not only knowledge acquisition but also behavioral change. However, the study found that Tahura currently lacks systematic mechanisms for measuring changes in visitor awareness, attitudes, or conservation behavior following educational experiences. Consequently, the educational outcomes of ecotourism remain largely assumed rather than empirically demonstrated.

The absence of visitor-awareness indicators represents a significant management challenge. Future development should focus on strengthening interpretive programming, integrating digital storytelling, and implementing visitor-learning assessment tools to evaluate the effectiveness of conservation education initiatives.

Towards Adaptive Ecotourism Governance in Urban Conservation Areas

Taken together, the findings suggest that Tahura Ir. H. Djuanda represents an example of adaptive ecotourism governance in an urban conservation context. Management practices integrate conservation priorities, community participation, visitor regulation, and educational functions while responding to external pressures associated with urbanization and tourism demand.

However, several challenges remain. These include limited educational infrastructure, insufficient monitoring of conservation awareness outcomes, budget constraints, and the absence of a comprehensive data-driven evaluation framework. Although visitor satisfaction surveys are conducted regularly, they primarily assess service quality rather than ecological and educational impacts.

The findings therefore indicate the need for a more integrated monitoring system that combines ecological indicators, visitor behavior indicators, educational outcomes, and community benefits. Such an approach would enable managers to evaluate whether ecotourism contributes not only to visitor satisfaction but also to long-term conservation objectives.

In this regard, Tahura illustrates how urban conservation areas can move beyond traditional protected-area management by adopting adaptive governance approaches that balance environmental protection, public education, and community development. The challenge for the future is not simply increasing visitation but ensuring that tourism functions as a mechanism for strengthening conservation outcomes and environmental stewardship.

Conclusion

This study examined how ecotourism management contributes to environmental conservation and environmental education within the context of Tahura Ir. H. Djuanda, an urban conservation area in Bandung, Indonesia. The findings demonstrate that ecotourism management at Tahura is fundamentally conservation-oriented, with tourism functioning as a complementary activity rather than the primary management objective. Conservation initiatives, including habitat restoration, biodiversity protection, visitor regulation, and ecosystem monitoring, form the foundation of management practices and help maintain the ecological integrity of the area.

The study further reveals that environmental conservation is strengthened through collaborative governance involving government agencies, local communities, and other stakeholders. Community participation extends beyond economic involvement and includes conservation support, environmental monitoring, and communication between park authorities and surrounding villages. These findings reinforce the importance of community-based approaches in achieving sustainable ecotourism outcomes.

Environmental education also emerges as an important component of ecotourism management. Interpretive signage, educational panels, and digital tools such as the Bagendit application provide opportunities for visitors to learn about biodiversity, geological heritage, and conservation values. However, the findings indicate that the educational potential of these resources has not yet been fully realized due to limited interpretive narratives, insufficient

promotion of digital features, and the absence of systematic evaluation of visitor learning outcomes.

Theoretically, this study contributes to the ecotourism literature by demonstrating how conservation-oriented governance, environmental education, and community participation interact within an urban protected-area setting. The findings support the view that ecotourism can serve as a mechanism for achieving conservation goals when ecological protection remains the primary management priority. Practically, the study highlights the need for stronger interpretive programming, integrated monitoring systems, and data-driven evaluation frameworks that assess not only visitor satisfaction but also ecological and educational outcomes.

Several limitations should be acknowledged. The study is based on a qualitative case study of a single conservation area and relies on a limited number of key informants. Consequently, the findings may not be directly generalizable to other protected areas with different governance structures or ecological characteristics. Future research could incorporate a larger number of stakeholders, apply mixed-method approaches, and investigate the relationship between environmental interpretation and measurable changes in visitor conservation awareness and behavior.

Overall, the case of Tahura Ir. H. Djuanda illustrates that the long-term sustainability of ecotourism in urban conservation areas depends not on maximizing visitor numbers, but on maintaining an adaptive balance between environmental protection, educational value, community participation, and responsible tourism use.

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Development Strategy of Cisande Tourism Village Through the Role of Pokdarwis Based on Community-Based Tourism

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Abstract

Community-Based Tourism (CBT) has emerged as a strategic approach to achieving sustainable rural tourism development by promoting local participation and equitable benefit distribution. In Indonesia, Tourism Awareness Groups (Pokdarwis) play a crucial role in facilitating community engagement and destination governance. However, empirical studies examining how Pokdarwis contributes to tourism village development remain limited. This study investigates the role of Pokdarwis in the development of Cisande Tourism Village, Sukabumi Regency, Indonesia, and formulates development strategies based on the Community-Based Tourism framework. A qualitative case study approach was employed through semi-structured interviews, participatory observation, and document analysis. Data were analyzed thematically and subsequently mapped using SWOT and TOWS analyses to identify strategic priorities. The findings reveal that Pokdarwis functions as an initiator, facilitator, and coordinator of tourism activities while simultaneously supporting local economic development, cultural preservation, and environmental sustainability. Nevertheless, challenges persist in the form of limited human resource capacity, inconsistent service standards, inadequate digital marketing, and financial dependence on village funding. The SWOT analysis indicates that Cisande Tourism Village is positioned within an aggressive strategic quadrant, suggesting strong potential for growth through the optimization of internal strengths and external opportunities. Strategic priorities include strengthening local capacities, standardizing tourism services, expanding digital promotion, enhancing institutional independence, and reinforcing cultural and environmental conservation. This study contributes to the growing literature on CBT by highlighting the institutional role of Pokdarwis as a key mechanism for sustainable tourism governance and community empowerment in rural destinations.

Keywords: *Community-Based Tourism, Pokdarwis, Tourism Village, SWOT Analysis, Sustainable Tourism Development*

Introduction

Community-Based Tourism (CBT) has increasingly become a prominent topic in both global and regional tourism literature as a strategic approach to achieving sustainable tourism development. CBT emphasizes the active involvement of local communities as primary actors in planning, managing, and evaluating tourism destinations so that economic, social, cultural, and environmental benefits can be distributed more equitably (Amerta, 2017; Cordova-Buiza et al., 2025). In Southeast Asia, the success of CBT is strongly influenced by community participation and social capital as the foundation of collective action (Hwang & Stewart, 2017; Pongponrat & Pongquan, 2007).

In Indonesia, Tourism Awareness Groups (Pokdarwis) hold a strategic role as the driving force of community involvement in tourism village development. Pokdarwis organizes tourism activities, strengthens local human resource capacity, and acts as a collaborative bridge between communities, government, and private stakeholders (Ferdian et al., 2024; Wigati & Kuswiyata, 2022). Previous studies show that Pokdarwis functions dually as both a facilitative empowerment agent and a representative of community interests in destination management (Priatmoko et al., 2021; Sutawa, 2012).

Within the diversity of tourism villages in Indonesia, CBT has become a central approach in tourism policy. Cisande Village, located in Cicantayan District, Sukabumi Regency, is one example of a tourism village with strong natural (river tubing, outbound), cultural (Jaipong dance, ngubeuk kulah traditional fishing), and culinary potential. The village was officially designated as a Tourism Village through Cisande Village Regulation No. 6/2019. Its early achievements include one of its homestays being selected among the top five for Best Toilet Category at the Indonesian Tourism Village Award (ADWI) 2021. However, Cisande still faces several issues, such as limited infrastructure, inconsistent homestay service standards, low human resource capacity, and underdeveloped digital promotion.

Existing research highlights that local institutions play a critical role in bridging the gap between tourism potential and actual community benefits. Studies in Bali underline that community empowerment is essential for ensuring sustainable tourism (Sutawa, 2012). Similarly, research on collaborative development among agro-tourism villages in Banyumas indicates that weak coordination among stakeholders limits rural tourism potential (Harsanto & Wahyuningrat, 2024). Furthermore, Huang et al. (2025) emphasize that strengthening livelihood capital is crucial in linking rural tourism with sustainable economic development and poverty alleviation.

Although CBT research in Indonesia is expanding (Amerta, 2017; Wigati & Kuswiyata, 2022), studies that specifically examine the role of Pokdarwis in tourism village development remain limited. Yet, Pokdarwis is a key institutional actor that organizes communities, manages tourism attractions, facilitates promotion, and builds partnerships with public and private sectors (Hu et al., 2022; Ismail et al., 2025). The role of Pokdarwis is also closely connected to institutional capacity building, destination sustainability, and accommodation service quality (Kataria et al., 2023; Sarma et al., 2025).

Therefore, this study aims to analyze the role of Pokdarwis in developing Cisande Tourism Village and to formulate CBT-based development strategies using SWOT analysis.

This research offers two key contributions. First, a practical contribution in the form of strategies for strengthening Pokdarwis' institutional capacity to optimize tourism potential and address external threats. Second, an academic contribution by enriching the literature on CBT and community empowerment within Indonesian tourism village contexts (Hendrayani et al., 2025; Ningsih et al., 2025; Su et al., 2016).

Literature review

Community Based Tourism and Community Empowerment

Community-Based Tourism (CBT) is an approach that emphasizes the active involvement of local communities in all stages of tourism development—from planning to evaluation. Its primary objective is to ensure that tourism benefits are directly experienced by local communities (Cordova-Buiza et al., 2025; Priatmoko et al., 2021). Studies conducted in Bali (Amerta, 2017; Sutawa, 2012) indicate that community empowerment is an essential prerequisite for effective CBT implementation.

Pokdarwis serves as a concrete manifestation of CBT implementation at the tourism village level. As a community-based organization, Pokdarwis plays a pivotal role in community empowerment through training, promotional facilitation, and mediating collaborations with external stakeholders. Wigati and Kuswiyata (2022) emphasize that Pokdarwis is crucial in strengthening community capacity, while Priatmoko et al. (2021) highlight that local community perceptions of CBT are critical for balancing economic benefits, cultural preservation, and environmental sustainability.

In practice, CBT requires not only community participation but also multi-actor coordination. A study in Malaysia finds that sustainable CBT homestay development is shaped by collaboration between government entities, local operators, and community members (Ismail et al., 2025). However, community participation in CBT often remains limited to operational roles, as observed in Pongponrat and Pongquan's (2007) study in Thailand. Substantive participation, which includes planning and decision-making, is essential for ensuring long-term sustainability (Hu et al., 2022).

For this reason, institutional structures such as Pokdarwis are vital in organizing and motivating communities to participate more broadly—not only as implementers but also as planners and decision-makers. Within the CBT framework, Pokdarwis Cisande can be regarded as both a community empowerment strategy and a governance-strengthening mechanism for tourism development at the village level. Using SWOT analysis, this study identifies Cisande Village's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to formulate relevant development strategies aimed at enhancing tourism performance and strengthening the local economy.

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Theoretical Framework

From a theoretical standpoint, this research is grounded in the CBT perspective, which emphasizes active community participation, fair distribution of benefits, and destination sustainability (Hu et al., 2022; Turčinović et al., 2025).

In the Indonesian context, community-based institutions such as Pokdarwis function as key instruments for organizing participation and mediating collaboration among stakeholders (Ferdian et al., 2024; Wigati & Kuswiyata, 2022). Based on this framework, the study examines five main factors: community participation in destination management, the role of Pokdarwis as facilitator and community representative in village tourism governance, the empowerment of local human resources in hospitality, accommodation management, and digital promotion, the local economic impacts of tourism on MSMEs and village households, and the socio-cultural and environmental sustainability of the destination (Huang et al., 2025; Ningsih et al., 2025; Priatmoko et al., 2021; Su et al., 2016).

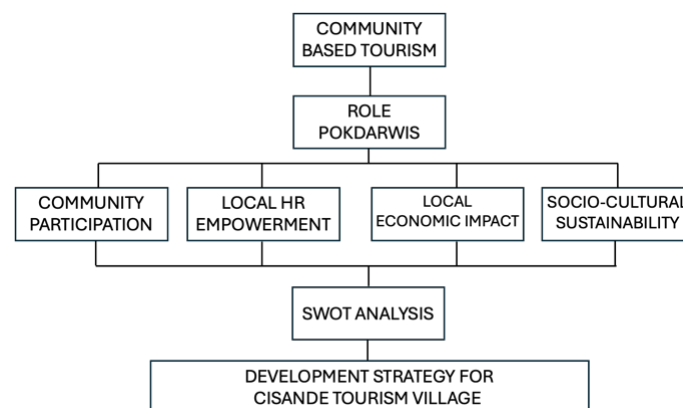


Figure 1. Theoretical Framework

Conceptually, Pokdarwis is positioned as the central institutional actor analyzed through a SWOT-based CBT lens. The interrelation between participation, human resource capacity, homestay service quality, economic impacts, and socio-cultural and environmental sustainability forms the basis for formulating development strategies that prioritize the optimization of Pokdarwis' role in implementing CBT at the village level.

Methodology

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach with a single case study design. The qualitative approach was considered appropriate because this research aimed to explore and understand the role of Pokdarwis in the development of Cisande Tourism Village within the framework of Community-Based Tourism (CBT). This approach allowed the researcher to examine social processes, institutional roles, community participation, local empowerment, and sustainability practices in a contextual and in-depth manner.

The research was designed as a single case study focusing on Cisande Tourism Village, Cicantayan District, Sukabumi Regency. This design was selected because Cisande represents

a tourism village with significant natural, cultural, and community-based tourism potential, while also facing challenges related to human resource capacity, service standardization, digital promotion, and institutional sustainability. Through this case study, the research seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of how Pokdarwis contributes to tourism village development and how appropriate development strategies can be formulated.

The research was conducted in Cisande Tourism Village, Cicantayan District, Sukabumi Regency, West Java. This location was selected purposively because Cisande has been formally designated as a tourism village through Cisande Village Regulation No. 6 of 2019. The village has various tourism attractions, including river tubing, outbound activities, Jaipong traditional dance, ngubeuk kulah tradition, homestays, and local culinary products. However, the village still faces several development issues, such as limited tourism infrastructure, uneven homestay service standards, limited human resource capacity, and underdeveloped digital promotion. Therefore, Cisande is considered relevant for examining the role of Pokdarwis in community-based tourism development.

The subjects of this research were individuals and groups directly involved in tourism activities in Cisande Tourism Village. They included Pokdarwis administrators and members, village government officials, homestay managers, MSME actors, tourism attraction managers, and other local stakeholders involved in village tourism activities.

The object of this research was the role of Pokdarwis in the development of Cisande Tourism Village. The study specifically focused on how Pokdarwis contributes to community participation, local human resource development, tourism attraction management, local economic empowerment, cultural preservation, environmental sustainability, and the formulation of tourism development strategies based on the CBT framework.

This study used both primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through semi-structured interviews and field observations. The informants were selected purposively based on their involvement, knowledge, and relevance to the development of Cisande Tourism Village. The main informants included Pokdarwis representatives, village government officials, homestay managers, local MSME actors, and tourism stakeholders.

Secondary data were collected from village regulations, Pokdarwis activity reports, government documents, official tourism publications, digital promotional materials, and relevant academic literature related to Community-Based Tourism, community empowerment, Pokdarwis, tourism village governance, and sustainable tourism development.

Data were collected using three main techniques: semi-structured interviews, participatory observation, and documentation study. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to obtain information regarding the role, challenges, and strategies of Pokdarwis in developing Cisande Tourism Village. This technique allowed the researcher to explore the perceptions and experiences of key stakeholders while still maintaining the focus of the research.

Participatory observation was carried out to directly observe tourism activities, visitor interactions, community involvement, attraction management, homestay conditions, and supporting facilities in Cisande Tourism Village. Documentation study was conducted by

reviewing relevant documents, including village regulations, activity reports, promotional materials, and previous studies related to CBT and tourism village development.

The data were analyzed using qualitative thematic analysis combined with SWOT and TOWS analysis. Thematic analysis was conducted through several stages. First, the researcher reduced the data by selecting, simplifying, and organizing information relevant to the research focus. Data related to community participation, Pokdarwis roles, human resource capacity, economic contribution, service quality, digital promotion, cultural preservation, and environmental sustainability were categorized based on the CBT framework.

Second, the reduced data were presented in narrative and tabular forms to identify patterns, relationships, and key themes. The data presentation helped clarify how Pokdarwis contributes to the development of Cisande Tourism Village and what challenges limit its effectiveness.

Third, conclusion drawing and verification were carried out by interpreting the findings and comparing them with relevant theoretical concepts and previous studies. This stage aimed to ensure that the conclusions were consistent with the empirical data and supported by the theoretical framework.

After the thematic analysis was completed, the findings were mapped into a SWOT framework. Internal factors were classified into strengths and weaknesses, while external factors were classified into opportunities and threats. The results of the SWOT analysis were then developed further using the TOWS matrix to formulate strategic alternatives for the development of Cisande Tourism Village. These strategies were designed to strengthen the role of Pokdarwis, improve institutional capacity, enhance community participation, optimize digital promotion, and support sustainable tourism development.

To ensure the credibility and reliability of the findings, this study applied source triangulation and technique triangulation. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing information obtained from different informants, such as Pokdarwis members, village government officials, homestay managers, and local business actors. Technique triangulation was carried out by comparing data from interviews, observations, and documentation. These procedures were used to strengthen the validity of the research findings and minimize subjective bias in data interpretation.

Result

The Theme 1: Pokdarwis as a Community Mobilization Institution

The findings indicate that Pokdarwis plays a significant role in mobilizing community participation through attraction management, community training, and tourism-related entrepreneurship development. This finding supports the argument of Hu et al. (2022) that local institutions are essential for sustaining CBT implementation.

Theme 2: Human Resource Development and Capacity Building

Pokdarwis contributes to capacity enhancement through hospitality training, digital literacy programs, and tourism management workshops. However, unequal skill distribution among community members remains a challenge. Similar findings have been reported by

Ismail et al. (2025), emphasizing the importance of continuous capacity development in community-based tourism destinations.

Theme 3: Economic Empowerment Through Tourism

Tourism activities have generated additional income opportunities through homestays, culinary enterprises, and tourism services. These outcomes confirm CBT's potential to support local livelihoods and reduce economic dependency on traditional sectors (Huang et al., 2025).

Theme 4: Cultural and Environmental Sustainability

Pokdarwis contributes to preserving local traditions and environmental resources. However, increasing visitor numbers may create risks of environmental degradation and cultural commodification, requiring stronger governance mechanisms.

The SWOT results suggest that Cisande possesses strong internal assets and favorable external opportunities. Therefore, aggressive growth strategies focusing on digitalization, institutional strengthening, and tourism product diversification are recommended.

Conclusion

study demonstrates that Pokdarwis serves as a critical institutional actor in the development of Cisande Tourism Village. Through its roles in community mobilization, capacity building, economic empowerment, and sustainability management, Pokdarwis facilitates the implementation of Community-Based Tourism principles at the local level.

The SWOT and TOWS analyses reveal that Cisande Tourism Village possesses substantial strengths and opportunities that support future development. Nevertheless, institutional limitations, human resource constraints, service quality issues, and financial dependence remain significant challenges. To address these issues, development efforts should prioritize capacity building, service standardization, digital transformation, institutional strengthening, and cultural-environmental conservation.

Theoretically, this study contributes to the CBT literature by emphasizing the importance of local institutions as governance mechanisms that connect participation, empowerment, and sustainability. Practically, the findings provide strategic guidance for policymakers, tourism village managers, and local communities seeking to strengthen sustainable tourism development. Future studies are encouraged to adopt comparative and mixed-method approaches to examine the effectiveness of Pokdarwis across different tourism village contexts.

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From Food Photos to Purchase Decisions: The Effects of Visual Design and Online Customer Reviews on Consumer Behavior in Food Delivery Apps

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Abstract

The rapid growth of online food delivery (OFD) applications has transformed consumer purchasing behavior by increasing reliance on digital information cues. Among the most influential cues are visual representations of food products and customer-generated reviews, which shape consumer perceptions and purchasing decisions. This study examines the effects of visual design and online customer reviews on consumer purchase intention, with trust acting as an intervening variable. A quantitative survey approach was employed using data collected from 82 active users of food delivery applications in Indonesia. Data were analyzed using multiple regression analysis to evaluate the relationships among visual design, online customer reviews, trust, and purchase intention. The findings reveal that both visual design and online customer reviews significantly influence consumer trust. Visual design demonstrates the strongest impact on trust, indicating that attractive and high-quality food images enhance consumers' confidence in restaurants and platforms. However, visual design does not directly affect purchase intention. In contrast, online customer reviews significantly influence both trust and purchase intention, making them the most influential factor in consumers' decision-making processes. Interestingly, trust does not significantly predict purchase intention when visual design and reviews are considered simultaneously. These findings highlight the critical role of user-generated content in reducing perceived risk and encouraging purchases. The study provides practical implications for restaurant operators and food delivery platforms seeking to optimize digital marketing strategies and improve customer engagement.

Keywords: Online Food Delivery, Visual Design, Online Customer Reviews, Trust, Purchase Intention

Introduction

The rapid advancement of digital technology has transformed consumer purchasing behavior across various sectors, including the food service industry. One of the most significant developments is the growth of online food delivery (OFD) platforms, which enable consumers to order food conveniently through mobile applications and websites. OFD services have become a major component of contemporary e-commerce ecosystems, facilitating interactions between consumers and restaurants through digital interfaces (Arora, 2024; Shidqi et al., 2024). Indonesia represents one of the largest OFD markets globally, with approximately 74.4% of internet users utilizing food delivery applications, highlighting the increasing importance of understanding consumer behavior in this context (Shidqi et al., 2024).

Unlike traditional dining experiences, online food purchasing involves limited physical interaction between consumers and products. Consequently, consumers rely heavily on information cues available within digital platforms to evaluate product quality and make purchasing decisions (Lima et al., 2025). Among these cues, visual design and online customer reviews play particularly important roles. Visual design encompasses elements such as food photographs, colors, layouts, and typography that collectively influence consumer perceptions of product quality and restaurant credibility. Previous studies indicate that visually appealing food images enhance perceived quality and trust, ultimately influencing consumers' behavioral intentions (Lima et al., 2025; Vermeir & Roose, 2020).

In addition to visual information, online customer reviews provide consumers with experience-based information generated by previous users. As a form of electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM), online reviews reduce information asymmetry and uncertainty by offering insights into food quality, service performance, and delivery experiences (Samiono & Pratiwi, 2024). Empirical evidence suggests that online customer reviews significantly influence both trust and purchase intention within digital commerce environments (Li et al., 2025; Samiono & Pratiwi, 2024).

Although previous studies have established the importance of visual design and online customer reviews independently, limited research has simultaneously examined their effects on trust and purchase intention in online food delivery applications. Furthermore, the relative influence of visual design, online reviews, and trust on purchase intention remains unclear. Addressing this gap, this study investigates the relationships among visual design, online customer reviews, trust, and purchase intention among users of food delivery applications. Specifically, the study aims to identify how visual design and online customer reviews contribute to trust formation and whether these factors directly influence consumers' intentions to purchase food through OFD platforms.

Literature review

Visual Design and Trust

Visual design refers to the presentation of information through graphical elements such as images, color schemes, layouts, and typography within digital platforms. In online food delivery applications, visual design serves as a substitute for direct product experience because consumers cannot physically inspect food products before purchasing (Lima et al., 2025). Consequently, food photographs become critical informational cues that influence perceptions of quality, attractiveness, and reliability.

Research suggests that visual cues function as signals that reduce uncertainty in online transactions. High-quality images and well-organized interfaces create positive impressions regarding professionalism and product credibility (Vermeir & Roose, 2020). Lima et al. (2025) further found that visual design significantly enhances perceived trust by improving consumers' confidence in restaurants and online platforms. Therefore, visual design is expected to positively influence consumer trust.

H1: Visual design positively and significantly influences consumer trust.

Online Customer Reviews and Trust

Online customer reviews (OCR) are consumer-generated evaluations and ratings that provide information regarding product and service experiences. OCR constitutes a major component of electronic word-of-mouth communication and represents one of the most influential information sources in digital marketplaces (Samiono & Pratiwi, 2024).

Customer reviews help consumers evaluate products before purchase and reduce perceived risks associated with online transactions. Positive reviews and high ratings signal product reliability and service quality, thereby increasing consumer trust. Previous studies demonstrate that OCR significantly contributes to trust formation in online food delivery services (Li et al., 2025; Samiono & Pratiwi, 2024).

H2: Online customer reviews positively and significantly influence consumer trust.

Online Customer Reviews and Purchase Intention

Purchase intention refers to consumers' willingness or likelihood to purchase a product or service in the future (Mong, 2022; Yip, 2020). In digital environments, purchase intentions are strongly influenced by information generated by other consumers. Online customer reviews provide detailed insights into product performance and customer satisfaction, thereby influencing purchasing decisions.

Previous studies consistently report a positive relationship between online reviews and purchase intention in e-commerce and online food delivery contexts (Samiono & Pratiwi, 2024; Dutta et al., 2025). Reviews provide social validation and reduce uncertainty, encouraging consumers to proceed with transactions.

H3: Online customer reviews positively and significantly influence purchase intention.

Trust and Purchase Intention

Trust represents consumers' willingness to rely on a product, seller, or platform based on expectations of reliability and competence (Jang & Kim, 2024). In online environments where

physical interaction is absent, trust becomes particularly important in reducing perceived risk and facilitating transactions (Eti, 2025).

Numerous studies have identified trust as a key determinant of purchase intention because consumers are more likely to engage in transactions with platforms they perceive as trustworthy (Nguyen et al., 2023). Therefore, trust is expected to positively influence consumers' willingness to purchase food products through OFD applications.

H4: Trust positively and significantly influences purchase intention.

Methodology

This study employed a quantitative research approach using a cross-sectional survey design to investigate the relationships among visual design, online customer reviews, trust, and purchase intention. The target population consisted of active users of online food delivery applications in Indonesia.

A purposive sampling technique was adopted to ensure that respondents possessed relevant experience with food delivery services. To be included in the study, respondents were required to have used a food delivery application and completed at least one food purchase transaction during the previous three months. Based on these criteria, a total of 82 valid responses were obtained and included in the analysis.

Data were collected using a structured online questionnaire consisting of closed-ended questions measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). Measurement items for visual design, online customer reviews, trust, and purchase intention were adapted from previous studies examining consumer behavior in online environments.

The collected data were analyzed using SPSS software. Instrument quality was assessed through validity and reliability testing. Classical assumption tests, including normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity assessments, were subsequently performed to ensure the suitability of the regression model. Multiple regression analysis was employed to test the proposed hypotheses and examine the direct relationships among variables (Hair et al., 2019; Sekaran & Bougie, 2016).

Result

Respondent Characteristics

The respondent profile indicates that most participants were between 20 and 30 years old (56.1%), followed by respondents younger than 20 years (32.9%). Female respondents constituted the majority of the sample (72%), while students represented the largest occupational group (46.3%). Regarding application usage, GoFood was the most frequently used platform (46.3%), followed by ShopeeFood (29.3%) and GrabFood (20.7%).

These findings suggest that young consumers dominate the OFD market. This demographic group is highly familiar with digital technologies and is generally more responsive to visual content and user-generated information, making them appropriate

participants for investigating the effects of visual design and online reviews on purchase intention.

Instrument Quality and Assumption Testing

Validity testing demonstrated significant correlations among all variables ($p < 0.01$), confirming that the measurement items adequately represented the constructs under investigation. Reliability analysis further indicated satisfactory internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha values ranging from 0.776 to 0.849, exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70.

The normality test produced a Kolmogorov–Smirnov significance value of 0.200, indicating that the data were normally distributed. Multicollinearity analysis revealed tolerance values above 0.10 and VIF values below 10, confirming the absence of multicollinearity problems. Although the heteroscedasticity test indicated a minor issue associated with the trust variable, the regression model remained statistically acceptable and suitable for hypothesis testing.

Discussion

The first regression model examined the influence of visual design and online customer reviews on trust. The findings indicate that both variables significantly contribute to trust formation among OFD users. Visual design emerged as the strongest predictor of trust ($\beta = 0.577$, $p < 0.001$), followed by online customer reviews ($\beta = 0.324$, $p < 0.001$). Together, these variables explained 63.4% of the variance in trust.

The strong influence of visual design supports previous findings suggesting that food photographs and interface aesthetics act as substitutes for physical product experiences in digital environments (Lima et al., 2025). Consumers rely on visual information to infer product quality and restaurant credibility. High-quality food images communicate professionalism and reduce uncertainty, thereby enhancing trust.

Similarly, online customer reviews significantly influenced trust. This finding reinforces the argument that OCR functions as a form of electronic word-of-mouth communication that provides consumers with authentic information regarding product quality and service performance (Samiono & Pratiwi, 2024). Positive reviews serve as social proof and strengthen confidence in both restaurants and delivery platforms.

The second regression model investigated the effects of visual design, online customer reviews, and trust on purchase intention. Interestingly, only online customer reviews demonstrated a significant direct effect on purchase intention ($\beta = 0.397$, $p < 0.001$). Visual design ($p = 0.052$) and trust ($p = 0.125$) were not statistically significant predictors.

These findings suggest that while visual design attracts consumer attention and facilitates trust formation, purchasing decisions are ultimately driven by information provided through customer reviews. Consumers appear to prioritize experiential information such as food quality, portion size, delivery performance, and consistency between promotional images and actual products. Consequently, online reviews become the primary mechanism through which consumers reduce perceived risk and evaluate alternatives.

The non-significant relationship between trust and purchase intention presents an interesting finding. Although trust contributes significantly to consumer perceptions, it may function as a foundational condition rather than a direct determinant of purchasing behavior. In the OFD context, consumers appear to place greater emphasis on detailed information from other users than on generalized trust perceptions. This result suggests that the influence of trust may be indirect and mediated through other cognitive evaluation processes.

Overall, the findings indicate that online customer reviews play a dual role by simultaneously influencing trust and purchase intention. Visual design contributes to the development of trust but does not directly encourage purchasing behavior. These results highlight the growing importance of user-generated content in shaping consumer decision-making within digital food service platforms.

Conclusion

This study investigated the effects of visual design and online customer reviews on trust and purchase intention within online food delivery applications. The findings demonstrate that both visual design and online customer reviews significantly enhance consumer trust. However, only online customer reviews directly influence purchase intention, indicating that user-generated content plays a more decisive role in consumer decision-making than visual appeal alone.

The study contributes to digital consumer behavior literature by highlighting the distinct functions of visual and informational cues within online food delivery environments. While visual design strengthens trust and product perceptions, online customer reviews serve as the primary determinant of purchasing decisions.

Practically, restaurant operators and platform managers should prioritize strategies that encourage authentic customer reviews while simultaneously maintaining high-quality food photography. Future research should employ larger samples, investigate potential mediating effects, and examine additional variables such as perceived value, satisfaction, and platform reputation to further explain consumer purchase behavior in digital food service contexts.

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The Influence of Gastronomic Experience on Tourist Satisfaction and Future Behavioral Intentions: An Importance–Performance Analysis of Culinary Tourism in Makassar, Indonesia

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Abstract

Gastronomic tourism has become an increasingly important component of destination competitiveness, as tourists seek authentic experiences that connect food, culture, and local identity. Makassar, one of Indonesia's prominent culinary destinations, offers a diverse range of traditional dishes that contribute to its unique gastronomic appeal. Despite the growing significance of culinary tourism, limited research has examined how tourists evaluate specific attributes of gastronomic experiences and which aspects require managerial improvement. This study aims to evaluate tourists' perceptions of gastronomic experiences in Makassar using Importance–Performance Analysis (IPA). A quantitative survey was conducted with 130 visitors who had experienced traditional culinary attractions in Makassar. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire measuring six dimensions of gastronomic experience: sensory, affective, behavioural, intellectual, service, and environmental experiences. Descriptive statistics and IPA were employed to assess the relative importance and performance of each attribute. The findings indicate that sensory, affective, and service experiences are perceived as key strengths of Makassar's culinary tourism, reflecting the authenticity, taste quality, and hospitality associated with local cuisine. In contrast, environmental and intellectual experiences were identified as priority areas for improvement due to their high importance but relatively lower performance. The study contributes to gastronomic tourism literature by providing an attribute-based evaluation of culinary experiences and offers practical recommendations for destination managers seeking to enhance Makassar's competitiveness as a leading gastronomic tourism destination.

Keywords: *Gastronomic Experience, Tourist Satisfaction, Behavioral Intention, Culinary Tourism, Importance–Performance Analysis, Makassar*

Introduction

Gastronomic tourism has emerged as one of the fastest-growing segments of contemporary tourism, reflecting a shift in tourist preferences from traditional sightseeing toward more immersive and experience-based travel. Food is no longer viewed merely as a basic necessity during travel but has become an essential medium through which tourists engage with local culture, traditions, and identities (Ellis, 2020). Consequently, destinations around the world increasingly utilize culinary heritage as a strategic tourism resource to differentiate themselves within a highly competitive tourism market.

Indonesia possesses rich culinary diversity that offers significant opportunities for gastronomic tourism development. Among its leading culinary destinations, Makassar is particularly recognized for iconic traditional dishes such as Coto Makassar, Pallubasa, Konro, and Pisang Ijo. These culinary products not only represent local food traditions but also reflect the historical and cultural identity of the region. Through gastronomic experiences, tourists can develop deeper emotional and cultural connections with destinations while simultaneously enriching their overall travel experiences (Kivela & Crofts, 2019).

Previous studies have demonstrated that gastronomic experiences contribute to destination attractiveness, enhance tourist satisfaction, and strengthen destination image (Ab Karim & Chi, 2020; Björk & Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2020). However, much of the existing literature has focused on the relationships between culinary experiences, satisfaction, and behavioral outcomes. Comparatively less attention has been devoted to evaluating the specific attributes that constitute gastronomic experiences and identifying which aspects perform well or require improvement from tourists' perspectives.

Understanding tourists' evaluations of gastronomic attributes is essential for destination management because culinary experiences are inherently multidimensional. Tourists assess not only food quality and taste but also service interactions, environmental conditions, cultural interpretation, atmosphere, and emotional engagement. Identifying strengths and weaknesses across these dimensions can assist destination managers and culinary entrepreneurs in allocating resources more effectively and improving visitor experiences.

Importance–Performance Analysis (IPA) provides a useful framework for evaluating service attributes by simultaneously examining their perceived importance and actual performance (Martilla & James, 2020). Although IPA has been widely applied in tourism and hospitality studies, its application within the context of gastronomic tourism in Makassar remains limited. Consequently, empirical evidence regarding which gastronomic attributes require managerial attention is still lacking.

To address this gap, this study evaluates tourists' perceptions of gastronomic experiences in Makassar using Importance–Performance Analysis. Specifically, the study seeks to identify the strengths and weaknesses of gastronomic experience attributes and provide practical recommendations for enhancing Makassar's position as a leading culinary tourism destination in Indonesia.

Literature review

Gastronomic Experience

Gastronomic experience refers to the multidimensional interaction between tourists and local food through sensory, emotional, intellectual, behavioral, environmental, and service-related elements (Kivela & Crofts, 2019). Culinary experiences involve more than tasting food; they represent opportunities for tourists to engage with local culture, traditions, and identities (Ab Karim & Chi, 2020).

Authentic gastronomic experiences have been found to strengthen destination image and create memorable tourism experiences (Björk & Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2020). Through food consumption, tourists can develop emotional connections with destinations and gain deeper cultural understanding. Consequently, gastronomic experiences have become an important component of sustainable tourism development and destination differentiation (Ab Karim & Chi, 2020).

Tourist Satisfaction

Tourist satisfaction is defined as the degree to which tourists perceive that their experiences meet or exceed their expectations (Chen, 2019). In tourism research, satisfaction serves as a key indicator of destination performance and quality.

Within culinary tourism, satisfaction is influenced by multiple factors including food quality, authenticity, service excellence, cleanliness, atmosphere, and perceived value (Ali & Amin, 2019). High levels of satisfaction contribute to positive destination evaluations and strengthen tourists' emotional attachment to destinations (Prayag, 2020).

Future Behavioral Intentions

Future behavioral intentions refer to tourists' willingness to engage in favorable post-consumption behaviors such as revisiting destinations, recommending them to others, and sharing positive experiences (Kim & Hall, 2021). These intentions are particularly important because they contribute to destination competitiveness and long-term sustainability.

Studies have consistently shown that satisfaction is one of the strongest predictors of future behavioral intentions (Kim et al., 2021). Furthermore, memorable tourism experiences directly influence tourists' willingness to revisit destinations and generate positive word-of-mouth communication (Prasetyo et al., 2024).

Importance–Performance Analysis (IPA)

Importance–Performance Analysis (IPA) is a widely used managerial tool that evaluates service attributes according to their perceived importance and performance (Martilla & James, 2020). IPA assists destination managers in identifying strengths, weaknesses, and priorities for improvement.

The technique classifies service attributes into four quadrants: (1) Concentrate Here, (2) Keep Up the Good Work, (3) Low Priority, and (4) Possible Overkill. Previous tourism studies have successfully employed IPA to evaluate service quality and tourist experiences across different destination contexts (Abdi & Tahir, 2020).

Based on this literature review, two research questions are developed:

RQ1: How do tourists evaluate the importance and performance of gastronomic experience attributes in Makassar?

RQ2: Which gastronomic experience attributes should be prioritized for improvement based on Importance–Performance Analysis?

Methodology

This study employed a quantitative descriptive-evaluative research design to assess tourists' perceptions of gastronomic experiences in Makassar. Data were collected from visitors at major culinary tourism destinations, including Pantai Losari Culinary Center, Lego-Lego Culinary Area, Coto Nusantara, and Konro Karebosi. A purposive sampling technique was used to select respondents who had experienced at least one traditional culinary attraction in Makassar. A total of 130 valid questionnaires were included in the analysis.

The questionnaire consisted of two main sections. The first section collected demographic information, while the second assessed gastronomic experience attributes across six dimensions: sensory, affective, behavioural, intellectual, service, and environmental experiences. Respondents evaluated each attribute using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). In addition, respondents rated both the importance and performance of each attribute to facilitate Importance–Performance Analysis.

Data analysis was conducted in two stages. First, descriptive statistics were used to summarize respondent characteristics and evaluate overall perceptions of gastronomic experiences. Second, Importance–Performance Analysis (IPA) was employed to compare the importance and performance of each gastronomic attribute and identify managerial priorities for improvement.

Result and Discussion

Respondent Profile

A total of 130 valid questionnaires were collected from tourists who had experienced culinary attractions in Makassar. The majority of respondents were aged between 21 and 30 years (55.4%), followed by those aged 31–40 years (24.6%). Female and male respondents were relatively balanced, and most respondents held undergraduate degrees. Furthermore, approximately 68.5% of respondents originated from outside Makassar, indicating the city's strong appeal as a culinary tourism destination for domestic visitors.

Evaluation of Gastronomic Experience Attributes

Descriptive analysis was conducted to assess tourists' perceptions of gastronomic experiences in Makassar. The results indicate that all gastronomic experience dimensions received positive evaluations, with mean scores exceeding 4.00 on a five-point scale.

Dimension	Importance	Performance
Sensory Food Experience	4.82	4.65
Affective Food Experience	4.75	4.50

Behavioural Food Experience	4.70	4.45
Intellectual Food Experience	4.68	4.40
Service Food Experience	4.73	4.48
Environmental Food Experience	4.71	4.35

Among these dimensions, Sensory Food Experience achieved the highest performance score, highlighting the importance of taste, aroma, texture, and visual presentation in shaping tourists' gastronomic experiences. This finding confirms that Makassar's traditional cuisine remains its strongest tourism asset.

Importance–Performance Analysis

The Importance–Performance Analysis was conducted to identify managerial priorities by comparing the perceived importance and performance of gastronomic experience attributes.

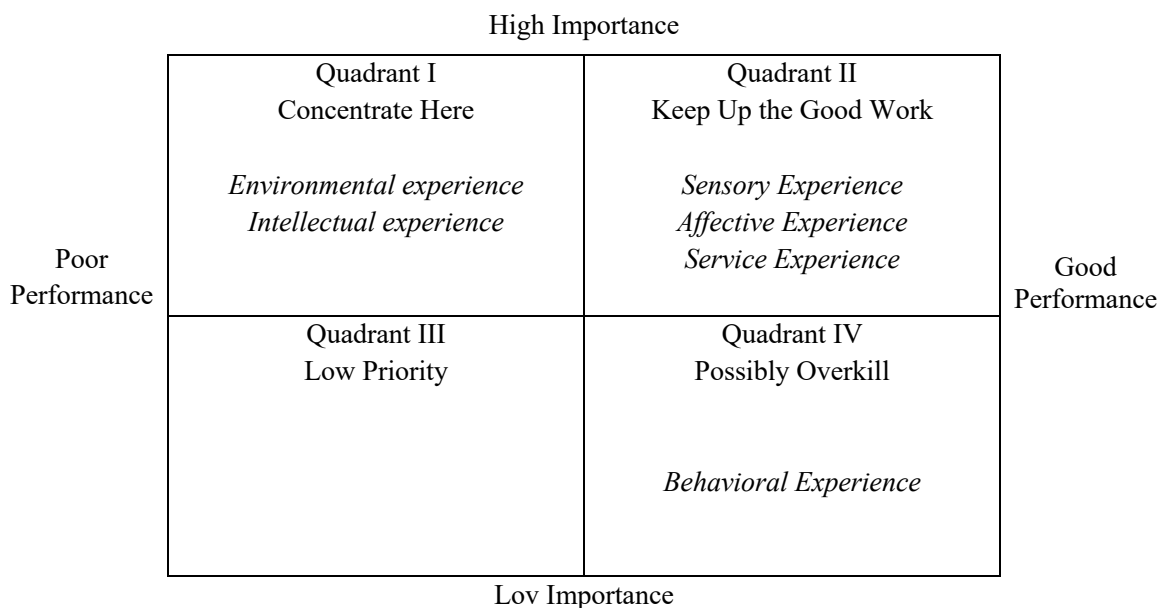


Figure 1: IPA Quadrant

Quadrant I: Concentrate Here

The analysis reveals that **Environmental Food Experience** and **Intellectual Food Experience** are positioned in Quadrant I, indicating high importance but comparatively lower performance. This finding suggests that tourists consider environmental conditions and cultural learning opportunities essential components of gastronomic experiences, yet current performance does not fully meet their expectations. Environmental aspects include cleanliness, dining ambience, seating comfort, and overall destination atmosphere. Meanwhile, intellectual experiences refer to tourists' opportunities to learn about local culinary heritage, food preparation methods, and cultural narratives associated with traditional dishes. The results indicate that Makassar's culinary destinations should place greater emphasis on storytelling,

interpretation, heritage communication, and environmental enhancement to enrich visitor experiences.

Quadrant II: Keep Up the Good Work

Sensory Food Experience, Affective Food Experience, and Service Food Experience are positioned in Quadrant II, indicating both high importance and high performance. This quadrant represents the core strengths of Makassar's gastronomic tourism. The high performance of sensory experiences reflects tourists' appreciation of authentic flavors, aromas, textures, and food presentation. Similarly, affective experiences indicate that local cuisine generates positive emotions and memorable experiences among visitors.

Service experience also emerged as a strength, suggesting that tourists generally perceive hospitality, friendliness, and service quality positively. These findings reinforce previous studies emphasizing that authenticity and emotional engagement are critical determinants of successful gastronomic tourism experiences (Ab Karim & Chi, 2020; Björk & Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2020). Destination managers should therefore maintain these strengths while continuing to ensure consistent food quality and service standards.

Quadrant III: Low Priority

No gastronomic experience attributes were classified within Quadrant III. This result suggests that none of the evaluated dimensions are perceived as simultaneously low in importance and performance. Consequently, all dimensions contribute meaningfully to tourists' overall evaluations of Makassar's culinary tourism experience.

Quadrant IV: Possible Overkill

Behavioural Food Experience is positioned within Quadrant IV, indicating relatively strong performance despite lower perceived importance. This finding suggests that resources allocated to behavioural engagement activities may currently exceed tourists' expectations relative to other attributes. While such activities remain beneficial, destination managers may achieve greater returns by redirecting additional investments toward environmental improvements and intellectual interpretation programs.

Managerial Implications

The findings provide several practical implications for culinary tourism development in Makassar. First, destination managers should prioritize improvements in environmental quality, including cleanliness, seating arrangements, signage, and overall dining ambience. Second, greater efforts should be devoted to enhancing intellectual experiences through culinary storytelling, heritage interpretation, cultural exhibitions, and interactive demonstrations of traditional cooking techniques.

At the same time, the strengths identified in the sensory, affective, and service dimensions should be maintained and incorporated into destination branding strategies. Promoting Makassar's authentic flavors, emotional appeal, and hospitality can strengthen its competitive position as one of Indonesia's leading gastronomic tourism destinations.

Conclusion

This study evaluated tourists' perceptions of gastronomic experiences in Makassar using Importance–Performance Analysis. The findings indicate that sensory, affective, and service experiences constitute the primary strengths of Makassar's culinary tourism offerings, reflecting the destination's ability to deliver authentic, enjoyable, and memorable gastronomic experiences. However, environmental and intellectual experiences were identified as priority areas for improvement due to their high importance and comparatively lower performance.

The study demonstrates that successful gastronomic tourism extends beyond food quality alone and requires attention to environmental conditions, cultural interpretation, and visitor engagement. By addressing these areas, destination managers can enhance overall tourist experiences and strengthen Makassar's competitiveness as a leading gastronomic tourism destination. The findings contribute to the growing literature on gastronomic tourism by applying Importance–Performance Analysis to identify strategic priorities for destination development and service improvement.

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Environmental Awareness as a Linking Mechanism Between Sustainable Tourism and Green Practice Behavior: A Scoping Review

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Abstract

The growing concern over environmental degradation has intensified the need for sustainable tourism practices and environmentally responsible consumer behavior. Environmental awareness has emerged as a critical factor influencing tourists' adoption of green practices; however, the mechanisms through which sustainable tourism and green marketing contribute to such behavior remain fragmented in the literature. This study aims to identify and synthesize the factors that explain how environmental awareness links sustainable tourism and green marketing to green practice behavior. A scoping review methodology was employed following the PRISMA-ScR framework. Fifty peer-reviewed articles published between 2013 and 2025 were selected from major academic databases and analyzed using thematic synthesis. The findings reveal four interrelated themes: (1) sustainable tourism experiences and environmental awareness, (2) green marketing communication and behavioral intention, (3) environmental awareness as a mediator of green behavior, and (4) stakeholder collaboration and sustainable community engagement. The review demonstrates that environmental awareness functions not merely as an outcome of sustainability initiatives but also as a psychological and social mechanism that transforms sustainability values into environmentally responsible actions. The study contributes to sustainable tourism literature by providing an integrated conceptual framework that explains the dynamic interaction among experiential, communicative, cognitive, and collaborative dimensions of green behavior. Practical implications are offered for destination managers, tourism businesses, and policymakers seeking to promote sustainable tourism development.

Keywords: *Environmental Awareness, Sustainable Tourism, Green Marketing, Green Behavior, Green Practice, Scoping Review*

Introduction

Sustainable tourism has become one of the most important approaches for balancing economic development, environmental conservation, and community well-being. As tourism activities continue to expand globally, concerns regarding environmental degradation, resource depletion, and climate change have increased significantly (Agarwal et al., 2024). Consequently, understanding the determinants of environmentally responsible tourist behavior has become a critical research agenda in tourism studies.

Recent studies indicate that sustainable tourism experiences can foster ecological values and encourage tourists to engage in environmentally responsible behavior (Han, 2021; Gössling & Hall, 2019). Simultaneously, green marketing has emerged as an important strategic tool for communicating sustainability values and influencing consumer attitudes toward environmentally friendly products and destinations (Rahman et al., 2023). Despite these developments, the mechanisms through which sustainable tourism experiences and green marketing influence green practice behavior remain insufficiently understood.

Environmental awareness has frequently been identified as a central explanatory construct in pro-environmental behavior research. Previous studies have demonstrated that individuals with higher environmental awareness are more likely to support sustainability initiatives, engage in green consumption, and adopt environmentally responsible behaviors (Wang et al., 2023; Han et al., 2019). However, existing research remains fragmented across different theoretical perspectives, including the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991), Value–Belief–Norm Theory (Stern, 2000), and environmental knowledge models.

Therefore, this study seeks to synthesize current knowledge regarding the role of environmental awareness in connecting sustainable tourism and green marketing with green practice behavior. Specifically, this review addresses the following research question:

“How does environmental awareness facilitate the relationship between sustainable tourism, green marketing, and green practice behavior?”

Literature review

Sustainable Tourism and Environmental Awareness

Sustainable tourism emphasizes responsible travel practices that minimize environmental impacts while maximizing socio-economic benefits for local communities. Experiences involving ecotourism, conservation activities, and nature-based tourism have been shown to increase tourists’ environmental awareness and ecological responsibility (Lee & Moscardo, 2021; Mutana & Mukwada, 2018).

Green Marketing and Behavioral Intention

Green marketing refers to marketing strategies designed to promote environmentally friendly products, services, and practices. Effective green communication can strengthen trust,

improve destination image, and enhance behavioral intentions toward sustainable consumption (Rahman et al., 2023; Kumar & Chaudhary, 2020).

Environmental Awareness and Green Behavior

Environmental awareness encompasses knowledge, concern, and sensitivity toward environmental issues. According to the Value–Belief–Norm Theory (Stern, 2000), environmental awareness contributes to the development of moral obligations that motivate environmentally responsible behavior.

Stakeholder Collaboration in Sustainable Tourism

Sustainable tourism development requires collaboration among governments, communities, businesses, academia, and media. Such collaboration enhances environmental education, strengthens sustainability initiatives, and promotes collective behavioral change (Widiati & Permatasari, 2022).

Methodology

This study employed a scoping review approach following the PRISMA-ScR framework to map and synthesize existing literature concerning environmental awareness, sustainable tourism, green marketing, and green practice behavior.

Articles were retrieved from Scopus, ScienceDirect, SpringerLink, and Google Scholar. Inclusion criteria consisted of: (1) peer-reviewed publications, (2) articles published between 2013 and 2025, (3) studies focusing on sustainable tourism, environmental awareness, green marketing, or green behavior, and (4) English-language publications.

A total of 50 articles met the eligibility criteria and were subjected to thematic synthesis. Data extraction focused on research objectives, theoretical foundations, methodologies, key findings, and identified determinants of green practice behavior.

Result

Study Selection

The literature search identified studies related to sustainable tourism, environmental awareness, green marketing, and green practice behavior from several academic databases. Following the PRISMA-ScR screening procedure, duplicate records and studies that did not meet the inclusion criteria were excluded. After the title, abstract, and full-text screening stages, 50 articles published between 2013 and 2025 were selected for further analysis.

The selected articles fulfilled the predefined inclusion criteria, including relevance to sustainable tourism, environmental awareness, green marketing, and environmentally responsible behavior. These studies formed the basis for the thematic synthesis conducted in this review.

Characteristics of the Included Studies

The reviewed literature demonstrates increasing scholarly attention toward environmental sustainability in tourism over the last decade. The selected studies were

conducted across various geographical contexts and tourism settings, including ecotourism destinations, hospitality industries, community-based tourism initiatives, and sustainable destination management programs.

Methodologically, the reviewed articles employed diverse research approaches. Quantitative studies dominated the literature, followed by qualitative and conceptual studies. Quantitative research frequently utilized survey methods and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to examine relationships among sustainability-related variables. Qualitative studies primarily explored stakeholder perspectives, sustainability practices, and community participation in sustainable tourism development.

The studies also reflected diverse theoretical perspectives, including environmental behavior theories, sustainability frameworks, consumer behavior models, and stakeholder-based approaches. This diversity indicates that environmentally responsible behavior in tourism is a multidimensional phenomenon influenced by cognitive, social, institutional, and experiential factors.

Research Trends in Sustainable Tourism and Environmental Behavior

The analysis revealed a growing research interest in the relationship between sustainability and tourist behavior, particularly after 2019. This trend corresponds with increasing global concerns regarding climate change, environmental degradation, and sustainable development goals.

Most studies emphasized the importance of environmental awareness as a determinant of sustainable behavior. Researchers increasingly examined how tourism experiences, environmental education, green marketing strategies, and stakeholder collaboration contribute to the development of environmentally responsible attitudes and practices.

In addition, recent studies have expanded beyond traditional environmental conservation perspectives by incorporating concepts such as regenerative tourism, green innovation, environmental literacy, and community engagement. These developments suggest a shift from viewing sustainability as a management issue toward understanding sustainability as a shared responsibility among multiple stakeholders.

Thematic Synthesis

The thematic analysis generated four major themes that explain the relationship between sustainable tourism, environmental awareness, green marketing, and green practice behavior.

Sustainable Tourism Experience and Environmental Awareness

The first theme highlights the role of sustainable tourism experiences in fostering environmental awareness. The reviewed studies consistently indicate that participation in environmentally oriented tourism activities contributes to greater understanding of environmental issues and ecological responsibility.

Experiences involving ecotourism, conservation-based tourism, and nature-oriented activities provide opportunities for experiential learning. Through direct interaction with natural environments, tourists gain a deeper appreciation of environmental conservation and become more aware of the consequences of unsustainable practices. Several studies suggest

that these experiences strengthen environmental values and encourage the adoption of environmentally responsible behavior.

The findings indicate that sustainable tourism experiences serve not only as recreational activities but also as educational platforms that facilitate environmental learning and awareness.

Green Marketing Communication and Behavioral Intention

The second theme emphasizes the contribution of green marketing communication to sustainable behavioral intentions. The reviewed studies show that environmentally oriented marketing strategies influence tourists' perceptions, attitudes, and willingness to support sustainable products and destinations.

Green marketing initiatives frequently communicate environmental values through eco-labels, sustainability campaigns, environmental certifications, and digital media platforms. Effective communication increases consumers' understanding of sustainability issues and enhances trust in environmentally responsible organizations.

The findings suggest that green marketing functions as both a promotional and educational mechanism. By increasing exposure to sustainability-related information, green marketing contributes to the development of environmental awareness and strengthens behavioral intentions toward environmentally responsible consumption.

Environmental Awareness as a Connecting Mechanism

The third theme identifies environmental awareness as the central mechanism linking sustainability initiatives with green practice behavior. Across the reviewed studies, environmental awareness consistently emerged as a key factor influencing environmentally responsible actions.

Environmental awareness encompasses knowledge, concern, and sensitivity toward environmental issues. Individuals with higher levels of environmental awareness demonstrate stronger support for conservation efforts, sustainable products, and environmentally friendly tourism practices. Furthermore, environmental awareness facilitates the transformation of sustainability-related information into behavioral commitment.

The findings indicate that environmental awareness does not operate independently. Instead, it develops through the interaction of tourism experiences, educational interventions, and sustainability communication. As a result, environmental awareness serves as a connecting mechanism that translates sustainability values into practical behavior.

Stakeholder Collaboration and Sustainable Community Engagement

The fourth theme highlights the importance of stakeholder collaboration in promoting sustainable tourism and environmentally responsible behavior. The reviewed studies emphasize that sustainability outcomes are more effective when supported by collaborative efforts among governments, local communities, tourism businesses, educational institutions, and civil society organizations.

Community participation emerged as a particularly important element in environmental stewardship and sustainable destination management. Educational programs, environmental

campaigns, and collaborative sustainability initiatives contribute to increasing public awareness and encouraging environmentally responsible practices.

The findings demonstrate that stakeholder collaboration provides the social and institutional support necessary to strengthen environmental awareness and facilitate long-term behavioral change.

Conceptual Framework Derived from the Review

The synthesis of the reviewed literature suggests an integrated relationship among sustainable tourism, green marketing, environmental awareness, and green practice behavior.

Sustainable tourism experiences provide direct exposure to environmental values and sustainability practices, while green marketing communication reinforces these values through information dissemination and persuasive messaging. Together, these factors contribute to the development of environmental awareness. Environmental awareness subsequently encourages individuals to engage in environmentally responsible actions, ultimately leading to green practice behavior.

The effectiveness of this process is strengthened by stakeholder collaboration, which creates supportive social, organizational, and policy environments that facilitate sustainable behavioral change. Therefore, environmental awareness can be understood as a central mechanism that connects sustainability-related initiatives with actual environmentally responsible behavior.

Discussion

The findings suggest that environmental awareness serves as a central psychological mechanism connecting sustainable tourism experiences and green marketing initiatives with green practice behavior. Consistent with the Theory of Planned Behavior and Value–Belief–Norm Theory, environmental awareness influences attitudes, subjective norms, and behavioral intentions that ultimately shape sustainable actions.

Furthermore, the results indicate that sustainable tourism experiences function as experiential learning platforms, while green marketing acts as an informational and persuasive mechanism. Together, these factors contribute to the formation of environmental awareness, which subsequently encourages green behavior.

The study also highlights the importance of stakeholder collaboration. Sustainable tourism initiatives become more effective when supported by coordinated actions among governments, local communities, tourism businesses, academic institutions, and media organizations.

Sustainable Tourism Experience and Environmental Awareness

Several important factors that emerge in this theme show that direct experience with nature is able to foster environmental awareness and commitment in tourists. Studies such as Gössling & Hall (2019) and Lee & Moscardo (2021) show that participation in conservation activities, ecotourism, as well as interactions with local communities promotes the formation

of ecological values and responsibilities. Thus, sustainable tourism experiences are not only recreative but also educational, helping tourists understand the ecological impact of their actions.

Furthermore, cutting-edge research emphasizes the importance of *experiential learning* as a means of building long-term environmental awareness (Mutana & Mukwada, 2018). The awareness that grows through this experience contributes directly to the intention to behave greenly, both in the context of sustainable product consumption and active participation in the preservation of tourist destinations.

Conclusion

This scoping review aimed to synthesize the existing literature concerning the role of environmental awareness in linking sustainable tourism and green marketing with green practice behavior. Based on the analysis of 50 studies published between 2013 and 2025, four major themes were identified: (1) sustainable tourism experience and environmental awareness, (2) green marketing communication and behavioral intention, (3) environmental awareness as a connecting mechanism, and (4) stakeholder collaboration and sustainable community engagement.

The findings demonstrate that environmental awareness plays a central role in transforming sustainability-related experiences and information into environmentally responsible actions. Sustainable tourism experiences provide opportunities for experiential learning, while green marketing communication reinforces sustainability values through educational and persuasive messages. Together, these factors contribute to the development of environmental awareness, which subsequently encourages green practice behavior. Furthermore, stakeholder collaboration strengthens this process by providing social support, institutional resources, and governance mechanisms that facilitate sustainable behavioral change.

From a theoretical perspective, this review contributes to the sustainable tourism literature by integrating previously fragmented discussions on sustainable tourism, green marketing, environmental awareness, and green practice behavior into a comprehensive conceptual framework. The findings suggest that environmental awareness should be viewed not only as an outcome of sustainability initiatives but also as a critical mechanism that connects sustainability-oriented interventions with actual behavioral outcomes.

Practically, the findings provide valuable insights for destination managers, tourism businesses, policymakers, and local communities. Sustainability initiatives should not focus solely on environmental conservation programs but should also prioritize educational experiences, effective green marketing communication, and collaborative stakeholder engagement to strengthen environmental awareness and encourage environmentally responsible behavior among tourists.

This study is subject to several limitations. First, the review relied exclusively on published literature and did not incorporate primary empirical data. Second, the analysis focused on studies published between 2013 and 2025, which may exclude relevant earlier

contributions. Third, differences in research contexts, methodologies, and conceptual definitions across studies may limit the generalizability of the findings.

Future research should examine the causal relationships among sustainable tourism experiences, green marketing, environmental awareness, and green practice behavior through empirical studies employing quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-method approaches. Additionally, comparative studies across different tourism destinations and cultural contexts would provide a deeper understanding of how environmental awareness influences sustainable behavior in diverse settings.

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Service Quality Dimensions of Conventional Travel Agencies in Bandung: A SERVQUAL Perspective

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Abstract

The rapid growth of Online Travel Agents (OTAs) has intensified competition within the tourism industry, challenging the sustainability of conventional travel agencies. In this context, service quality has become a critical determinant of customer satisfaction and competitive advantage. This study examines the underlying dimensions of service quality perceived by customers of conventional travel agencies in Bandung, Indonesia, using the SERVQUAL framework. A quantitative descriptive approach was employed, and data were collected from 201 respondents who had previously used travel agency services. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics to identify latent service quality dimensions. The findings revealed five factors influencing customer evaluations: Service Attention, Staff Professionalism, Physical Appearance and Agency Image, Trust in Services, and Commitment to Service. Among these, Service Attention emerged as the most influential dimension, emphasizing the importance of personalized communication, responsiveness, and customer-oriented service. The results indicate that while the core principles of SERVQUAL remain relevant, the dimensions are reconfigured within contemporary travel agency settings characterized by increasing digitalization and competition from OTAs. This study contributes to the service quality literature by providing empirical evidence of the contextual adaptation of SERVQUAL in the Indonesian travel agency sector and offers managerial insights for enhancing customer satisfaction and long-term competitiveness.

Keywords: Service Quality, Customer Satisfaction, Travel Agency, Tourism Services, Exploratory Factor Analysis.

Introduction

Tourism has been widely acknowledged as a strategic sector that contributes significantly to economic growth, employment creation, and regional development. In Indonesia, tourism does not only generate foreign exchange but also stimulates local economies and enhances community welfare. The continuous expansion of tourism destinations has encouraged governments and industry stakeholders to focus on improving service quality across tourism-related sectors, including travel agencies, which play a pivotal role within the tourism value chain.

Within the tourism industry, travel agencies function as key intermediaries connecting tourists with various service providers. Morgan (1994) highlights that travel agencies are not merely transaction facilitators but also advisors who assist customers in planning travel arrangements that align with their preferences, budgets, and expectations. Through services such as ticketing, accommodation booking, itinerary planning, and travel consultation, travel agencies help reduce uncertainty and enhance the overall travel experience, particularly for complex or multi-destination trips.

However, the role of conventional travel agencies has been increasingly challenged by rapid digital transformation within the tourism industry. The emergence of Online Travel Agents (OTAs) such as Traveloka and Tiket.com has reshaped consumer behavior by offering speed, price transparency, and ease of access through digital platforms. This digital shift has intensified competition, particularly in urban tourism destinations such as Bandung, where conventional travel agencies operate alongside highly popular OTA applications. As a result, traditional travel agencies are required to reassess their value propositions in order to remain relevant and competitive in a digitally driven marketplace.

In this highly competitive environment, service quality becomes a critical determinant of customer satisfaction and business sustainability. Filiz (2010) emphasizes that high service quality is closely associated with customer satisfaction and loyalty, which subsequently influence repeat usage and positive word-of-mouth. For travel agencies, customer satisfaction represents more than an operational outcome; it functions as a strategic asset that strengthens long-term competitiveness in the tourism market. Customers who perceive service quality positively tend to develop trust and emotional attachment, reducing their likelihood of switching to alternative service providers.

The significance of service quality is particularly pronounced in tourism, where services are intangible, experiential, and inseparable from their providers. Oliver (1997) argues that customer satisfaction arises from cumulative service experiences rather than isolated transactions. In the context of travel agencies, service quality is not solely evaluated based on technical efficiency or accuracy but also on interpersonal interaction, responsiveness, and personalized attention. These emotional and relational elements play a central role in shaping customers' overall perceptions and behavioral intentions.

Bandung serves as a relevant empirical setting for examining service quality in travel agencies due to its position as one of Indonesia's major urban tourism destinations. The city attracts both leisure and business travelers and hosts a diverse range of travel agencies operating in direct competition with digital platforms. Rohaeni and Marwa (2018) note that in

such competitive environments, conventional travel agencies must differentiate themselves by emphasizing personalized service, professional staff competence, and consistent service delivery—advantages that are often difficult to replicate by purely digital platforms.

To systematically assess service quality, the SERVQUAL model developed by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1966) has been extensively applied across service industries. Introduced by Parasuraman et al. (1988), SERVQUAL conceptualizes service quality as the gap between customer expectations and perceived service performance across five dimensions: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. Due to its structured and customer-centered approach, the model has been widely adopted in tourism research, including studies on travel agencies, hotels, and transportation services (Jonkisz et al., 2023).

Nevertheless, the relevance of SERVQUAL has been increasingly questioned in contemporary service contexts shaped by digitalization. Many service encounters now occur through online platforms, reducing direct face-to-face interaction between service providers and customers. In travel agency services, transactions are frequently conducted via websites, mobile applications, or remote communication channels, which may alter how customers perceive traditional service quality dimensions. Consequently, empirical re-examination of SERVQUAL within specific local and digital contexts is necessary to ensure its continued applicability.

Previous research by Filiz (2010) successfully developed and validated a SERVQUAL-based measurement instrument for travel agencies in Turkey. However, similar empirical studies remain limited in Indonesia, particularly at the city level. Differences in cultural characteristics, technological adoption, and market dynamics suggest that service quality dimensions identified in one context may not be directly transferable to another. Therefore, localized investigations are essential to generate contextually relevant insights for both theory development and managerial practice.

Based on these considerations, this study aims to analyze the factors influencing customer satisfaction with travel agency services in Bandung using the SERVQUAL framework. By employing Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), this research seeks to identify underlying service quality dimensions as perceived by customers and to compare these empirically derived factors with the original SERVQUAL model. The findings are expected to contribute to the service quality literature while offering practical recommendations for travel agency practitioners seeking to enhance service performance and maintain competitiveness in an increasingly digital tourism industry.

Literature review

Service Quality in the Tourism and Travel Agency Context

Service quality has been widely discussed as a critical factor influencing customer satisfaction and behavioral outcomes in service-based industries, particularly tourism. Parasuraman et al. (1988) define service quality as the discrepancy between customer expectations and their perceptions of actual service performance. In tourism services, where

products are largely intangible and experiential, customers rely heavily on service encounters to evaluate quality. As a result, service quality perceptions are shaped not only by technical accuracy but also by interpersonal interactions and emotional responses during service delivery.

In the context of travel agencies, service quality encompasses various aspects, including staff competence, responsiveness, reliability, and the ability to provide personalized assistance. Filiz (2010) argues that travel agency services are highly dependent on human interaction, making service quality a decisive element in customer evaluation. Customers expect travel agencies to offer accurate information, timely responses, and professional consultation, particularly when planning complex or high-risk travel arrangements.

Previous studies indicate that service quality plays a central role in determining customer satisfaction and loyalty within the tourism sector. High service quality is associated with repeat purchase intentions, positive word-of-mouth, and long-term customer relationships, while poor service quality often leads to dissatisfaction and customer switching behavior (Oliver, 1997). Therefore, understanding how customers perceive service quality in travel agencies is essential for sustaining competitiveness in a dynamic tourism market.

The SERVQUAL Model as a Service Quality Measurement Framework

One of the most widely used models for measuring service quality is SERVQUAL, developed by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry. The SERVQUAL framework conceptualizes service quality as a multidimensional construct consisting of five dimensions: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy (Parasuraman et al., 1988). Tangibles refer to physical facilities and appearance, reliability reflects the ability to deliver promised services accurately, responsiveness relates to prompt service and willingness to help, assurance involves trust and confidence, and empathy emphasizes personalized attention to customers.

Due to its comprehensive structure, SERVQUAL has been extensively applied in tourism-related research, including studies on hotels, airlines, transportation services, and travel agencies. Jonkisz et al. (2023) note that SERVQUAL remains a relevant diagnostic tool for identifying service quality gaps and areas for improvement, particularly in service industries where customer perceptions are central to performance evaluation.

In travel agency research, SERVQUAL has been employed to assess how well agencies meet customer expectations and to identify service dimensions that most strongly influence satisfaction. Filiz (2010) demonstrated that SERVQUAL-based instruments could be effectively adapted to the travel agency context, revealing key dimensions related to staff professionalism, service reliability, and personalized attention. These findings support the applicability of SERVQUAL as a foundational framework for evaluating travel agency service quality.

Service Quality, Customer Satisfaction, and Loyalty

Customer satisfaction is commonly viewed as an outcome of perceived service quality. Oliver (1997) conceptualizes satisfaction as a cumulative evaluation derived from repeated

service experiences rather than a single transaction. In tourism services, satisfaction emerges when perceived service performance meets or exceeds customer expectations across multiple encounters.

Numerous studies have established a positive relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction, which subsequently influences customer loyalty. Kotler and Keller (2016) argue that retaining existing customers is more cost-effective than acquiring new ones, especially in highly competitive service industries. In the travel agency context, satisfied customers are more likely to reuse services and recommend agencies to others, contributing to long-term business sustainability.

Rohaeni and Marwa (2018) further emphasize that in the digital era, customer satisfaction is increasingly shaped by service efficiency, responsiveness, and the ability to provide tailored solutions. As consumers become more accustomed to fast and convenient digital services offered by OTAs, conventional travel agencies must strengthen service quality dimensions that emphasize human interaction, trust, and personalized support.

Relevance of SERVQUAL in the Digital Tourism Era

Despite its widespread use, the SERVQUAL model has faced criticism regarding its applicability in digitally mediated service environments. The rise of online platforms has altered how services are delivered and evaluated, reducing direct interpersonal interaction and increasing reliance on technology-based service encounters. In travel agencies, many transactions are now conducted online or through remote communication channels, potentially reshaping customer expectations of service quality.

Nevertheless, several scholars argue that SERVQUAL remains relevant when adapted to contemporary service contexts. Sambodo Rio Sasongko (2021) suggests that while digitalization changes service delivery mechanisms, core service quality dimensions such as reliability, responsiveness, and assurance remain essential in shaping customer trust and satisfaction. Therefore, rather than abandoning SERVQUAL, empirical studies are needed to reassess and refine its dimensions based on local and industry-specific contexts.

Given the limited number of empirical studies examining SERVQUAL-based service quality in Indonesian travel agencies, particularly at the city level, further investigation is warranted. Localized research can provide insights into whether traditional service quality dimensions remain applicable or whether new dimensions emerge in response to changing consumer behaviour and technological advancement.

Based on the literature, this study assumes that customer satisfaction with travel agency services is influenced by perceived service quality as conceptualized in the SERVQUAL framework. Service quality is viewed as a multidimensional construct formed by customers' evaluations of various service attributes, which may combine into underlying factors when examined empirically. Using Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), this study identifies these underlying service quality factors and examines their relevance in explaining customer satisfaction within the context of travel agencies in Bandung.

Methodology

This study employed a quantitative cross-sectional design to examine customer perceptions of service quality among conventional travel agency users in Bandung. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire adapted from SERVQUAL-based measurement instruments previously validated in travel agency research (Filiz, 2010).

A purposive sampling technique was utilized. Respondents were required to be at least 17 years old and have previous experience using travel agency services in Bandung. A total of 201 valid responses were obtained, exceeding the minimum sample size requirement of 156 respondents calculated using Yamane's formula (Yamane, 1973).

The questionnaire consisted of 27 service quality indicators measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 5 ("strongly agree").

Data analysis was conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics. Descriptive statistics were first applied to examine respondent characteristics and service quality perceptions. Subsequently, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was performed using Principal Component Analysis with Varimax Rotation. The adequacy of the dataset was assessed through the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity. Factors with eigenvalues greater than one and factor loadings above 0.50 were retained for interpretation (Hair et al., 2019).

Result

Respondent Profile

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

No.	Sociodemographics	Item	Percentage
1	Gender	Men	37.0%
		Women	63.0%
2	Employment	Student	42.0%
		Employee	39.0%
		Entrepreneur	19.0%
3	Monthly Income	Less than IDR 1,000,000	32.0%
		IDR 1,000,000 - IDR 3,000,000	36.5%
		IDR 3,000,000 - IDR 7,000,000	23.6%
		IDR 7,000,000 - IDR 10,000,000	5.4%
		More than IDR 10,000,000	2.5%
4	Frequency of Using Travel Agency Services	Once a year	55.7%
		Twice a year	25.6%
		Three times a year	10.3%
		More than three times a year	7.9%
5	Purpose of Last Trip	Leisure	60.6%
		Business/work	18.2%
		Visiting family	21.2%

Source: Research data (2025)

This study involved 201 respondents who had previously used travel agency services in Bandung. The respondent profile indicates that the sample consisted of customers from different occupational and income backgrounds. Most respondents were students or pupils

(42%), followed by employees (39%) and entrepreneurs (19%). In terms of monthly income, the largest group earned IDR 1,000,000-3,000,000 (36.5%), followed by respondents earning less than IDR 1,000,000 (32%), IDR 3,000,000-7,000,000 (23.6%), IDR 7,000,000-10,000,000 (5.4%), and more than IDR 10,000,000 (2.5%).

The frequency of travel agency usage shows that most respondents used travel agency services once a year (55.7%). Other respondents used the services twice a year (25.6%), three times a year (10.3%), and more than three times a year (7.9%). Regarding the purpose of the last trip, most respondents used travel agency services for leisure purposes (60.6%), followed by visiting family or relatives (21.2%) and business or work-related purposes (18.2%). These findings suggest that travel agencies in Bandung are used mainly for leisure travel, although they also serve customers with family and business travel needs.

Descriptive Analysis

The descriptive analysis indicates that respondents generally perceived the service quality of travel agencies in Bandung positively. Several indicators received high scores, particularly the ability of travel agencies to complete promised tasks, provide fast service, give clear information about service completion time, ensure accurate bills and documents, and provide personal attention to customers. These results show that customers value not only the technical accuracy of travel agency services but also the clarity of communication, responsiveness, and personalization of service encounters.

The findings further indicate that professional employee appearance, employee product knowledge, problem-solving ability, and a positive agency image contributed to respondents' favorable evaluations. Overall, the descriptive results suggest that travel agencies in Bandung have been able to meet customer expectations in several core aspects of service delivery, especially reliability, responsiveness, and interpersonal service quality.

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was conducted to identify the underlying dimensions of service quality perceived by customers of travel agencies in Bandung. Before extracting the factors, the suitability of the data was examined using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity. The KMO value was 0.927, indicating that the sample was highly adequate for factor analysis. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity produced a chi-square value of 2363.674 with 351 degrees of freedom and a significance value of 0.000. This result indicates that the correlations among the observed variables were statistically significant and that the data were appropriate for further factor analysis.

Table 2. One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test Results

Test	Result	Interpretation
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy	0.927	The sample is highly adequate for factor analysis.
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Chi-square = 2363.674; df = 351; Sig. = 0.000	The variables are sufficiently correlated for factor analysis.

Source: Research data (2025)

The factor extraction results showed that five factors had eigenvalues greater than 1. The first factor had the largest eigenvalue of 10.421 and explained 38.598% of the variance before rotation. After extraction and rotation, the five-factor solution explained 46.469% of the total

variance. This indicates that the service quality indicators used in the study could be reduced into five main underlying factors that represent customers' evaluations of travel agency services.

Table 3. Factor Extraction Results

Factor	Initial eigenvalue	Initial % of variance	Rotated % of variance	Cumulative rotated %
1	10.421	38.598	11.388	11.388
2	1.330	4.925	10.052	21.441
3	1.245	4.611	9.516	30.957
4	1.114	4.128	8.065	39.021
5	1.053	3.901	7.448	46.469

Source: Research data (2025)

Extracted Service Quality Factors

Based on the rotated factor matrix, five service quality factors were identified. These factors were named according to the items with the strongest and most conceptually relevant loadings. The five factors are service attention, staff professionalism, physical appearance and agency image, trust in services, and commitment to service.

Table 4. Extracted Service Quality Factors Results

Extracted factor	Representative indicators	Related SERVQUAL dimension
Service Attention	Prioritizing customer interests, overall service quality assessment, clear information about service completion time, capacity to meet customer needs, personal attention to customers.	Responsiveness and empathy
Staff Professionalism	Fast service, polite and friendly employees, deep product knowledge, accurate bills and documents, sufficient service resources, understanding specific customer needs.	Reliability and assurance
Physical Appearance and Agency Image	Neat employee appearance, positive agency image, quality service image, providing the right service the first time, attractive brochures.	Tangibles
Trust in Services	Flexible operating hours, consistent and dependable service, accurate service delivery, advanced and easy-to-use booking technology.	Assurance and reliability
Commitment to Service	Completing promised tasks and giving individual attention to customers.	Empathy and reliability

The first factor, Service Attention, reflects customers' evaluation of how travel agencies prioritize customer interests, provide clear information, and offer personal attention. This factor shows that customers expect travel agencies to communicate clearly and respond to their needs in a personalized manner. The second factor, Staff Professionalism, emphasizes the importance of fast service, employee politeness, product knowledge, administrative accuracy, and the ability to understand specific customer needs. This factor suggests that staff competence remains a crucial element in shaping customer satisfaction.

The third factor, Physical Appearance and Agency Image, includes employee appearance, agency image, service quality image, and promotional materials. Although physical evidence remains relevant, its role appears to be changing in the digital era because customer interaction with travel agencies may no longer occur only in physical offices. The fourth factor, Trust in Services, reflects the role of flexible operating hours, consistent service, accurate service delivery, and digital booking technology in creating customer confidence. The fifth factor, Commitment to Service, highlights the agency's ability to complete promised tasks and maintain individual attention toward customers.

Discussion

The findings demonstrate that customer satisfaction with travel agency services in Bandung is shaped by five interrelated service quality factors. The emergence of Service Attention as the first factor suggests that customers place strong emphasis on communication clarity, responsiveness, and personal care. In a competitive tourism market where Online Travel Agents (OTAs) offer speed and convenience, conventional travel agencies need to strengthen the aspects of service that cannot be fully replaced by digital platforms, particularly human interaction and personalized assistance.

The second factor, Staff Professionalism, confirms the importance of employee competence in the travel agency context. Customers expect travel agency staff to provide fast service, accurate information, clear documentation, and reliable recommendations. This finding is consistent with the SERVQUAL perspective, particularly the dimensions of reliability and assurance, which emphasize accurate service delivery and customer confidence. In travel agency services, professional staff are important because customers often depend on them to reduce uncertainty in trip planning, ticketing, accommodation selection, and itinerary preparation.

The third factor, Physical Appearance and Agency Image, shows that tangible aspects still contribute to customer evaluations, although their relevance is changing. Traditional SERVQUAL places physical facilities, appearance, and communication materials under the tangibles dimension. However, in the context of contemporary travel agencies, brochures and office decoration may no longer dominate customer evaluation because many service encounters occur through digital communication channels. This indicates that tangibles remain relevant but should be interpreted more broadly, including visual professionalism, digital presentation, and the overall credibility of the agency.

The fourth factor, Trust in Services, indicates that customer confidence is built through consistent service, flexible operating hours, reliable transactions, and the use of accessible booking technology. This factor is closely related to assurance and reliability in the SERVQUAL model. In the digital era, trust is not only created through face-to-face interaction but also through the perceived dependability of digital systems, transaction security, and the agency's ability to provide accurate service across online and offline channels.

The fifth factor, Commitment to Service, reflects the importance of fulfilling promises and maintaining individual attention. This factor shows that customers value travel agencies that consistently deliver what has been promised and demonstrate concern for customer needs.

Although commitment is not explicitly presented as a separate SERVQUAL dimension, it is conceptually related to empathy and reliability. Therefore, this study suggests that SERVQUAL remains useful as a theoretical framework, but its dimensions may need contextual adjustment when applied to travel agency services in a digitally mediated environment.

Overall, the EFA results confirm that SERVQUAL is still relevant for understanding service quality in conventional travel agencies. However, the empirical factors identified in this study show that customer evaluation is not limited to the original five dimensions. The findings highlight the importance of service attention, professional staff, agency image, trust, and service commitment as context-specific dimensions of travel agency service quality in Bandung. These results support the need to reinterpret SERVQUAL in line with changes in customer behavior, digital service encounters, and competition between conventional travel agencies and OTAs.

Conclusion

This study identified five service quality dimensions influencing customer perceptions of conventional travel agencies in Bandung: Service Attention, Staff Professionalism, Physical Appearance and Agency Image, Trust in Services, and Commitment to Service.

The findings confirm the continued relevance of the SERVQUAL framework while demonstrating the need for contextual adaptation in digitally transformed tourism environments. Service Attention emerged as the most influential dimension, emphasizing the importance of personalized interaction and customer-centered communication.

Theoretically, this study contributes to the service quality literature by providing empirical evidence that SERVQUAL dimensions may be restructured when applied to contemporary travel agency contexts. Practically, travel agency managers should prioritize staff development, personalized customer service, trust-building mechanisms, and digital service integration to enhance customer satisfaction and maintain competitiveness against OTAs.

Future studies are encouraged to compare conventional travel agencies and Online Travel Agents to further understand how digitalization influences customer expectations and service quality evaluations.

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The Effect of Social Media on The Motivation and Experience of Beginner Climbers on Mount Seminung

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Abstract

This study examines the influence of social media on climbing motivation and tourist experience among beginner climbers at Mount Seminung, South Ogan Komering Ulu Regency, South Sumatra, Indonesia. Social media has increasingly shaped tourism behavior by providing visual inspiration, destination information, and symbolic value for self-expression, particularly in adventure tourism. Using a quantitative explanatory design, data were collected from 110 beginner climbers through an accidental sampling technique. The research instrument was a structured questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale to measure three constructs: social media influence, climbing motivation, and tourist experience. Data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), supported by validity and reliability testing. The results show that social media has a significant positive effect on climbing motivation. Climbing motivation also significantly influences tourist experience. In addition, social media directly affects tourist experience and indirectly influences it through climbing motivation. These findings indicate that motivation serves as a partial mediator in the relationship between social media and tourist experience. The study contributes to adventure tourism literature by explaining how digital exposure shapes beginner climbers' psychological motivation and experiential outcomes. Practically, the findings suggest that destination managers should develop responsible digital promotion strategies that balance visual appeal with safety, environmental awareness, and realistic information.

Keywords: *Social Media, Climbing Motivation, Tourist Experience, Adventure Tourism, Beginner Climbers, Mount Seminung*

Introduction

Adventure tourism has experienced significant growth in Indonesia, particularly through outdoor activities such as mountain climbing. This form of tourism attracts visitors because it offers physical challenge, contact with nature, escape from daily routines, and opportunities for self-development. In contemporary tourism, adventure activities are no longer viewed solely as recreational activities but also as experiences related to wellness, personal meaning, and identity construction (Li & Liu, 2021).

Mount Seminung is a relevant context for examining this phenomenon. Located on the border of South Ogan Komering Ulu Regency, South Sumatra, and West Lampung Regency, Lampung, Mount Seminung offers panoramic views of Lake Ranau, sunrise scenery, and a relatively accessible climbing route. These characteristics make the destination attractive to beginner climbers who seek both adventure and visually appealing experiences. The scenic landscape of Mount Seminung also makes it highly shareable on social media platforms.

The development of social media has transformed the way tourists search for information, imagine destinations, and make travel decisions. Platforms such as Instagram and TikTok function not only as communication tools but also as sources of travel inspiration and social validation. Through visual content, user-generated narratives, and influencer recommendations, social media can shape destination image, create expectations, and stimulate the desire to participate in trending activities (Rochman, 2023; Suhari, 2024). In the context of adventure tourism, social media may motivate beginner climbers to visit destinations that appear challenging, beautiful, and “Instagrammable.”

However, the influence of social media on beginner climbers requires further attention. Beginner climbers often have limited technical skills, physical readiness, and risk awareness. Their decision to climb may be influenced by external stimuli, such as visual content, trends, and the desire for self-actualization, rather than by sufficient knowledge of safety and environmental responsibility. Previous studies have discussed motivation, safety, and tourist behavior in nature-based tourism, but research focusing on the relationship between social media, motivation, and tourist experience among beginner climbers remains limited (Febriani & Anam, 2024; Setiawan & Utomo, 2021).

This study addresses this gap by examining how social media influences climbing motivation and tourist experience among beginner climbers at Mount Seminung. It also investigates whether climbing motivation mediates the relationship between social media and tourist experience. The study is expected to provide theoretical contributions to adventure tourism and digital tourism studies, as well as practical implications for sustainable destination promotion.

Based on the research background, this study aims to:

examine the effect of social media on climbing motivation among beginner climbers at Mount Seminung;

examine the effect of climbing motivation on tourist experience;

examine the direct effect of social media on tourist experience; and

analyze the mediating role of climbing motivation in the relationship between social media and tourist experience.

Literature review

Social Media and Tourist Behavior

Social media has become an important element in contemporary tourism behavior. Tourists increasingly rely on digital platforms to search for destination information, evaluate travel options, and share their experiences before, during, and after visiting a destination. In this process, social media influences not only the decision to visit but also the formation of expectations and emotional engagement.

In tourism, user-generated content is often perceived as more authentic and credible than traditional promotional material. Visual posts, travel videos, and personal stories from other users can stimulate emotional responses and encourage individuals to visit a destination. In adventure tourism, social media is especially influential because it presents outdoor activities as exciting, meaningful, and socially desirable experiences. Exposure to climbing-related content has been shown to influence travel interest and the desire to participate in hiking activities (Umas, 2020; Auladina, 2024).

Social media also contributes to the creation of destination image. A destination that is frequently shared through attractive photos and videos may be perceived as more desirable. However, the image created through social media can also produce expectations that may not always match actual conditions. The alignment between digital expectations and real on-site experiences becomes an important determinant of tourist satisfaction and perceived experience quality (Oudmine, 2025).

Climbing Motivation in Adventure Tourism

Tourism motivation explains the internal and external factors that encourage individuals to travel. The push and pull theory suggests that tourists are motivated by internal needs, such as escape, self-development, and social interaction, as well as external destination attributes, such as natural beauty, accessibility, and physical challenge (Dann, 1981; Rahman et al., 2021). In adventure tourism, motivation is often related to the pursuit of novelty, challenge, achievement, and connection with nature.

For beginner climbers, motivation may be influenced by both intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Intrinsic motivation includes the desire to challenge oneself, improve physical and mental well-being, and gain meaningful experiences. Meanwhile, extrinsic motivation may emerge from social media trends, peer influence, self-presentation, and personal branding. Studies on transformative travel indicate that tourists increasingly seek experiences that support self-development, mental restoration, and meaning-making (Li & Liu, 2021).

In the digital era, social media can intensify climbing motivation by presenting mountain climbing as an aspirational activity. Positive feedback, visual recognition, and online social interaction may encourage individuals to engage in outdoor tourism. However, when motivation is driven mainly by digital trends, beginner climbers may underestimate the risks

associated with mountain climbing. Therefore, understanding the motivational process is important for developing responsible adventure tourism.

Beginner Climbers

Beginner climbers refer to individuals who have limited climbing experience, technical knowledge, and physical preparation. Unlike experienced climbers, beginners may rely heavily on accessible information, peer recommendations, and social media content. Their limited experience can affect their perception of risk, decision-making, and readiness during climbing activities.

Previous studies suggest that beginner climbers may have higher risk perception and lower mental toughness compared with experienced climbers (Febriani & Anam, 2024). They may also require more reliable information regarding routes, weather, equipment, safety procedures, and environmental ethics. In this context, social media can play a dual role. On one hand, it can inspire participation and provide useful information. On the other hand, it can create unrealistic expectations or encourage impulsive travel decisions.

Tourist Experience in Mountain Climbing

Tourist experience is a multidimensional construct that includes emotional, cognitive, sensory, social, and evaluative aspects of travel. In mountain climbing, experience is shaped by physical effort, natural scenery, social interaction, personal achievement, and emotional responses. A positive climbing experience may include enjoyment, learning, satisfaction, stress relief, and memorable moments.

In adventure tourism, the quality of experience is influenced by the match between expectations and reality. When the actual climbing experience aligns with the images and narratives encountered on social media, tourists may feel satisfied and emotionally fulfilled. Conversely, if the real experience differs significantly from digital expectations, satisfaction may decline (Oudmine, 2025). Social media also affects the post-experience stage because tourists often share photos, stories, and reflections online, which may strengthen memory and emotional value (Wang & Azizurrohman, 2025; Al-Busaidi et al., 2025).

The Mediating Role of Climbing Motivation

Motivation can be understood as a psychological mechanism that connects external stimuli with behavioral outcomes. In this study, social media functions as an external stimulus that activates psychological needs, such as novelty-seeking, self-actualization, escape, and social recognition. These needs are then internalized as climbing motivation, which influences how climbers engage with and evaluate their experience.

The mediating role of motivation is important because social media may not only directly shape tourist experience through expectations but also indirectly influence experience by strengthening the desire to climb. When social media exposure stimulates strong motivation, beginner climbers may become more emotionally involved, more engaged, and more likely to

perceive the climbing experience positively. Therefore, this study proposes that climbing motivation mediates the relationship between social media and tourist experience.

Based on the literature review, the hypotheses are formulated as follows:

H1: Social media has a positive and significant effect on climbing motivation.

H2: Climbing motivation has a positive and significant effect on tourist experience.

H3: Social media has a positive and significant direct effect on tourist experience.

H4: Climbing motivation mediates the relationship between social media and tourist experience.

Methodology

This study employed a quantitative explanatory research design. The explanatory approach was used to test causal relationships among social media influence, climbing motivation, and tourist experience. The research was conducted at the Mount Semnang climbing base camp during July–September 2025.

The population of this study consisted of beginner climbers who climbed Mount Semnang during the research period. The sample was selected using accidental sampling, meaning that respondents were chosen based on their availability and willingness to participate. A total of 110 respondents were involved in the study. The sample size was determined using the Slovin formula with a 10% margin of error.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire used a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. The instrument measured three latent variables:

Social Media (X1): measured through indicators related to usage intensity, content inspiration, social influence, and perceived reliability of information.

Climbing Motivation (X2): measured through indicators related to adventure-seeking, social interaction, physical wellness, self-development, and novelty.

Tourist Experience (Y): measured through indicators related to emotional involvement, enjoyment, educational value, memorable experience, and overall satisfaction.

The data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The analysis consisted of two stages: measurement model evaluation and structural model evaluation. The measurement model was assessed through convergent validity, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), Composite Reliability (CR), and discriminant validity using the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT). The structural model was evaluated using the coefficient of determination (R^2), path coefficients, p-values, and mediation testing.

Result & Discussion

Respondent Characteristics

The study involved 110 beginner climbers. The demographic profile shows that most respondents were young climbers. Respondents aged 20–27 years represented the largest group, with 53 respondents or 48.18% of the sample. Respondents aged ≤ 19 years accounted for 13 respondents or 11.82%, while those aged 28–35 years accounted for 25 respondents or 22.73%. Respondents aged above 35 years represented 19 respondents or 17.27%.

These findings indicate that the majority of beginner climbers at Mount Seminung were Generation Z and young Millennial tourists. This demographic profile is relevant because younger tourists are generally more familiar with social media and are more likely to use digital platforms as sources of travel inspiration, self-expression, and social interaction.

Measurement Model Evaluation

Validity The measurement model results indicate that all constructs met the required validity and reliability criteria. The AVE values for Social Media, Climbing Motivation, and Tourist Experience were 0.607, 0.582, and 0.612, respectively. Since all AVE values exceeded the threshold of 0.50, the constructs fulfilled convergent validity.

The Composite Reliability values were also satisfactory. Social Media had a CR value of 0.885, Climbing Motivation had a CR value of 0.908, and Tourist Experience had a CR value of 0.887. Since all values exceeded 0.70, the constructs were considered reliable.

Discriminant validity was assessed using the HTMT criterion. The HTMT value between Social Media and Climbing Motivation was 0.781, between Social Media and Tourist Experience was 0.869, and between Climbing Motivation and Tourist Experience was 0.751. All values were below the threshold of 0.90, indicating that the constructs were empirically distinct from one another.

Table 2
Measurement Model Test (Outer Model)

Criteria	X1 (Media Social)	X2 (Motivation)	Y (Experience)	Status
AVE (≥ 0.50)	0.607	0.582	0.612	PASSED
CR (≥ 0.70)	0.885	0.908	0.887	PASSED

Table 3
Discriminant Validity (HTMT)

Correlation	Score HTMT (≤ 0.90)	Status
X1 $\leftrightarrow$ X2	0.781	PASSED
X1 $\leftrightarrow$ Y	0.869	PASSED
X2 $\leftrightarrow$ Y	0.751	PASSED

Table 4
Structural Model Test (Inner Model)

Criteria	Motivation (X2)	Experience (Y)	Description
R^2 (Predictive Power)	0.438	0.677	R^2Y Strong (≥ 0.67)

Table 5
Hypothesis Testing (Path)

Hypothesis	Relationship Path	Path Coeff. (β)	P-Value	Decision
H1	$X1 \rightarrow X2$	0.662	0.000	Accepted
H2	$X2 \rightarrow Y$	0.274	0.002	Accepted
H3 (Directly)	$X1 \rightarrow Y$	0.597	0.000	Accepted
H4 (Mediation)	$X1 \rightarrow X2 \rightarrow Y$	0.181	0.002	Accepted

Respondent Characteristics

The R^2 value for Climbing Motivation was 0.438, indicating that Social Media explained 43.8% of the variance in Climbing Motivation. This suggests a moderate predictive power. The R^2 value for Tourist Experience was 0.677, meaning that Social Media and Climbing Motivation jointly explained 67.7% of the variance in Tourist Experience. This indicates strong predictive power.

Hypothesis Testing

The hypothesis testing results show that all proposed hypotheses were supported. Social Media had a positive and significant effect on Climbing Motivation ($\beta = 0.662$, $p = 0.000$), supporting H1. Climbing Motivation had a positive and significant effect on Tourist Experience ($\beta = 0.274$, $p = 0.002$), supporting H2. Social Media also had a positive and significant direct effect on Tourist Experience ($\beta = 0.597$, $p = 0.000$), supporting H3.

The mediation test showed that the indirect effect of Social Media on Tourist Experience through Climbing Motivation was significant ($\beta = 0.181$, $p = 0.002$). Since the direct effect of Social Media on Tourist Experience remained significant, Climbing Motivation acted as a partial mediator. Therefore, H4 was supported.

Discussion

The findings confirm that social media plays a significant role in shaping the motivation of beginner climbers at Mount Seminung. The strong effect of Social Media on Climbing Motivation indicates that digital platforms function as important sources of inspiration and encouragement. Visual content, travel stories, and user-generated posts may stimulate the

desire to experience mountain climbing, especially among younger tourists. This finding is consistent with previous studies showing that social media exposure influences travel interest and destination choice (Umas, 2020; Auladina, 2024; Oudmine, 2025).

The significant effect of Climbing Motivation on Tourist Experience suggests that motivation influences how beginner climbers perceive and evaluate their journey. Climbers who are motivated by adventure, self-development, novelty, and social interaction are more likely to experience emotional involvement, enjoyment, and satisfaction during the climb. This supports the idea that motivation is not only a factor that encourages travel behavior but also a determinant of experience quality.

The direct effect of Social Media on Tourist Experience indicates that digital exposure can shape tourists' expectations before they arrive at the destination. When the actual experience at Mount Seminung matches the visual image and narratives encountered on social media, climbers may perceive the experience more positively. The strong direct relationship also suggests that social media influences not only the decision-making stage but also the interpretation and evaluation of the experience itself.

The mediation result shows that Climbing Motivation partially mediates the relationship between Social Media and Tourist Experience. This means that social media influences experience through two pathways. First, it directly shapes expectations and perceptions of the destination. Second, it indirectly enhances experience by stimulating motivation. This finding strengthens the theoretical argument that motivation acts as a psychological bridge between external digital stimuli and tourist experience.

From a practical perspective, the findings highlight the importance of responsible social media-based destination promotion. Destination managers should not only promote the scenic beauty of Mount Seminung but also provide accurate information about safety, climbing preparation, environmental ethics, and responsible behavior. Since beginner climbers may rely heavily on social media, digital promotion should balance aesthetic appeal with educational and safety-oriented content.

Conclusion

This study examined the influence of social media on climbing motivation and tourist experience among beginner climbers at Mount Seminung. The results show that social media has a positive and significant effect on climbing motivation. Climbing motivation also has a positive and significant effect on tourist experience. In addition, social media directly influences tourist experience and indirectly influences it through climbing motivation.

The findings confirm that climbing motivation serves as a partial mediator in the relationship between social media and tourist experience. This indicates that social media not only creates expectations and destination images but also activates internal psychological motivation that enhances the quality of the climbing experience.

Theoretically, this study contributes to adventure tourism and digital tourism literature by explaining the mechanism through which social media affects beginner climbers' experiences. Practically, the study suggests that destination managers and tourism stakeholders

should develop digital promotion strategies that are informative, realistic, and responsible. Promotional content should include not only attractive scenery but also safety guidance, route information, environmental awareness, and ethical climbing behavior.

This study has several limitations. First, the research used a cross-sectional design, so it captured respondents' perceptions at one point in time. Future studies may use longitudinal designs to examine how motivation and experience change as climbers gain more experience. Second, this study focused only on social media and motivation. Future research may include other variables such as perceived risk, facility quality, guide services, environmental conditions, and destination management. Third, the use of accidental sampling may limit the generalizability of the findings. Future studies may use broader and more diverse samples across different mountain destinations.

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Understanding Revisit Intention in Nature-Based Tourism: Integrating Travel Motivation and Tourist Experience in the Indonesian Context

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Abstract

Revisit intention is a key indicator of destination competitiveness and long-term sustainability in nature-based tourism. While previous studies have identified travel motivation and tourist experience as important determinants of tourist behavior, these constructs are often examined independently, resulting in a fragmented understanding of destination loyalty. This study aims to synthesize existing knowledge on the relationships among travel motivation, tourist experience, satisfaction, and revisit intention within the context of Indonesian nature-based tourism. Using an integrative literature review approach, the study critically examines and synthesizes theoretical and empirical research from tourism and hospitality literature. The thematic analysis reveals four major themes. First, travel motivation, comprising both push factors (e.g., escape, relaxation, and novelty seeking) and pull factors (e.g., natural attractions, biodiversity, and cultural authenticity), shapes tourists' expectations and destination choices. Second, tourist experience functions as a multidimensional construct involving cognitive, emotional, sensory, and social dimensions. Third, satisfaction emerges when tourism experiences successfully fulfill motivational expectations and serves as a crucial mechanism linking experience and loyalty. Finally, revisit intention develops through the interaction between motivational fulfillment, memorable experiences, and satisfaction. Based on these findings, the study proposes a conceptual framework in which travel motivation influences tourist experience, tourist experience enhances satisfaction, and satisfaction strengthens revisit intention. The review contributes to tourism theory by offering a holistic explanation of destination loyalty and provides practical implications for developing sustainable and competitive nature-based tourism destinations in Indonesia.

Keywords: *Travel Motivation; Tourist Experience; Tourist Satisfaction; Revisit Intention; Nature-Based Tourism; Destination Loyalty; Integrative Literature Review.*

Introduction

Nature-based tourism has emerged as one of the most important segments of the global tourism industry, driven by growing environmental awareness, increasing demand for authentic travel experiences, and a greater emphasis on sustainable destination development. Unlike conventional mass tourism, nature-based tourism encourages interactions with natural environments, biodiversity, and local communities while supporting conservation and sustainable resource management (Buckley, 2009). Indonesia, recognized as one of the world's most biodiverse countries, possesses substantial potential for nature-based tourism development through its national parks, tropical rainforests, marine ecosystems, volcanic landscapes, and community-based tourism destinations.

The long-term sustainability of nature-based tourism, however, depends not only on attracting first-time visitors but also on encouraging repeat visitation. Revisit intention has become a critical indicator of destination competitiveness because tourists who revisit destinations are more likely to generate stable economic benefits, engage in positive word-of-mouth communication, and support conservation initiatives (Chen & Chen, 2010). In the Indonesian context, where tourism contributes significantly to local livelihoods and regional development, understanding the determinants of revisit intention is essential for achieving both economic and sustainability objectives.

Previous tourism studies have identified travel motivation as one of the most influential antecedents of tourist behavior. Travel motivation refers to the psychological forces that encourage individuals to travel in pursuit of relaxation, escape, novelty, social interaction, self-development, or cultural enrichment (Crompton, 1979). These motivational drivers shape destination preferences and influence tourists' expectations before travel. Research suggests that when destinations successfully fulfill tourists' motivational needs, satisfaction and loyalty are more likely to develop (Anggraeni, 2019).

Another important determinant of revisit intention is tourist experience. Tourist experience encompasses the cognitive, emotional, sensory, and social responses generated through interactions with destinations, activities, and local communities. Memorable tourism experiences have been shown to strengthen emotional attachment, increase perceived value, and encourage repeat visitation (Kim et al., 2012). In nature-based tourism settings, experiences related to environmental engagement, cultural authenticity, and community interaction are particularly important because they contribute to meaningful and memorable travel outcomes (Yuliviona et al., 2025).

Although the relationships among travel motivation, tourist experience, satisfaction, and revisit intention have received considerable scholarly attention, the existing literature remains fragmented in several ways. First, many studies have focused primarily on travel motivation as an antecedent of tourist behavior (Crompton, 1979; Pearce & Lee, 2005), while others have examined tourist experience and memorable tourism experiences as predictors of satisfaction and loyalty (Kim et al., 2012; Anggraeni, 2019). Consequently, these streams of research have often evolved independently, providing limited understanding of how motivational factors and experiential outcomes interact to influence revisit intention. Second, previous studies have predominantly relied on empirical investigations of specific destinations, resulting in limited

theoretical integration across different tourism contexts. Third, despite the rapid growth of nature-based tourism in Indonesia, there remains a lack of review-based studies that synthesize existing knowledge and develop a comprehensive framework explaining revisit intention within this particular context.

This fragmentation creates an important theoretical gap. Existing research has established that travel motivation influences destination choice and that tourist experience affects satisfaction and loyalty; however, less attention has been given to understanding how these constructs collectively contribute to revisit intention. A more integrated perspective is needed to explain the sequential process through which travel motivations shape expectations, tourist experiences fulfill or fail to fulfill those expectations, satisfaction emerges, and revisit intention develops.

To address this gap, this study employs an integrative literature review approach to synthesize and critically evaluate existing research on travel motivation, tourist experience, and revisit intention in nature-based tourism. By integrating findings from diverse theoretical and empirical studies, the review seeks to develop a holistic understanding of destination loyalty formation and propose a conceptual framework explaining the relationships among these constructs. The study contributes to tourism literature by bridging previously disconnected research streams and provides practical insights for destination managers seeking to design memorable and sustainable tourism experiences that encourage repeat visitation.

Accordingly, this review is guided by the following research question: *How do travel motivation and tourist experience interact to influence revisit intention in nature-based tourism destinations in Indonesia?*

Methodology

Research Design

This study employs an Integrative Literature Review (ILR) approach to examine the relationships among travel motivation, tourist experience, and revisit intention in nature-based tourism. An integrative review enables researchers to synthesize findings from diverse theoretical and empirical studies to generate new conceptual perspectives and identify future research directions (Snyder, 2019). Unlike traditional narrative reviews, integrative reviews systematically evaluate and combine knowledge from multiple sources to produce a comprehensive understanding of a phenomenon.

The integrative review approach is particularly appropriate for this study because research on revisit intention in nature-based tourism remains fragmented across different theoretical traditions, including travel motivation theory, tourist experience theory, satisfaction theory, and destination loyalty research. By integrating these perspectives, the study seeks to develop a holistic framework explaining revisit intention in Indonesian nature-based tourism.

Literature Search Strategy

The review followed four stages adapted from Snyder (2019): problem formulation, literature search, data evaluation, and thematic synthesis.

The literature search focused on peer-reviewed journal articles, books, and conference proceedings published in tourism, hospitality, and consumer behavior journals. Relevant studies were identified using combinations of the following keywords:

“travel motivation”; “push and pull motivation”; “tourist experience”; “memorable tourism experience”; “tourist satisfaction”; “revisit intention”; “destination loyalty”; “nature-based tourism”; “ecotourism”; “Indonesia tourism”

The search emphasized publications that examined the relationships among motivation, tourist experience, satisfaction, and behavioral intentions within tourism contexts.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

The literature included in this review was selected based on several criteria to ensure its relevance and academic rigor. Studies were included if they examined one or more of the key constructs investigated in this review, namely travel motivation, tourist experience, tourist satisfaction, revisit intention, or destination loyalty. Eligible sources were limited to peer-reviewed journal articles, scholarly books, and other reputable academic publications that focused on tourism, ecotourism, or nature-based tourism contexts. Furthermore, studies were required to provide either conceptual insights or empirical evidence related to tourist behavioral intentions and destination loyalty.

Conversely, studies were excluded if they focused primarily on marketing or consumer behavior outside tourism settings, lacked sufficient academic rigor or methodological transparency, or did not address the relationships among the central constructs of travel motivation, tourist experience, satisfaction, and revisit intention. These criteria were applied to ensure that the selected literature contributed meaningfully to the development of an integrated understanding of tourist loyalty in nature-based tourism.

Data Analysis

The selected literature was analyzed using qualitative thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Each source was reviewed to identify recurring concepts, theoretical frameworks, and empirical findings. Codes were generated around themes such as push and pull motivations, memorable tourism experiences, and determinants of revisit intention. These codes were then synthesized into broader themes that highlight the relationships among the constructs.

The analysis emphasized interpretive synthesis, comparing and integrating findings across different studies to build a conceptual framework. This method is particularly useful in tourism research, as it allows for identifying patterns across diverse contexts while acknowledging cultural and environmental specificities (Denyer & Tranfield, 2009).

Result and Discussion

The integrative review identified four interconnected themes that explain the formation of revisit intention in nature-based tourism. The findings suggest that revisit intention is not determined by a single factor but emerges through a sequential process involving travel motivation, tourist experience, satisfaction, and destination loyalty.

Travel Motivation as the Foundation of Nature-Based Tourism Behavior

The first emerging theme highlights travel motivation as the primary driver of tourist behavior. Consistent with the push–pull framework proposed by Crompton (1979), tourists are motivated by internal psychological needs such as escape, relaxation, novelty seeking, social interaction, and self-development, while destination choices are influenced by external attributes including natural attractions, biodiversity, cultural authenticity, and environmental quality. Similar findings were reported by Pearce and Lee (2005), who argued that tourist motivations evolve throughout the travel career and influence both destination selection and expectations regarding travel outcomes.

Within the context of Indonesian nature-based tourism, motivational drivers extend beyond recreation and leisure. The reviewed studies indicate that many visitors seek authentic interactions with nature and local communities, reflecting growing interest in sustainability and meaningful travel experiences (Anggraeni, 2019; Yuliviona et al., 2025). This finding suggests that motivations in nature-based tourism are increasingly associated with personal enrichment, environmental awareness, and cultural engagement rather than solely with entertainment or novelty.

The literature further demonstrates that travel motivation establishes the expectations against which tourists subsequently evaluate their experiences. Consequently, understanding tourists' motivational profiles is essential because these motivations shape perceptions of destination quality and influence satisfaction levels.

Tourist Experience as the Fulfillment of Motivational Needs

The second theme identifies tourist experience as the mechanism through which travel motivations are fulfilled. Tourist experience is consistently conceptualized as a multidimensional construct encompassing cognitive, emotional, sensory, and social dimensions (Kim et al., 2012). In nature-based tourism, experiences are created through interactions with landscapes, wildlife, local communities, cultural activities, and environmental conservation initiatives.

Several studies emphasize the importance of memorable tourism experiences in generating positive destination evaluations (Kim et al., 2012; Anggraeni, 2019). Wildlife encounters, cultural immersion, eco-friendly activities, and adventure-based experiences were frequently identified as significant contributors to memorable travel experiences. These experiences create emotional attachment and strengthen tourists' perceptions of authenticity, which subsequently influence future behavioral intentions.

The reviewed literature suggests that memorable experiences are most likely to occur when destinations successfully satisfy tourists' underlying motivations. Tourists motivated by environmental appreciation, for example, derive greater value from conservation activities and biodiversity encounters, while tourists seeking cultural enrichment value interactions with local communities and traditional practices. This finding reinforces the argument that tourist experience should not be viewed independently from motivation but rather as the experiential manifestation of motivational fulfillment.

Tourist Satisfaction as the Mechanism Linking Experience and Loyalty

A third theme emerging from the literature is the mediating role of tourist satisfaction. Satisfaction consistently appears as the critical mechanism through which tourist experiences

influence revisit intention. Chen and Chen (2010) argue that satisfaction develops when tourists perceive that their experiences meet or exceed expectations, leading to favorable attitudes toward destinations.

The reviewed studies indicate that positive experiences alone do not necessarily guarantee revisit intention. Rather, tourists must evaluate those experiences as meaningful, valuable, and consistent with their pre-travel expectations. This process reflects the expectation-confirmation perspective, whereby satisfaction results from the alignment between anticipated and actual experiences.

In the context of nature-based tourism, satisfaction is strongly associated with authenticity, environmental quality, service quality, and opportunities for meaningful engagement with local communities (Anggraeni, 2019; Sari et al., 2025). Destinations that successfully combine natural attractions with high-quality experiences are more likely to generate tourist satisfaction and foster long-term loyalty.

These findings highlight satisfaction as a pivotal construct that bridges the gap between experience quality and behavioral outcomes. Consequently, destination managers should focus not only on creating memorable experiences but also on ensuring that those experiences align with visitor expectations and motivations.

Revisit Intention as an Expression of Destination Loyalty

The final theme concerns revisit intention as an expression of destination loyalty and sustainable tourism competitiveness. The literature consistently identifies revisit intention as one of the strongest indicators of tourist loyalty because it reflects a willingness to return to destinations and recommend them to others (Alegre & Cladera, 2009; Chen & Chen, 2010).

The findings suggest that revisit intention develops through the interaction of motivational fulfillment, memorable experiences, and satisfaction. Tourists who perceive that destinations have successfully fulfilled their motivations through authentic and meaningful experiences are more likely to develop emotional attachment and loyalty toward those destinations.

Within Indonesian nature-based tourism, revisit intention appears to be particularly influenced by environmental authenticity, biodiversity, cultural engagement, and community involvement. These attributes create distinctive destination identities that differentiate nature-based tourism destinations from conventional tourism products. Moreover, tourists who revisit destinations often demonstrate stronger commitment to environmental conservation and sustainable tourism practices, reinforcing the long-term sustainability of destination development (Yuliviona et al., 2025).

Towards an Integrated Framework of Revisit Intention

The thematic synthesis reveals that revisit intention should be understood as the outcome of a sequential and interconnected process. Travel motivation serves as the foundation of tourist behavior by shaping expectations and destination choice. Tourist experience functions as the mechanism through which these motivations are fulfilled. Satisfaction emerges when experiences meet or exceed expectations, while revisit intention represents the behavioral manifestation of satisfaction and destination loyalty.

Based on these findings, this review proposes an integrated conceptual framework in which travel motivation influences tourist experience, tourist experience enhances satisfaction, and satisfaction subsequently strengthens revisit intention. This framework contributes to tourism literature by integrating motivation theory and memorable tourism experience theory into a holistic explanation of destination loyalty formation in nature-based tourism.

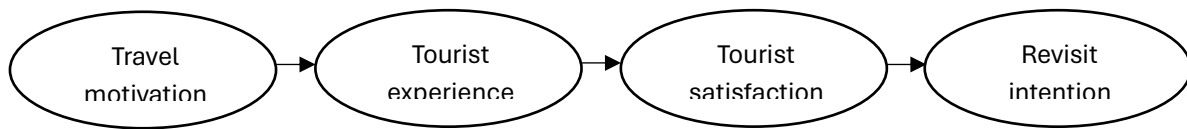


Figure 1. The integrated framework of revisit intention

This framework extends previous studies that examined these constructs independently and provides a more comprehensive understanding of how nature-based tourism destinations can foster visitor loyalty and long-term sustainability.

Conclusion

This integrative literature review examined the relationships among travel motivation, tourist experience, satisfaction, and revisit intention in the context of Indonesian nature-based tourism. The findings indicate that revisit intention is shaped through a sequential process in which travel motivations influence tourists' expectations, tourist experiences determine the extent to which these expectations are fulfilled, and satisfaction translates positive experiences into destination loyalty. Rather than functioning as independent determinants, travel motivation and tourist experience operate as interconnected constructs that collectively influence tourists' willingness to revisit a destination.

The review identified four major themes. First, travel motivation serves as the foundation of tourist behavior through both push factors, such as relaxation, escape, and novelty seeking, and pull factors, including natural attractions, biodiversity, and cultural authenticity. Second, tourist experience functions as the mechanism through which motivational needs are fulfilled. Third, satisfaction emerges as a critical mediating factor linking experiences with behavioral outcomes. Finally, revisit intention represents an expression of destination loyalty that develops when tourists perceive meaningful, authentic, and memorable experiences.

The study contributes to tourism literature by integrating travel motivation theory and tourist experience theory into a holistic framework explaining revisit intention in nature-based tourism. The proposed framework suggests that destination loyalty develops through the pathway of travel motivation, tourist experience, and satisfaction, providing a more comprehensive explanation than approaches that examine these constructs separately.

From a practical perspective, destination managers may design tourism products and experiences that align with visitors' motivations while delivering authentic, memorable, and sustainable experiences. Emphasizing environmental conservation, cultural authenticity, and community engagement can enhance visitor satisfaction and strengthen destination loyalty. Such strategies are particularly relevant for Indonesia, where nature-based tourism is increasingly positioned as a driver of sustainable development.

Although this review provides a comprehensive synthesis of existing knowledge, it is limited by its reliance on secondary sources and the contextual diversity of the reviewed studies. Future research should empirically test the proposed framework using quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-method approaches across different nature-based tourism destinations. Further studies may also explore additional factors, such as destination image, service quality, environmental attitudes, and digital engagement, that may influence revisit intention in sustainable tourism contexts.

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Government's Role in Managing Marine Tourism in Tanjung Karang Beach Area, Donggala Regency: Collaborative Governance Perspective

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Abstract

Marine tourism in Tanjung Karang Beach has become one of the leading sectors supporting local economic development in Donggala Regency. This Study aims to analyze the role of government in managing the marine tourism sector especially in Tanjung Karang Beach Area from a collaborative governance perspective by examining the starting conditions and interaction patterns among government, private sector, and local communities. Using a qualitative descriptive approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews, observation, and document analysis related to tourism policies and management practices in Tanjung Karang. The findings show that government, private sectors, and local communities already possess important prerequisites to support collaboration in managing the marine tourism sector. The private sector acts as the manager, local communities as operators, and the government acts primarily as regulator and protector through policy, and basic infrastructure. However, the absence of a sustainable and formal collaborative forum involving these stakeholders has become a critical missing link in the collaboration process that constrains efforts to build trust, strengthen mutual commitment, and develop a shared understanding regarding responsibilities and benefits in managing Tanjung Karang beach. This study recommends establishing an institutionalized multi-stakeholder forum as a strategic step to enhance the Collaborative Governance process.

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Keywords: *Collaborative Governance, Marine Tourism, Private Sectors, Tanjung Karang*

Introduction

Tourism has become one of the strategic sectors in global economic development, making a significant contribution to Gross Domestic Product (GDP), job creation, and foreign exchange earnings. The global tourism sector generated 10.4% of the world's GDP, equivalent to 319 million jobs in 2018, making it one of the largest and most dynamic industries in the world economy (Afrisal, 2022). Over the last decade, Central Sulawesi has begun to be recognized as an emerging marine tourism destination in eastern Indonesia due to its combination of bay landscapes, white sandy coastlines, and relatively well-preserved coral reef ecosystems (Hidayat N. 2022). Among these various attractions, the Tanjung Karang Beach Area in Donggala Regency stands out as one of the leading destinations, with coastal scenery, coral reefs, and marine tourism activities such as snorkeling, diving, and beach recreation that have attracted both domestic and international tourists.

Nationally, marine tourism is viewed as one of the strategic sectors capable of driving regional economic growth, particularly in coastal areas through job creation, increased household income, and development of micro and small enterprises around destinations. Studies on coastal tourism development in various regions of Indonesia show that if managed in a planned and sustainable manner, beach and marine tourism provides significant multiplier effects on other sectors such as fisheries, local transportation, accommodation, culinary businesses, and the creative economy (Nur Adyla Suriadi et al., 2022). In the context of Donggala Regency, the Tanjung Karang Beach Area has been utilized as a marine tourism zone that not only offers marine recreation experiences but also serves as a livelihood source for local communities through homestay services, boat rentals, diving businesses, and marine product trading integrated with tourism activities.

Tourism is a thriving and highly dynamic industry that has the potential to become a pivotal sector for stimulating economic growth especially in rural areas (Febrian, Sandi, Amalia, & Perdana, 2023). It plays a crucial role in job creation, boosting local revenues and living standards, and also serves as a catalyst for the development of other economic sectors (Surjadi, Purnaweni, & Astuti, 2022; Anggraheni, Nurjaman, & Kamil, 2022). Tourism governance strives to plan and coordinate objectives, and work with local stakeholders to define and develop targets. (Presenza et al., 2015), Encourage public-private cooperation, synergy, and valuable commitment, and support policymakers carry out sustainable development (Lim, 2019). Coastal tourism often generates controversy regarding environmental impacts, conflicts over space utilization with other sectors such as fisheries and conservation, and economic benefit distribution imbalances between large businesses and local communities (Papageorgiou, 2016). Explicitly, Law No. 10/2009 emphasizes the importance of cross-sector coordination, designation of strategic tourism areas, and empowerment of micro, small, and medium enterprises within and around destinations as part of efforts to achieve sustainable tourism (Anwar, 2024). However, the local government has several issues related to tourism governance, for example lack of human resources, transparency, accountability, and un-integrated governance (Sannu, Romadhon, & Amelia, 2021). The implementation of this policy positions local government as a key actor that must be capable of harmonizing the interests of various stakeholders—government, private sector, and community—within a collaborative governance framework to ensure coastal environmental sustainability, investment certainty,

and improved community welfare at marine destinations such as the Tanjung Karang Beach Area. The absence of a systematic tripartite communication forum between government, business actors, and communities has resulted in weak management synergy at the Tanjung Karang Beach Area, as evidenced by frequent conflicts over coastal land utilization, disorganized street vendor arrangements, and trust gaps between government and communities. In this context, current governance practices tend to be sectoral and top-down, yet to adopt collaborative governance principles that emphasize face-to-face dialogue, trust building, and shared commitment in managing common resources, as highlighted in various studies on collaborative coastal tourism governance in Indonesia and the Asia-Pacific region.

Over the past two decades or so, a new strategy of governance has been developed called "collaborative governance". This model of governance brings many stakeholders together in a forum with public bodies to be involved in decision making. (Ansell & Gash, 2018) Theory "collaborative governance" emerged in response to the failure of downstream implementation and the high cost and politicization of regulation. Ansel and Gash have reviewed 137 cases of collaborative governance across different policy sectors and identify critical variables that influence the success of such collaborations (Ansell & Gash, 2018). The importance of studying collaborative governance in coastal tourism development in Donggala Regency is also driven by global and national trends toward community-based tourism approaches and local community empowerment as key actors in destination management. Coastal community empowerment-based tourism models in Indonesia have proven effective in developing local economies, increasing awareness of environmental and natural resource protection, and providing new business opportunities for local communities that can improve their living standards (Mahadiansar et al., 2023). However, implementing this concept still requires attention and cooperation from all parties to change public behavior and perceptions in running tourism businesses, as well as the government's role in supervision and policy formulation in the tourism sector.

Within the theoretical framework of collaborative governance, Ansell and Gash (in Mahadiansar et al., 2023) identify four key elements that influence collaboration success: starting conditions, institutional design, facilitative leadership, and intermediate outcomes. Therefore, in this study researchers will use a collaborative governance approach by Ansel and Gash to analyze the role of government in the Tanjung Karang Beach sector. Brighthouse (2006) argues that collaborative governance and other collective activity can be useful tools in rebuilding a new generation of more just and democratic systems with an additive to social movements. The author also believes that collaborative governance can and should provide a platform for democratic self governance that can serve as a forum to reconcile emerging interests as they collide with existing institutions.

This study also aims to analyze the role of government in managing the marine tourism sector especially in Tanjung Karang Beach Area from a collaborative governance perspective by examining the starting conditions and interaction patterns among government, private sector, and local. Additionally, this research will identify the driving and inhibiting factors of collaborative governance in coastal tourism development in Donggala Regency, and formulate strategy recommendations to strengthen collaboration among stakeholders in supporting

sustainable tourism development that provides optimal economic, social, and environmental benefits for local communities.

Methodology

This study uses a qualitative approach because this study intends to understand phenomena about what is experienced by research subjects such as behavior, perception, motivation, action, and others. Qualitative research has two main objectives, the first is to describe and explore (to describe and explore) and the second describes and explain (to describe and explore) in outline, research can be grouped according to several aspects. Some of these aspects are aspects of objectives, aspects of methods, and aspects of study. The type of research used is a case study (case study) is research carried out "unity system" this unity can be in the form of programs, activities, events, or groups of individuals bound by a certain place, time, or bond. Case study is a study directed to collect data, take meaning, gain understanding of the case. Cases do not represent the population at all, the conclusions of case studies only apply to those cases, each case has its own characteristics that are different from other cases.

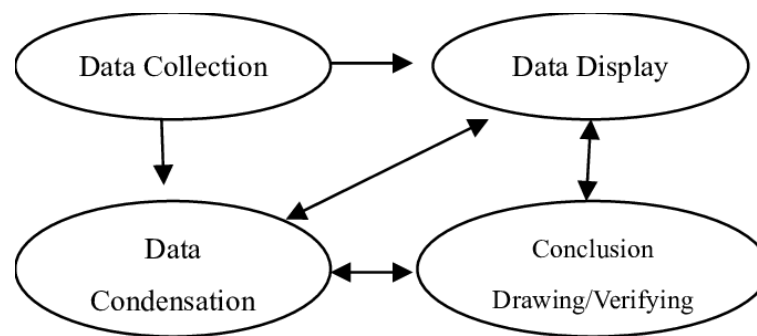


Figure 1. Interactive Model of Qualitative data analysis

Source: (Miles et al., 2014)

In the data collection technique, the authors use an interview technique which will then obtain primary data from the results of the interview. By using interview techniques as one of the techniques to obtain data, the relationship between researchers and sources / informants is independent. The other primary data were collected through observation. On the other hand, secondary data were collected through documents. The data is analyzed. The data analysis held between the researchers by cross interpreting the same several qualitative data from interviews and documents. The study assigns a higher priority to common ideals, motivations, and institutional capabilities when addressing the "how" and "why" concerns. Researchers looked at "how" and "why" from the discourses of the related Bira tourism stakeholders to see the patterns with a detailed and thorough triangulation. In addition, data analysis processes are consistently held with a simultaneous connection between data collection, data display, data condensation, and conclusions drawing, according to Miles et al (2014).

Result and Discussion

The results of this study consist of data collected to examine collaboration between Government, Private Sector, and Community in managing Tanjung Karang marine tourism. Researchers interviewed sources representing the government, namely the Donggala Regency Tourism Office, private sector parties such as hotel and restaurant managers, and tourism service providers, as well as local communities residing in the Tanjung Karang area. The questions asked were based on the research problems, which broadly examined the initial conditions of Tanjung Karang marine tourism management followed by the collaboration process in destination management.

Tanjung Karang Beach tourism serves as one of the sources of local revenue (PAD) for the Donggala Regency government. Therefore, efforts are needed to enhance economic growth and destination management. Ansell & Gash (2008) argue that a new governance strategy has developed over the past two decades, namely "collaborative governance." This collaboration model brings many policymakers together in a forum involved in decision-making and achieving common goals.

Collaboration Process: Initial Conditions, Process, and Outcomes

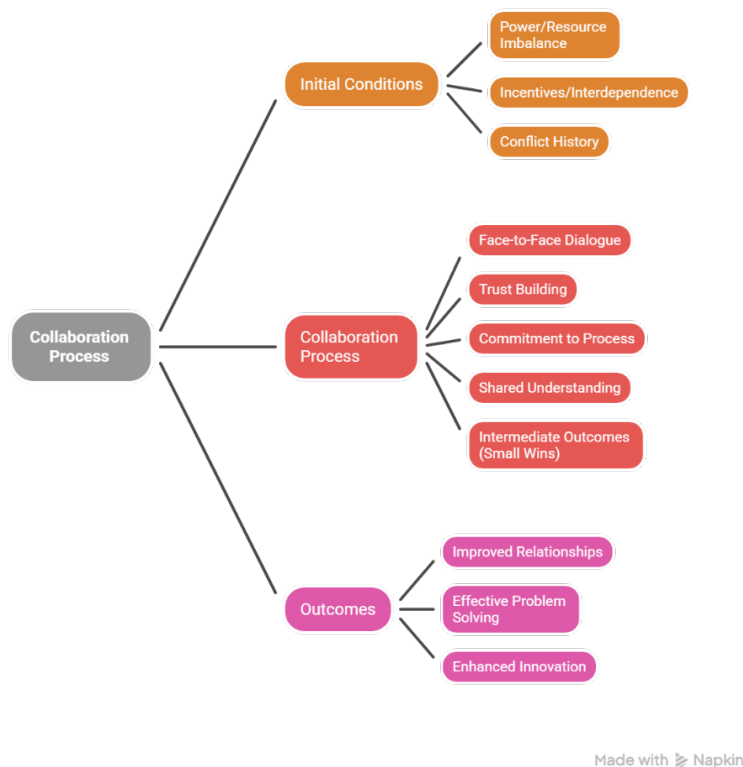


Figure 2. Theoretical Framework: Collaborative Governance (Ansell & Gash, 2008)

The government in collaboration with the community has issued a number of tour packages to support the development of tourism activities themselves. These activities include promotions, tourist destinations, main and supporting facilities, tourism products and human

resources. Thanks to the collaboration between the government and the community, currently there are various tourist objects that have been known to foreign countries and tourism objects that are in the promotion process which of course have their respective potentials and attractions (Sabatina, 2018).

Initial Conditions to Collaborate in Tanjung Karang Beach

The initial conditions of collaboration in managing marine tourism in the Tanjung Karang Area are heavily influenced by the roles, resources, and incentives possessed by each stakeholder. In this context, the local government through the Donggala Tourism Office occupies the position of regulator, facilitator, and basic infrastructure provider with relatively greater policy authority and budget access compared to other actors, thus tending to become the most dominant party in determining the direction of destination management. The government's main incentives in the form of increased regional revenue (PAD) and accelerated regional development drive focus on increasing visits and investment, which do not always align with the capacities and interests of other actors at the grassroots level.

Table 1. Initial conditions of stakeholders

Stakeholder	Role	Resources	Incentives
Government (Dinas Pariwisata Donggala)	Regulator, Facilitator, Infrastructure Provider	Policy authority, budget	↑ PAD, regional development
Private Sector (Hotel, Operators)	Service Provider, Investor	Financial, expertise	Business profit, market expansion
Community (Local residents, fishermen)	Resource Stewards, Labor	Local knowledge, land rights	Welfare improvement, sustainability

The private sector, consisting of accommodation managers and tourism operators, plays the role of service providers and investors with primary strengths in financial resources and tourism service expertise, yet their bargaining position remains dependent on regulations and facilities provided by the government. Their incentives in the form of business profits and market expansion drive demands for regulatory certainty, quality infrastructure, and a well-organized destination environment, thus when formal dialogue spaces are limited, their potential contributions to innovation and service quality improvement become suboptimal. At the same time, local communities—including coastal residents and fishermen—act as resource stewards and labor suppliers who possess local knowledge and, in some cases, land rights claims around the tourism area. Their incentives focus on welfare improvement and environmental sustainability, but limited access to formal decision-making processes makes their participation more reactive than integrated into planning, thus creating potential tensions

regarding space utilization, economic benefit distribution, and coastal resource management practices.

This initial configuration, characterized by the dominance of the government's regulatory capacity, the financial and technical strengths of the private sector, and the depth of local knowledge within communities, creates an asymmetric collaboration structure. From the perspective of Ansell & Gash (2008), this power and resource imbalance has the potential to affect the level of incentives and trust among actors, while also determining how far the collaborative governance process can evolve toward more inclusive and sustainable management patterns in the Tanjung Karang Beach Area.

Table 2. Strength and Interest of Stakeholders

Stakeholders	Strength	Interest
Government (Donggala Tourism Office)	Authority to create tourism-related regulations and policies; Authority for local budget allocation; Utilization of regional apparatus human resources; Mandate for tourism object management rights	Economic growth enhancement in Donggala; PAD increase; Development and management of Tanjung Karang.
Private Sectors	Assets, human resources, and financial distribution; Conveying criticism and suggestions to government representing collective interests	Business profit increase; Customer safety and comfort; Market penetration in Tanjung Karang area
Community	Right to express aspirations through collective action	Welfare improvement and obtaining decent livelihoods; Cleanliness and beauty of Tanjung Karang environment

Processed by author, 2025

The power differences possessed by the government, private sector, and community ultimately result in unequal participation among stakeholders. The government tends to act as the leader, while the private sector and community become decision recipients. This aligns with Ansell & Gash's (2008) theory, which states that collaborative governance processes tend to be manipulated by stronger actors. Additionally, with limited skills and expertise to engage in technical discussions, the private sector and community ultimately become disadvantaged parties.

Second, incentives in collaboration. Power and resource imbalances will affect group incentives to participate in collaborative processes (Ansell & Gash, 2008; Gunton & Day, 2003; Imperial, 2005). In the Tanjung Karang beach area, all three parties—government, private sector, and community—have their respective motivations for collaboration and mutual dependence to achieve these incentives.

Third, the history of conflict and cooperation. From interviews with various related sources, researchers found that conflicts and cooperation between government, private sector, and community have occurred, particularly related to land, street vendors, cleanliness, and area arrangement. Conflicts generally arise due to community behavior that does not understand policy objectives, thus in facing conflicts as initial conditions that hinder collaboration, Ansell & Gash (2008) emphasize that facilitative leadership is crucial to unite stakeholders and encourage them to engage with each other in a collaborative spirit.

Collaboration Process in Tanjung Karang Marine Tourism Management

The collaboration process in the management of Tanjung Karang marine tourism can be understood through the collaborative governance framework proposed by Ansell and Gash (2008), which views collaboration as an iterative and cyclical process. In this process, governance develops gradually through continuous interaction among stakeholders. Feedback from initial conditions and each stage of collaboration may influence subsequent collaboration either positively or negatively. Since communication is the core element of collaboration, Ansell and Gash emphasize that the collaborative process begins with face-to-face dialogue among the actors involved.

In the context of Tanjung Karang marine tourism management, face-to-face dialogue has been carried out between the government, community, and private sector, although its intensity and scope still vary. Direct communication between the government and the community is reflected in policy socialization, problem-solving approaches, and meetings that provide space for the community to express their aspirations. The community has also conveyed its concerns and expectations directly through meetings with the Tourism Office and informal discussions. However, direct communication between the private sector and the community remains limited, particularly in discussing shared goals and joint efforts for tourism management. Therefore, the government needs to act as a facilitator by providing a forum where all stakeholders can meet, communicate directly, and collectively discuss the management of Tanjung Karang marine tourism. This is in line with Ansell and Gash's (2008) view that collaboration requires non-governmental stakeholders to have real responsibility for policy outcomes, meaning that stakeholders should be directly involved in the decision-making process.

Trust building is another important aspect of the collaboration process. Building trust requires time because collaboration depends on continuous communication and the ability of stakeholders to adjust to current conditions, especially when past conflicts or differences of interest may re-emerge. In general, trust among the government, private sector, and community in Tanjung Karang marine tourism management has begun to develop. Nevertheless, trust between the private sector and the community still needs to be strengthened. Ansell and Gash (2008) argue that policymakers and stakeholders must allocate sufficient time to build trust

effectively. Without adequate trust, collaboration may become difficult to sustain because each actor may be reluctant to participate openly or commit fully to collective goals.

Commitment to the collaborative process can be observed through the roles and contributions of each stakeholder in managing Tanjung Karang marine tourism. The government, through the Tourism Office, demonstrates its commitment by preparing strategic plans, creating innovations, and making efforts to improve the development of Tanjung Karang as a marine tourism destination. The private sector also shows commitment by providing tourism services and participating in tourism management activities. Meanwhile, the community contributes by maintaining environmental cleanliness, including collecting scattered waste, and expressing readiness to relocate if the government provides a more strategic and appropriate location. According to Ansell and Gash (2008), commitment is closely related to stakeholder motivation in carrying out collaboration. This commitment is influenced by mutual recognition, joint appreciation, trust among actors, ownership of the collaborative process, and interdependence among stakeholders.

Shared understanding among stakeholders is also essential in supporting effective collaboration. Ansell and Gash (2008) explain that shared understanding refers to a shared mission, shared purpose, shared objectives, and shared vision. In the management of Tanjung Karang marine tourism, the government, private sector, and community generally understand each other's characteristics, interests, and needs. However, this understanding still needs to be strengthened and directed toward a more concrete common vision. The unification of perspectives and goals should be carried out through regular face-to-face interaction and periodic communication. Such efforts are necessary to minimize misunderstandings among stakeholders and to ensure that all actors move toward the same direction in managing and developing Tanjung Karang marine tourism.

The collaboration process has also produced several intermediate outcomes. Collaboration tends to be easier to maintain when its goals and benefits are concrete and when small achievements, or "small wins," can be obtained. These small wins may provide positive feedback to the collaborative process and contribute to the development of trust and commitment among stakeholders (Ansell & Gash, 2008; Vangen & Huxham, 2003). In the case of Tanjung Karang marine tourism, intermediate outcomes can be seen in efforts to address waste management and street vendor arrangement. The presence of waste collection officers in the tourism area and the arrangement of street vendors indicate that collaboration has produced initial results. However, further efforts are still needed to achieve more comprehensive and sustainable outcomes in the management of Tanjung Karang marine tourism.

Conclusion

Collaboration between government, private sector, and community in managing Tanjung Karang Beach tourism in Donggala Regency has gone through all stages or processes of creating collaboration. Both direct communication (*face-to-face dialogue*), trust building (*trust building*), commitment to the process (*commitment to the process*), shared understanding (*shared understanding*), and intermediate outcomes (*intermediate outcomes*) have been carried out by the government, private sector, and community. However, these variables have not been

comprehensively fulfilled due to weaknesses in the direct communication stage. Communication only involves two parties, either government and private sector or government and community. Direct communication does not occur between private sector and community due to the absence of a forum that brings all three together, thus trust building, commitment, and intermediate outcomes stages are not achieved between private sector and community. Communication also occurs conditionally, without periodic communication that compels each party to allocate time for interaction and objectively understanding one another, ultimately preventing the three elements from collaborating optimally.

However, the limitation in this study still exists around case study method weakness issues compared to longitudinal and Participatory Action study. The limitation also exists in terms of theoretical basis. This research does not utilize Ansell and Gash's (2008) framework holistically. Researchers did not use institutional aspects (e.g. participatory, inclusiveness, forum exclusiveness, etc), facilitative leadership aspects (e.g. empowerment), and ultimate outcome. Therefore, future research needs to utilize longitudinal or/and participatory study to fully understand the discourse that occurs between stakeholders in the collaboration process. In addition, future study has to see collaborative phenomena holistically that include institutional aspect, facilitative leadership, and outcome in order to reach a better understanding of collaborative governance in Tanjung Karang Beach case.

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Understanding the Role of Green Hotels in Advancing Sustainable Tourism: A Comprehensive Review of Empirical Evidence

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Abstract

This study aims to explore how Green Hotel practices contribute to the Sustainable Tourism Goals (SDGs). The investigation was conducted through a comprehensive review of research articles published in reputable international journals between 2012 and 2024. Using a literature review approach, this study followed a structured method to identify, classify, and analyze articles based on their alignment with the three pillars of sustainability: Environmental, Social, and Economic. This methodological framework enabled a systematic assessment of how green hotel practices address different dimensions of sustainability across various contexts and timeframes. The findings reveal that environmental sustainability dominates the literature, appearing most frequently with a focus on energy efficiency, waste reduction, and limiting plastic use. Economic sustainability emerged as the second most prevalent theme, covering green brand image, guest loyalty, and willingness to pay premium prices for environmentally friendly services. Social aspects were the least addressed dimension in previous literature, primarily focusing on consumer behavior, generational attitudes, and social norms—often examined using behavioral models such as the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R). This study contributes to the growing body of knowledge on sustainable tourism by highlighting the uneven attention given to the three pillars of sustainability in green hotel research. The predominance of environmental considerations suggests a need for more balanced approaches that integrate social and economic dimensions more thoroughly. These findings provide valuable insights for hotel managers, policymakers, and researchers seeking to develop more comprehensive sustainable tourism strategies that align with broader SDGs, while identifying critical gaps in current research that future studies should address.

Keywords: Green Hotels, Sustainable Tourism Goals, Hotel, Theory of Planned Behavior

Introduction

Sustainable tourism has emerged as a strategic response to the increasing environmental damage caused by the tourism and hospitality industries. The hospitality sector, as one of the most resource-intensive segments of tourism, is increasingly being challenged to adopt environmentally responsible practices. Green hotels—defined as lodging facilities that actively implement sustainable practices such as energy efficiency, water conservation, and waste minimization—are playing a key role in this transformation. Numerous empirical studies underscore the role of environmentally friendly practices in shaping traveler behavior, enhancing hotel competitiveness, and supporting the broader sustainability agenda (Kim et al., 2016).

While the conceptual understanding of green hotels is growing, their practical contribution to advancing sustainable tourism requires systematic investigation. Previous research has examined various dimensions of green hotels—from consumer perceptions and willingness to pay (Wiastuti et al., 2022), to the influence of environmentally friendly practices on brand image and customer loyalty (Artha et al., 2023) (Moise et al., 2020). However, empirical evidence remains fragmented, limiting our understanding of the overall effectiveness and consistency of green hotel strategies in different contexts and among different consumer groups.

Several studies have highlighted that the implementation of environmentally friendly practices not only reduces environmental impact but also improves economic performance and social legitimacy for hotels (Merli et al., 2019; Parwati & Sagitarini, 2022). (Millar et al., 2012) found that both business and leisure travelers value eco-friendly attributes, which influences their accommodation choices. Similarly, (Herini et al., 2024) emphasized the importance of structured green hotel standards such as those in the ASEAN framework, noting the challenges of implementation in small-scale hotels.

An important dimension of research on eco-friendly hotels relates to consumer behavior, specifically how eco-friendly practices shape behavioral intentions, revisit intentions, and word-of-mouth (Trang et al., 2018; Wang et al., 2018). Psychological models such as the Theory of Planned Behavior (S. S. Yeh et al., 2020) offer valuable perspectives for analyzing these relationships, but integration across studies is limited. Some findings also suggest a generational gap in attitudes toward eco-friendly hotels, with Generation Y being more aware but more skeptical (Huh & Chang, 2017).

In the context of sustainable development, aligning green hotels with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is another emerging topic (Abdou et al., 2020). The environmental and socioeconomic pillars of the SDGs have received attention in studies exploring how environmentally friendly practices not only impact hotel performance but also contribute to community-based tourism and local procurement initiatives (Merli et al., 2018; Parwati & Sagitarini, 2022).

However, there are still inconsistencies across empirical studies regarding the definition, indicators, and measurement of the impact of green practices. For example, (Lee & Cheng, 2018) proposed a minimalist approach to SERVQUAL in green hotels, while others applied

regression-based models to examine perceived quality and satisfaction (Assaker et al., 2020; Moise et al., 2020).

Given the diverse contexts, methods, and conceptual frameworks used, a systematic review is urgently needed to consolidate findings and provide clearer guidance for academics, practitioners, and policymakers. This study aims to fill this gap by synthesizing two decades of empirical research (2012–2024) on green hotels and mapping their role in advancing sustainable tourism. Through a literature review of 20 reviewed articles, the study identifies key drivers, barriers, and outcomes of green hotel implementation.

Ultimately, understanding the role of eco-friendly hotels is crucial not only for enhancing the sustainability of the tourism industry but also for aligning tourism growth with environmental responsibility and consumer expectations. By integrating insights from a variety of cross-regional empirical studies and analytical models, this research contributes to a more coherent body of knowledge and supports the development of more effective sustainability strategies in the hospitality sector.

Methodology

This study employed a qualitative approach using descriptive analysis techniques. This study identified publications related to Green Hotels to consolidate empirical evidence on the role of green hotels in relation to the three main pillars of the SDGs: Environmental, Social, and Economic Sustainability. Qualitative data collection techniques were conducted through exploration of various literature (library research), such as books and journals (Creswell, 2003).

The article search tool used by researchers is Harzing's Publish or Perish. Harzing's Publish or Perish is a software tool that can be used for free that simplifies the process of searching for articles by being neatly arranged and connected to various publication sites (until now the metadata reached in Harzing's Publish or Perish are Google Scholar, Microsoft Academic, Scopus, and Web of Science so that it makes it easier for researchers to search for articles that are used as reference material in literature studies.

The methodology used was to identify and classify articles published between 2012 and 2024, a period chosen due to the increasing global attention to sustainability and green tourism practices during that decade. Source selection was based on relevance to key themes such as green hotel attributes, consumer behavior, sustainability indicators, and alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

To ensure consistency and reliability, the review process followed the structured steps proposed by (Otoo & Kim, 2020) which included: (1) identification of relevant materials, (2) collection of eligible studies, and (3) examination and categorization of selected publications. The main objective was to extract and classify the attributes and outcomes of green hotel initiatives according to their contribution to sustainable tourism.

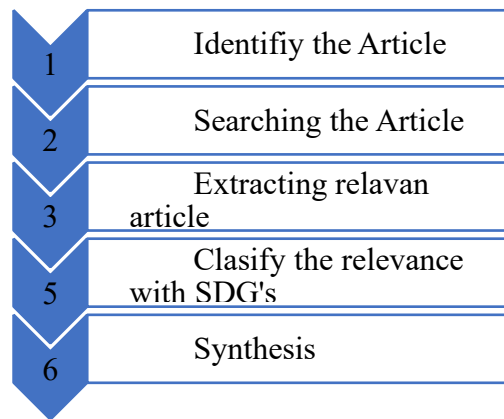


Image 1 : Data Processing Process

Source: processed by the researcher

The data processing stage was carried out in six systematic stages, as outlined in Figure 1: (1) article identification, (2) article search, (3) article selection, (4) attribute criteria extraction, (5) sustainable tourism classification, and (6) synthesis of findings. These steps were designed to ensure methodological rigor and transparency, thus enabling future researchers to repeat the study under the same conditions.

Results

Over the past decade, green hotels have been increasingly recognized as important contributors to the realization of sustainable tourism goals. As the tourism and hospitality industries face increasing pressure to reduce their environmental impact while aligning with global sustainability frameworks such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), academic interest in green hotel practices has grown significantly. The selected articles encompass a variety of methodological approaches—from surveys and regression analyses to theoretical reviews and mixed methods—and address dimensions such as consumer behavior, green brand image, operational practices, and organizational strategy. By mapping these studies against three aspects of sustainability, this review not only identifies thematic concentrations and methodological trends but also reveals existing gaps in the literature, particularly regarding the economic dimension of sustainability. The matrix below presents a structured summary of each article, including its methodological orientation, primary focus, and the sustainability aspect it addresses, thus offering a comprehensive foundation for advancing academic discourse and the practical implementation of sustainable practices in the hospitality sector.

Table 1. Comparison of Green Hotel from Experts

No	Tittle	Year	Authors	Main Focus	Keywords	Relevance to Sustainable Tourism
1	Importance of Green Hotel Attributes	2012	(Millar et al., 2012)	Green attributes preference	Green attributes, travelers	Identifying green hotel attributes that support sustainable practices

No	Tittle	Year	Authors	Main Focus	Keywords	Relevance to Sustainable Tourism
2	Influence of Recent Amenities and Green Practices	2016	(Kim et al., 2016)	Amenities and revisit intention	Green practices, amenities	Assessing the impact of green facilities and practices on revisit intentions
3	How Do Green Attributes Elicit Behavior	2018	(Trang et al., 2018)	Pro-environmental behavior	Green cues, emotion	Analyzing pro-environmental behavior mechanisms through green attributes
4	Measuring SERVQUAL of Green Hotels	2018	(Lee & Cheng, 2018)	Green service quality	SERVQUAL, minimalism	Measuring service quality as a reflection of hotel sustainability
5	Impact of Green Practices in Coastal Tourism	2018	(Merli et al., 2018)	Sustainability in coastal tourism	Eco-innovation, impact	Evaluating the contribution of green practices to sustainable coastal destinations
6	Green Hotel Adoption: Personal or Social?	2019	(Balaji & Jiang, 2019)	Adoption motivators	Adoption, social norm	Explaining the influence of social pressure and personal choice on green hotel adoption
7	Why Should Hotels Go Green?	2019	(Merli et al., 2019)	Guest perspective on going green	Customer experience	Exploring consumer perceptions of green hotels as a sustainable strateg
8	Examining an Integrated Model of Green Image, PQ, Trust	2020	(Assaker et al., 2020)	Green image, PQ, loyalty	PQ, PQ, trust, satisfaction	Building an integrative model of green image and loyalty fo sustainability
9	Factors influencing willingness of customers of environmentally friendly hotels to pay a price premium	2019	(González-rodríguez & Díaz-fernández, 2019)	WTP and Value Based Norm Theory	Trust, WTP, GHA	Investigating willingness to pay more for green hotels as concret support
10	Extraversion and Agreeableness traits in Gen Y attitude and WTP for GH	2016	(Tang & Lam, 2016)	extraversion and agreeableness personality traits on GenerationY(Gen Y) consumers' attitudes toward and willingness to pay	Personality, Generation Y Agreeableness, Willingness to pay, Extraversion, Green attitudes	Shows that Generation Y is willing to pay more for sustainable consumption.

No	Tittle	Year	Authors	Main Focus	Keywords	Relevance to Sustainable Tourism
11	Reinterpreting the Theory of Planned Behavior and Its Application to Green Hotels	2020	(S. S. Yeh et al., 2020)	Green hotel intention using TPB	TPB, intention, attitude, social norm	Using the TPB model to theoretically and practically explain green hotel stay behavior
12	Water Conservation and Waste reduction management for increase guest loyalty	2018	(Han et al., 2018)	role of guests' perceptions regarding hotel practices of water conservation and waste reduction management	Waste reduction management, Water conservation management, Green Hotels	Encourage hotel guests to participate in environmentally friendly practices, reflecting more responsible consumption.
13	Green Practices antecedents of functional value, guest satisfaction and loyalty	2020	(Moise et al., 2020)	Testing relationship between Green Practices to Guest Satisfaction & Loyalty	Green Practices, Satisfaction, Revisit Intention	Driving changes in guest and management behavior to select and manage accommodation sustainably.
14	Visitors eco-innovation adoption and Green Consumption Behavior	2023	(Chen et al., 2023)	Identifying Green Hotel Attribute	Sustainable hospitality Green hotel attributes, Diffusion of Innovation	This study encourages hotels to provide facilities and communications that facilitate environmentally friendly consumption behavior.
15	An Investigation of Gen Y Travelers Believe and Attitude Towards GH Practices	2017	(Huh & Chang, 2017)	Generation Y travellers' beliefs and attitudes towards green hotel practices	Generation Y; Millennials; green hotel; green practices; green attributes	Providing insights for hotels to develop sustainability strategies based on young consumer preferences.
16	Building social entrepreneurship for the hotel industry by promoting environmental education	2016	(S.-S. Yeh et al., 2016)	Investigate how Environmental Education can influence motivation and revisit intention	Tourism, Tourism, Green Hotel management, Green Hotel Education	The emphasis on environmental education is directly linked to SDG 4, especially target 4.7, which is to ensure that all people acquire the knowledge and skills to support sustainable development.
17	An-exploratory-study-on-tourist-perception-of-green-hotels-Empirical-evidence-from-Thailand	2024	(Fuchs & Prideaux, 2024)	Exploring Tourist Perception of GH	Green hotels, sustainable tourism, empirical evidence	Provides a comprehensive review on how green hotels support environmental, economic, and socio-cultural sustainability

No	Tittle	Year	Authors	Main Focus	Keywords	Relevance to Sustainable Tourism
18	Green marketing orientation: achieving sustainable development in green hotel management	2019	(Chung, 2019)	GMO, CSR and Stakeholder influence to Sustainable Program	Green hotel, Green marketing, Sustainable	Loyalty Consumer can create b Green Image
19	Fostering green customer citizenship behavioral intention through green hotel pracrices	2024	(Van et al., 2024)	examines how perceptions of green hotel practices boost customer citizenship behavioral intentions (green CCBi)	Green hotel practices; pride; moral elevation; green customer citizenship behavioral intentions	Sustainability practices ar designed with emotional an psychological aspects in min and have long-term potential i shaping environmentally friendl behavior.
20	Preferences and willingness to pay for green hotel Attributes in Tourist Choice Behavior	2014	(Chia-jung et al., 2014)	Green attrib-utes preference	Choice experimen environmental hotel, gree consumer behaviors, gree marketing	The emphasis on willingness t pay for environmentally friendl services supports economi incentives for a greener tourist sector.

A comprehensive review of 20 journal articles on green hotels revealed that the concept of sustainable tourism is primarily approached through three interrelated dimensions: environmental sustainability, socio-cultural awareness, and economic viability. These aspects are not mutually exclusive, but highlight different priorities and approaches across studies.

Environmental Sustainability – Addressed in 19 Articles

Environmental sustainability emerges as the most dominant theme across the literature. A total of 19 out of 20 articles explicitly explore how green hotels contribute to reducing environmental impacts. These contributions include energy and water conservation, waste reduction, limiting plastic usage, and adopting eco-friendly operational practices. Research articles such as those focused on green action, green food, and green donation highlight hotel efforts in recycling, sourcing local organic ingredients, and educating guests about sustainability.

Several studies delve deeper into the behavioral implications, describing how guests adapt to environmental cues after eco-friendly practices are implemented. For example, research (Merli et al., 2019) found that guests place greater value on eco-friendly practices that directly benefit them, such as the provision of organic and local food, recycling facilities, and energy savings that do not compromise comfort. Other research emphasizes environmental values and perceptions in shaping customer loyalty and revisit intentions. This widespread

emphasis on environmental responsibility underscores the fundamental role it plays in justifying eco-friendly hotel operations. In their research (Assaker et al., 2020), they developed a model linking green image, perceived quality, satisfaction, trust, and guest loyalty. This model demonstrates that guest loyalty can be significantly influenced by eco-friendly strategies integrated with high service quality. This also aligns closely with global efforts to mitigate climate change through environmentally responsible tourism practices.

Socio-cultural Sustainability – Addressed in 9 Articles

The socio-cultural aspects of sustainable tourism were the second most prominent theme, reflected in 9 of the 20 articles reviewed. Studies in this category often investigate how eco-friendly hotels influence, and are influenced by, human behavior, cultural values, generational attitudes, and social norms. Much of the literature focuses on younger generations—particularly Millennials (Gen Y) and Generation Z—who have been shown to have a stronger environmental awareness and moral obligation towards sustainable consumption.

Articles in this area generally use behavioral frameworks such as the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) to explore how factors such as subjective norms, social pressure, and environmental image influence decision-making. For example, one study confirmed that word-of-mouth (WOM) and environmental beliefs are key determinants of hotel customer engagement among millennials, thus supporting the spread of environmentally conscious social values. Furthermore, socio-cultural studies highlight the crucial role of education and awareness in driving consumer behavior. Hotels that actively engage guests through informational campaigns and participatory practices tend to achieve higher acceptance and alignment with sustainable tourism goals.

Economic Sustainability – Addressed in 12 Articles

These studies explore how environmentally friendly practices influence consumers' willingness to pay, justification for premium prices, customer loyalty, and overall brand image. Especially in the context of high-end resorts or hotels, sustainability can be a competitive differentiator.

One article demonstrates how integrating eco-friendly branding into hotel marketing not only improves customer retention but also allows businesses to position themselves as forward-thinking and responsible companies. Another article explores the return on investment (ROI) of eco-friendly practices in terms of repeat visits and long-term profitability. However, the relatively limited focus on economic implications in the literature indicates a gap that future research may need to address. This suggests the need for a more balanced framework in which sustainability is driven not only by ethics and the environment but also by sound economic incentives that support business continuity and innovation.

Emphasis

To better understand the distribution of sustainability themes in green hotel research, the 20 reviewed articles were categorized based on the three core pillars of sustainable tourism: environmental, socio-cultural, and economic aspects. Each article was analyzed based on its primary emphasis and mapped to one or more relevant aspects. The table below summarizes the number of articles related to each sustainability dimension and the primary thematic focus of the research.

Table 2. Summary of Article Distribution by Sustainability Aspect

Aspect	Number of Articles	Emphasis
Environmental	19	Green practices, efficiency, and conservation
Socio-cultural	9	Consumer behavior, norms, education
Economic	12	Loyalty, brand image, willingness to pay

Discussion

Sustainable tourism is fundamentally supported by three interrelated pillars: environmental, socio-cultural, and economic sustainability. These dimensions serve as a comprehensive framework within which the impacts and practices of green hotels can be evaluated. The growing literature on green hotels reflects a variety of research objectives, ranging from assessing the operational effectiveness of environmentally friendly practices to understanding consumer perceptions and motivations toward sustainability. This review analyzes how each of the 20 selected journal articles contributes to one or more pillars. By classifying the literature accordingly, we were able to identify thematic focuses, methodological orientations, and contextual insights that advance both academic understanding and practical implementation of sustainable tourism in the hospitality sector. The following sections discuss each pillar in detail, beginning with environmental sustainability.

Environmental Sustainability in Green Hotel Practices

Another important contribution comes from (Merli et al., 2018), who evaluated the impact of eco-friendly practices on coastal tourism. They identified the relationship between eco-friendly practices and guest loyalty. The findings revealed that guests with higher levels of environmental awareness exhibited positive attitudes toward eco-friendly practices. However, there was no direct effect of environmental awareness on guest satisfaction. While guests appreciate eco-friendly efforts, a positive attitude toward them is not enough to create satisfaction or loyalty. The actual experience of service is far more important.

Furthermore, environmental sustainability is closely linked to innovation and brand image. Research by (Millar et al., 2012) analyzed the importance of specific eco-friendly attributes—such as recyclable waste bins, low-flow plumbing fixtures, and eco-certification—among business and leisure travelers. Their results indicate that guests increasingly expect basic environmental standards as part of their hotel experience, regardless of travel destination. This expectation signals a shift in market norms, making eco-friendly practices less of a differentiator and more of a foundation for hotel competitiveness and legitimacy.

Socio-cultural Sustainability in Green Hotel Practices

Socio-cultural sustainability in the context of green hotels refers to the influence of hotel practices on societal behavior, cultural values, social norms, and individual decision-making. This aspect was explored in 9 of the 20 journal articles reviewed, highlighting the crucial role of guest perceptions, intergenerational values, and behavioral models in shaping sustainable consumption. For example, a study by Trang (2018) used an extended Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) model to investigate Gen Z consumers in China. The study showed that emotional values, perceived behavioral control, and subjective norms significantly influenced intention to stay at a green hotel. This underscores the importance of aligning green hotel

communication strategies with the social and psychological drivers of this emerging consumer group.

Normative and moral pressures are another prominent theme in socio-cultural sustainability studies. (Haq et al., 2023) explored the ethical dimensions of green hotel patronage through deontological (duty-based) and teleological (consequence-based) ethical theories. The study confirmed that moral beliefs significantly impact travelers' intentions to choose green accommodations. Similarly, (Artha et al., 2023) revealed that eco-friendly image not only enhances brand perception but also consumers' sense of social responsibility, which in turn influences their intention to engage in green hotel consumption. These findings suggest that green hotel strategies must be socially resonant and ethically crafted to achieve meaningful behavioral change.

Economic Sustainability in Green Hotel Practices

Economic sustainability in the hospitality sector focuses on the ability of environmentally friendly practices to create long-term financial value—both for the business and for the broader tourism economy. Although only 12 of the 20 articles reviewed explicitly emphasized economic outcomes, their findings highlight the strategic value of green hotel initiatives in increasing profitability, market competitiveness, and brand equity. A prime example is provided by (González-rodríguez & Díaz-fernández, 2019), whose study confirmed that guests' willingness to pay a premium for a green hotel is positively influenced by their environmental concerns and their perceptions of green practices. These findings suggest that green practices, if communicated effectively, can be monetized without sacrificing guest satisfaction.

Brand image plays a central role in generating economic value through sustainability practices. Artha et al. (2023) demonstrated a direct relationship between the implementation of environmentally friendly practices and the enhancement of brand image at Nandini Jungle Resort & Spa in Bali. Using regression analysis, the study found that the resort's environmental initiatives—such as eco-conscious design and waste reduction programs—significantly improved perceived brand equity. These economic benefits are particularly evident in the upscale hospitality segment, where sustainability attributes are often regarded as an integral component of the luxury value proposition. Consequently, green branding not only supports environmental objectives but also strengthens a hotel's market positioning and competitive advantage.

Loyalty and repeat visits are frequently discussed themes in economic-focused studies. (Moise et al., 2020) found that the perceived functional value derived from a green hotel experience significantly predicted guest satisfaction and loyalty intentions. In their study conducted in Spain, guests who recognized visible green practices such as energy-efficient systems and recycling infrastructure were more likely to return and recommend the hotel. This positive feedback underscores the economic rationale behind investing in sustainable design and operations—not just as a cost-saving measure, but as a customer retention strategy.

Conclusions

This study consolidates empirical insights from 20 journal articles to explore the various contributions of green hotels to the advancement of sustainable tourism. The study

demonstrates that green hotel initiatives significantly support the three pillars of sustainability—environmental, socio-cultural, and economic. Environmentally, the implementation of energy-efficient practices, waste reduction programs, and water-saving technologies exemplify the role green hotels play in reducing environmental impacts. Socio-culturally, green hotels encourage pro-environmental behavior through guest education and cultural integration, aligning hospitality operations with broader societal values. Economically, environmentally friendly practices contribute to customer loyalty, brand equity, and consumers' willingness to pay a premium, demonstrating the long-term viability of businesses that embrace sustainability.

These findings show that green hotels are not merely an operational response to environmental regulations, but also a strategic tool for value creation. The review highlights that successful green hotel implementation often involves leadership commitment, employee engagement, and consumer trust—all of which serve as catalysts for broader behavioral change. This comprehensive synthesis underscores the growing importance of sustainability in hospitality and tourism management, particularly as eco-friendly consumerism continues to rise. Future research should examine how environmentally friendly practices can impact various market segments, ultimately contributing to the global movement toward a more sustainable tourism sector.

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Travel Agents as Cultural Intermediaries in Sustainable Gastronomy Tourism: Insights from Jejak Rasa Palembang

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Abstract

Gastronomy tourism has become an important strategy for destination development by linking culinary heritage, cultural identity, and visitor experiences. While previous studies have examined food as a tourism attraction, limited attention has been given to the role of travel agents in facilitating sustainable gastronomy tourism. This research note explores the case of Jejak Rasa Palembang, a gastronomy-focused travel agency operating in South Sumatra, Indonesia. Using qualitative data collected through interviews, participant observation, documentation, and visitor feedback, the study examines how the travel agent designs and delivers gastronomy-based tourism experiences. The findings suggest that Jejak Rasa performs four interconnected functions: cultural interpretation, experience co-creation, community collaboration, and destination promotion. Through culinary storytelling, participation in traditional food preparation, visits to heritage sites, and engagement with local micro-enterprises, the travel agent contributes to preserving culinary heritage while enhancing visitor understanding of Palembang's cultural identity. The case highlights the potential of travel agents to act as cultural intermediaries that connect food, place, and community. The study offers practical insights for destinations seeking to develop sustainable gastronomy tourism through locally embedded tourism experiences.

Keywords: gastronomy tourism, travel agents, cultural intermediary, sustainable tourism, Palembang

Introduction

Gastronomy tourism has emerged as an increasingly important component of destination development, reflecting a broader shift in tourist preferences from passive sightseeing toward authentic and experience-based travel. Food is no longer viewed solely as a supporting element of tourism but has become a primary motivation for travel, allowing visitors to engage with local culture, history, and identity through culinary experiences (UNWTO, 2019). Consequently, destinations around the world have increasingly incorporated gastronomy into tourism strategies to enhance destination differentiation, cultural preservation, and local economic development.

The growing interest in gastronomy tourism is closely linked to the recognition of food as cultural heritage. Traditional dishes, preparation techniques, dining rituals, and culinary narratives provide opportunities for tourists to experience local culture in tangible and meaningful ways. Previous studies suggest that gastronomy tourism can contribute to sustainable destination development by strengthening local food systems, supporting small-scale enterprises, preserving cultural traditions, and generating economic opportunities for host communities (Bessière, 1998; Rinaldi, 2017). As a result, gastronomy tourism is increasingly regarded as a vehicle for achieving both cultural and economic sustainability.

Indonesia possesses considerable potential for gastronomy tourism due to its culinary diversity and rich cultural heritage. In Palembang, South Sumatra, culinary traditions such as pempek, tekwan, pindang, sate cucuk manis, and the communal dining practice of ngidang-ngobeng represent more than local food products; they embody historical interactions among Malay, Chinese, Arab, and indigenous cultures that have shaped the city's identity over centuries. The city's position along the Musi River and its historical role within the Sriwijaya civilization further contribute to the cultural significance of its gastronomy.

Despite this potential, gastronomy tourism development often remains focused on food consumption rather than cultural interpretation. Tourists may visit culinary destinations without understanding the historical, social, and cultural meanings associated with local foods. This limitation highlights the need for tourism actors capable of transforming food consumption into meaningful cultural experiences. Among these actors, travel agents may play a particularly important role by designing tourism experiences that connect visitors with local heritage, communities, and cultural narratives.

While previous gastronomy tourism studies have examined food heritage, tourist experiences, and destination development, relatively limited attention has been given to the role of travel agents in facilitating sustainable gastronomy tourism. This research note addresses this gap by exploring the case of Jejak Rasa Palembang, a gastronomy-focused travel agency that integrates culinary experiences, heritage interpretation, and community participation within a single tourism product. The study aims to provide preliminary insights into how travel agents can function as cultural intermediaries that contribute to sustainable gastronomy tourism development.

Literature review

Gastronomy Tourism and Cultural Heritage

Gastronomy tourism refers to travel experiences in which food and culinary activities constitute a primary motivation for visitation (Hall & Sharples, 2003). Beyond food consumption, gastronomy tourism involves engagement with the cultural, historical, and social contexts that shape local cuisines (Richards, 2012). Food serves as a medium through which visitors can understand local traditions, values, identities, and ways of life.

Traditional foods are increasingly recognized as forms of cultural heritage because they reflect accumulated knowledge, local resources, and historical interactions within communities. According to Bessière (1998), local cuisine can become a tourism attraction when it embodies authenticity, historical significance, and strong connections to local identity. In this context, gastronomy tourism contributes not only to visitor experiences but also to heritage preservation and destination differentiation.

Sustainable Gastronomy Tourism

Sustainable tourism seeks to balance economic, sociocultural, and environmental objectives while ensuring long-term benefits for local communities (UNWTO, 2018). Within gastronomy tourism, sustainability involves supporting local food systems, preserving culinary traditions, encouraging community participation, and generating economic opportunities for local businesses.

Previous studies have highlighted the importance of collaboration among tourism stakeholders, including food producers, restaurants, local communities, and tourism organizations, in creating sustainable gastronomy destinations (Pramezwarly et al., 2022). Gastronomy tourism can strengthen local economies by creating value-added experiences while simultaneously preserving cultural practices that might otherwise decline.

Travel Agents as Cultural Intermediaries

Traditionally, travel agents have been viewed as intermediaries responsible for coordinating transportation, accommodation, and tourism services (Middleton & Clarke, 2001). However, the rise of experience-based tourism has expanded their role beyond logistical coordination. Travel agents increasingly act as experience designers who shape how destinations are interpreted and consumed by visitors.

Within gastronomy tourism, travel agents can be understood as cultural intermediaries that connect tourists with local culinary heritage. Through storytelling, interpretation, and interaction with local communities, travel agents may transform ordinary food consumption into meaningful cultural experiences. Despite the growing importance of this role, limited empirical evidence exists regarding how travel agents contribute to sustainable gastronomy tourism. The present study explores this emerging role through the case of Jejak Rasa Palembang.

Methodology

This research adopted an exploratory qualitative approach using a single-case study design. The study focused on Jejak Rasa Palembang, a gastronomy-oriented travel agency that offers culinary-based tourism experiences along the Musi River corridor. A case study

approach was considered appropriate because the study aimed to explore an emerging tourism phenomenon and generate preliminary insights rather than test predetermined hypotheses.

Data were collected through multiple sources. First, semi-structured interviews were conducted with Jejak Rasa management, tourism partners, and participating tourists to understand their experiences and perspectives regarding gastronomy tourism activities. Second, participant observation was undertaken during gastronomic tour activities, including visits to culinary businesses, heritage houses, river transportation experiences, and participation in the *ngidang-ngobeng* communal dining tradition. Third, documentary materials, including promotional content, photographs, social media posts, brochures, and field notes, were examined to supplement interview and observation data. Finally, questionnaire responses from 30 tour participants were used as supporting evidence to provide descriptive information regarding visitor characteristics, satisfaction, and understanding of gastronomy tourism.

Data were analyzed using thematic analysis following the procedures proposed by Miles and Huberman. Interview transcripts, observation notes, and documentary evidence were reviewed repeatedly to identify recurring patterns and themes. Similar codes were grouped into broader thematic categories representing the roles performed by Jejak Rasa in gastronomy tourism development. To enhance trustworthiness, data triangulation was conducted by comparing findings across interviews, observations, questionnaires, and documentary sources.

Result and Discussion

Travel Agents as Cultural Interpreters of Culinary Heritage

One of the most significant findings of this study is that Jejak Rasa functions as a cultural interpreter that transforms culinary consumption into a learning experience. Prior to participating in the tour, most visitors had limited familiarity with the concept of gastronomy tourism. Questionnaire results indicated that approximately 70% of participants were unfamiliar with gastronomy as a tourism concept, suggesting that food tourism is often perceived merely as visiting popular eateries rather than engaging with culinary heritage and local culture.

The findings reveal that Jejak Rasa addresses this gap through storytelling and cultural interpretation embedded throughout the tour experience. Visitors are introduced to the historical origins of Palembang's signature dishes, including pempek and sate cucuk manis, as well as the historical significance of heritage sites such as Kapitan House and Baba Boen Tjit House. Through guide narratives and interaction with local stakeholders, food becomes a medium through which visitors learn about trade routes, cultural exchanges, and the historical development of Palembang as a river-based civilization.

Interview data suggest that tourists experienced a shift in perspective after participating in the tour. Rather than viewing food solely as a product to be consumed, participants increasingly understood culinary practices as expressions of local identity and cultural heritage. This finding supports Richards' (2012) argument that gastronomy tourism extends beyond food consumption and encompasses engagement with the cultural meanings embedded within local

cuisines. In this context, Jejak Rasa performs a role that goes beyond traditional tourism intermediation by facilitating cultural understanding and heritage interpretation.

The findings also suggest that cultural interpretation contributes to destination differentiation. As many culinary destinations compete based on food quality alone, integrating historical narratives and cultural meanings may create a more distinctive and memorable visitor experience. Consequently, the case of Jejak Rasa demonstrates how travel agents can contribute to sustainable gastronomy tourism by enhancing cultural appreciation and strengthening awareness of local heritage.

Moreover, the survey results revealed that 70% of participants were unfamiliar with the concept of gastronomy tourism before joining the tour. However, interview responses indicated that visitors developed a broader understanding of gastronomy as a combination of food, culture, and history after participating in the activities. This finding suggests that Jejak Rasa also performs an educational function by transforming culinary consumption into cultural learning.

Co-Creating Authentic Gastronomic Experiences

The participatory nature of Jejak Rasa's gastronomic experiences was reflected in both the quantitative and qualitative findings. To complement the interview and observation data, participants were asked to evaluate several dimensions of their tour experience using a four-point scale ranging from 1 (poor) to 4 (very good). The results provide preliminary evidence regarding which components of the gastronomy tour generated the strongest visitor responses and how these experiences contributed to the overall perception of the destination.

Table 1 presents an integrated summary of the survey findings and supporting qualitative evidence. Rather than treating the quantitative and qualitative results separately, the table illustrates how visitor evaluations correspond with the themes emerging from interviews and participant observation. This approach enables a more comprehensive understanding of the ways in which Jejak Rasa facilitates meaningful gastronomic experiences through cultural interpretation, active participation, local collaboration, and place-based storytelling.

Tabel 1. Visitors evaluation for gastronomic experience

Theme	Quantitative Evidence	Qualitative Evidence	Interpretation
Cultural interpretation	70% of participants reported that they were unfamiliar with gastronomy tourism before joining the tour	Visitors reported learning about the history, philosophy, and cultural meanings of Palembang cuisine through storytelling and heritage visits	Jejak Rasa functions as an educational platform that transforms food consumption into cultural learning
Participatory gastronomic experiences	Ngidang–Ngobeng (M = 3.7), culinary quality (M = 3.6), cultural learning (M = 3.5)	Visitors identified communal dining, pempek-making, and satay grilling as the most memorable activities	Active participation enhances authenticity and visitor engagement
Community collaboration	Overall satisfaction (M = 3.5)	Positive interactions with MSMEs, heritage-house managers, and local hosts were frequently mentioned	Collaboration strengthens community participation and supports local economic sustainability

Place identity and destination experience	Ketek boat experience (M = 3.1) remained positively evaluated despite some comfort concerns	Visitors described the Musi River journey as an essential part of experiencing Palembang	Gastronomy tourism can reinforce destination identity through the integration of food, heritage, and place
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The findings presented in Table 1 indicate that visitor evaluations were generally positive across all dimensions of the gastronomic experience. The highest-rated component was the Ngidang–Ngobeng communal dining tradition (M = 3.7), followed by culinary quality (M = 3.6) and cultural learning experiences (M = 3.5). These results suggest that tourists particularly valued experiences that combined food consumption with cultural interaction and active participation. Consistent with interview findings, participants frequently described the opportunity to prepare pempek, observe traditional cooking practices, and engage in communal dining as the most memorable aspects of the tour.

The convergence of quantitative and qualitative evidence highlights the importance of experience co-creation in gastronomy tourism. Rather than acting as passive consumers, visitors became active participants in the production and interpretation of local culture. Such participation enabled tourists to engage with both the tangible and intangible dimensions of Palembang's culinary heritage, including traditional food preparation techniques, local hospitality practices, and communal dining customs. These findings support previous research suggesting that authenticity in gastronomy tourism is strengthened when visitors are directly involved in cultural practices rather than merely observing or consuming them.

Furthermore, the results demonstrate that the value of gastronomy tourism extends beyond food quality alone. While visitors appreciated the culinary products themselves, satisfaction was largely derived from the integration of storytelling, social interaction, and cultural immersion. Consequently, the Jejak Rasa case illustrates how travel agents can facilitate meaningful tourism experiences by transforming local food heritage into participatory and educational encounters that contribute to both visitor satisfaction and cultural sustainability.

Strengthening Community-Based Tourism through Local Collaboration

The findings further indicate that Jejak Rasa contributes to sustainable tourism development through collaboration with a diverse range of local stakeholders. The tour experience is built upon partnerships with culinary micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), heritage-house managers, local guides, and ketek boat operators, creating a network of actors who collectively contribute to the visitor experience. This collaborative approach was positively reflected in the quantitative findings, with participants reporting a high level of overall satisfaction with the tour experience (M = 3.5). Interview data further revealed that interactions with local hosts, business owners, and cultural custodians were among the aspects most appreciated by visitors.

Rather than concentrating tourism benefits within a single organization, Jejak Rasa distributes economic opportunities across multiple local stakeholders. Culinary businesses benefit from increased visitor exposure, heritage sites receive additional visitation, and

traditional transportation operators gain access to tourism markets. The integration of these actors creates a localized tourism value chain that extends the economic benefits of tourism throughout the destination while simultaneously supporting the preservation of cultural assets.

The positive visitor evaluations suggest that local collaboration contributes not only to destination sustainability but also to the quality of the tourism experience itself. Many participants highlighted the opportunity to interact directly with local residents, culinary entrepreneurs, and heritage-site caretakers as an important component of the tour. Such interactions provided visitors with insights into local lifestyles, traditions, and culinary practices that would be difficult to obtain through conventional tourism experiences.

These findings support previous research emphasizing the importance of community participation in sustainable tourism development. Sustainable gastronomy tourism requires more than the promotion of local food products; it also depends on the active involvement of local communities in the design and delivery of tourism experiences. By integrating local businesses and cultural actors into its tourism products, Jejak Rasa contributes to both economic sustainability and cultural preservation. Furthermore, the direct engagement between visitors and local stakeholders enhances the authenticity of the tourism experience, reinforcing the notion that gastronomy tourism is fundamentally a social and cultural practice rooted in community participation.

Reconnecting Gastronomy with Place Identity

The final theme highlights the role of gastronomy tourism in reinforcing Palembang's place identity through the integration of culinary heritage, historical narratives, and cultural landscapes. Quantitative findings indicate that visitors positively evaluated both the cultural learning dimension of the tour ($M = 3.5$) and the *ketek* boat experience along the Musi River ($M = 3.1$). Although the river journey received a slightly lower rating than other activities, largely due to concerns regarding weather conditions, engine noise, and river traffic, participants generally regarded it as an essential and distinctive component of the overall tourism experience.

The design of Jejak Rasa's tourism experience extends beyond culinary destinations and incorporates significant cultural and geographical elements of the city, particularly the Musi River and its associated heritage landscapes. The Musi River serves as the primary corridor connecting the tour destinations and functions as more than a transportation route. Interview findings revealed that many visitors perceived traveling by *ketek* boat as an authentic way to experience Palembang's historical identity as a river city. For participants, the river journey provided a tangible connection to the city's maritime heritage and enabled a deeper understanding of the relationship between culinary development, trade activities, settlement patterns, and cultural exchange that have shaped Palembang over centuries.

Similarly, visits to heritage sites such as Kapitan House and Baba Boen Tjit House contextualized culinary experiences within broader historical narratives. The relatively high rating for cultural learning experiences ($M = 3.5$) suggests that visitors valued opportunities to understand the stories, traditions, and historical influences associated with local cuisine. Food was therefore presented not as an isolated attraction but as part of a larger cultural landscape connecting heritage, community, and place. This integration of food, history, and geography

created a more holistic tourism experience that strengthened visitors' understanding of Palembang as a destination.

From a destination development perspective, these findings suggest that gastronomy tourism can serve as an effective mechanism for destination branding. By linking culinary heritage with local history, river culture, and heritage landscapes, destinations can develop unique tourism identities that are difficult to replicate elsewhere. In the case of Palembang, gastronomy tourism becomes a means of communicating the city's river-based heritage, multicultural history, and distinctive culinary traditions. The positive evaluations of both cultural learning and river-based experiences indicate that visitors recognize and appreciate these place-specific characteristics, highlighting the potential of gastronomy tourism to strengthen destination identity while preserving local cultural heritage.

Towards a Conceptual Understanding of Travel Agents as Cultural Intermediaries

The findings collectively suggest that travel agents can play a broader role than traditionally acknowledged in tourism literature. The case of Jejak Rasa demonstrates that travel agents can function as cultural intermediaries that connect visitors with local heritage through interpretation, participation, and collaboration. This role can be conceptualized as a process in which local culinary heritage is transformed into meaningful tourism experiences through storytelling, community engagement, and experiential learning.

The study proposes a preliminary framework in which travel agents act as facilitators linking local food heritage, cultural narratives, and community stakeholders to create sustainable gastronomy tourism outcomes. These outcomes include enhanced visitor understanding, heritage preservation, local economic benefits, and stronger destination identity. Although derived from a single case study, this framework provides a useful foundation for future research examining the role of tourism intermediaries in sustainable gastronomy tourism development.

Conclusion

This research note explored the role of Jejak Rasa Palembang in facilitating sustainable gastronomy tourism through the integration of culinary heritage, cultural interpretation, and community participation. The findings demonstrate that the travel agent functions beyond its conventional role as a tourism intermediary by acting as a cultural intermediary that connects visitors with local food traditions, heritage sites, and community actors. Through storytelling, participatory culinary activities, collaboration with local MSMEs, and the incorporation of the Musi River and heritage landscapes into the tourism experience, Jejak Rasa creates meaningful encounters that extend beyond food consumption.

The study highlights four interconnected contributions of the travel agent: fostering cultural understanding, co-creating authentic gastronomic experiences, strengthening community-based tourism networks, and reinforcing Palembang's destination identity. The integration of quantitative and qualitative findings further suggests that visitors particularly value experiences that combine cultural learning, direct participation, and interaction with local communities.

Although this study is limited to a single case, it provides preliminary evidence that travel agents can play a strategic role in sustainable gastronomy tourism development. Future research may examine similar initiatives in other destinations to further explore how tourism intermediaries contribute to heritage preservation, community empowerment, and destination differentiation through gastronomy-based tourism experiences.

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The effectiveness of Process-Oriented Guided Inquiry Learning (POGIL) and Jigsaw Learning Model on Student Learning Outcomes: A Quasi-Experimental Study in Indonesian Tourism Vocational School

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Abstract

This study aimed to evaluate and compare the effectiveness of Process-Oriented Guided Inquiry Learning, the Jigsaw cooperative model, and conventional instruction in enhancing students' cognitive learning outcomes in hospitality and tourism vocational education. The research involved eleventh-grade students from Lembang Tourism Development Vocational School and Bandung Vocational School, focusing on Guest Service Protocol learning materials. A quasi-experimental design was employed, with students divided into three instructional groups taught using equivalent lesson durations and content structures. Data were collected through a validated 60-item multiple-choice test, with 41 items meeting validity standards. Normality tests indicated non-normal data distribution, leading to the use of nonparametric analyses, which is Kruskal–Wallis tests. The results showed significant differences in post-test scores among the groups, with the Jigsaw model achieving the highest improvement, followed by the guided inquiry and conventional methods. These findings demonstrate that active learning approaches foster deeper conceptual understanding and stronger procedural skills. The study concludes that incorporating inquiry- and cooperation-based strategies into vocational curricula enhances student engagement, cognitive development, and readiness for real-world service challenges.

Keywords: *Process Oriented Guided Inquiry Learning (POGIL), Jigsaw Learning Model, Active learning, Vocational education, Student competencies.*

Introduction

The In Indonesia, hospitality vocational education has traditionally grown from an apprenticeship-based approach in which learners gained abilities by observation and involvement alongside experienced professionals in real-world service environments (Silitonga, 2020). According to Zraggen (2021) and Rosenkranz (2021), this experiential method has been codified over time into organized curricula that combine theoretical education with both simulated environments and real-world, workplace-based learning. However, many vocational school programs still mostly use instructor-led demonstrations and conventional lecture-based approaches. Graduates frequently struggle to apply conceptual knowledge in dynamic, real-time guest service settings as a result of this educational emphasis (Huilaja et al., 2022; Wang., 2022). Consequently, this disconnect hampers the development of cognitive proficiency in essential service competencies, including reservation systems, check-in and check-out procedures, and complaint handling skills that are critical to ensuring professional readiness in the contemporary hospitality industry.

To address persistent learning gaps, educational researchers increasingly promote active learning frameworks that position students as active participants in constructing knowledge. Two such prominent models are Process-Oriented Guided Inquiry Learning (POGIL) and the Jigsaw model. POGIL, originally from STEM fields, organizes instruction into exploration, concept invention, and application through collaborative activities. This approach fosters conceptual mastery and key process skills like critical thinking and problem-solving. Similarly, the Jigsaw model is a cooperative learning strategy where students become "experts" on one piece of a topic and then teach it to their peers, fostering interaction and a sense of shared responsibility (Darsan, 2023). Both models have been shown to enhance understanding more effectively than conventional lecture-based methods.

Although active-learning approaches such as Process-Oriented Guided Inquiry Learning (POGIL) and the Jigsaw model have proven effective across STEM and social-science disciplines, their comparative influence within hospitality and tourism service training remains underexplored. This gap is particularly relevant because both Hospitality and Tourism Service roles demand mastery of guest-handling procedures that blend cognitive knowledge with interpersonal judgment (Muzam et al, 2023). Excellence in guest service entails not only understanding what actions are required but also how and when to execute them based on dynamic guest interactions.

While conventional training methods may teach discrete operational skills, they often fall short in preparing students for the unnoventy predictable nature of authentic guest interactions. At the same time, while research on Jigsaw in tourism education shows promise for improving test scores and social skills (Jainal & Shahrill, 2021), it also highlights challenges with student motivation and the need for more rigorous evaluation (Vives et al., 2025). This creates a clear need for empirical research that directly compares the effectiveness of different active learning strategies against traditional methods in this specific vocational context. Without robust data on how pedagogies like POGIL and Jigsaw influence cognitive mastery of guest service protocols, educators lack a sound basis for curriculum redesign.

Empirical evidence demonstrating cognitive gains through the implementation of POGIL offers valuable insights for curriculum developers at Lembang Tourism Development Vocational School, supporting the integration of guided inquiry modules into the hospitality syllabus. Moreover, statistically significant improvements in students' mastery of service protocols would align with the principles of outcomes-based education, a key component of the institutional accreditation framework. Such findings would enable program administrators to provide robust evidence of graduate competence to regulatory bodies and industry stakeholders. This alignment not only strengthens the program's credibility but also informs targeted professional development initiatives for instructors, promoting a culture of reflective, evidence-informed teaching practice.

Although qualitative studies on active learning in hospitality education have highlighted increased student engagement, the absence of comparative quasi-experimental research limits the ability to draw causal conclusions (Harrison, 2024). While educators are encouraged to adopt active learning, there is a significant gap in the literature directly comparing the effectiveness of different models, such as inquiry-based (POGIL) and cooperative (Jigsaw) approaches (Bhandary et al., 2024). Without robust data showing how these distinct pedagogies perform against each other and against traditional instruction, educators lack a sound empirical foundation for curriculum redesign (Scott & Husain, 2021).

In response, scholars have called for extending learning method research into guest-service training contexts to isolate its effects on students' cognitive development specifically their acquisition of factual knowledge, procedural fluency, and decision-making capabilities related to guest service protocols. The novelty of this research lies in its dual-institution, multi-method design. It simultaneously compares three pedagogical approaches POGIL, Jigsaw, and conventional instruction across two related vocational contexts: the Hospitality (Hospitality) class at Lembang Tourism Development Vocational School and the Tourism Service class at Bandung Vocational School. Despite differences in program orientation, both courses employ Guest Service Protocol as their central instructional theme, enabling a valid cross-context comparison of cognitive learning outcomes.

Furthermore, no prior research has concurrently measured cognitive, psychomotor, and affective outcomes of POGIL, jigsaw and conventional learning method implementation within the hospitality education context. Most existing vocational studies adopt qualitative methodologies or non-comparative pre-post designs, thereby limiting their generalizability and capacity to infer causality (Zheng et al., 2025).

To bridge this gap, the present study employed a comparative quasi-experimental design involving eleventh-grade students at Lembang Tourism Development Vocational School and Bandung Vocational School. Participants were divided into three groups: Three experimental group engaged in POGIL-based learning, a second experimental group using the Jigsaw model, and a control group that received conventional lectures. Pre- and post-instruction assessments provided the empirical basis for comparing learning outcomes across the three instructional methods

In Indonesia, vocational education in hospitality and tourism has historically evolved from apprenticeship-based training into formal programs that integrate classroom, simulation,

and industry practice (Silitonga, 2020). According to Zraggen (2021) and Rosenkranz (2021), Yet many classes including Hospitality at Lembang Tourism Development Vocational School and Tourism Service at Bandung Vocational School still rely heavily on conventional instruction. Students consequently face difficulties transferring theoretical understanding of Guest Service Protocol into authentic service performance (Huilaja et al., 2022; Wang., 2022).

This study compares the effectiveness of three instructional methods Process-Oriented Guided Inquiry Learning (POGIL) and the Jigsaw model, and conventional instruction on student learning outcomes within the Hospitality course at Lembang Tourism Development Vocational School School and Bandung Vocational School. Specifically, it explores which method best improves knowledge retention and conceptual understanding related to guest-service protocols, while identifying areas where learners may continue to face challenges. By analyzing pre-and post-instruction cognitive test scores from both the POGIL, JIGSAW and conventional method and control groups, this research seeks to reveal procedural knowledge gaps and provide actionable recommendations for enhancing curriculum alignment with evolving industry expectations.

Based on the issues raised above, this study aims to determine how different instructional strategies Process-Oriented Guided Inquiry Learning (POGIL), the Jigsaw model, and conventional teaching affect students' cognitive learning outcomes in Guest Service Protocol instruction across two vocational contexts: the Hospitality class of Lembang Tourism Development Vocational School and the Tourism Service class of Bandung Vocational School. The following three particular goals serve as the research's compass:

1. To determine which instructional method (POGIL, Jigsaw, or conventional) yields the greatest cognitive improvement in Guest Service Protocol learning.
2. To analyze differences in cognitive gain among students exposed to the three methods across both institutions.
3. To examine patterns of learning variance attributable to instructional approach within and between the Hospitality and Tourism Service contexts.

Methodology

This This study adopted a quantitative comparative quasi-experimental approach, utilizing a multi-group non-equivalent control group design. According to Hardani et al. (2020), this design is appropriate when random assignment is impractical, allowing for meaningful comparisons of intervention effects in naturally occurring groups. Three intact eleventh-grade classes at Lembang Tourism Development Vocational School, matched based on baseline academic performance, served as the participant groups. The first experimental group received instruction using the POGIL model, the second experimental group used the Jigsaw model, and the control group received conventional lectures and demonstrations.

Data were collected using a rigorously constructed multiple-choice test designed to assess students' cognitive mastery of guest service protocols, including reservation accuracy, check-in and check-out procedures, and complaint resolution (Shappell et al., 2021). A pilot research with 30 eleventh-grade hospitality students from a separate, similar vocational school was carried out to determine the validity and reliability of the measure. 60 items made up the initial pool, which was examined using SPSS's item-total correlation, difficulty index, and

discrimination index feature. Items that showed poor discrimination, excessive difficulty levels, or failed to fulfill Pearson's $r > .30$ requirements were either altered or eliminated. The finished tool complied with validity and reliability requirements (Zhou et al., 2022; Yandriani et al., 2020; Zakariya, 2022).

Table 1. Mid-Semester Exam (PTS) Averages

School Class	Class	Mean Semester Exam Score	Mid-
Hospitality Class of Lembang Tourism Development Vocational School	XI Hospitality 1	79.03	
	XI Hospitality 2	79.58	
	XI Hospitality 3	81.39	
Tourism Service Class of Bandung Vocational School	XI Tourism Service 1	79.39	
	XI Tourism Service 2	82.58	

Table 1 presents the mid-semester (PTS) average scores used to designate participant groups across the two vocational schools. At *Lembang Tourism Development Vocational School*, Class XI Hospitality 1 (mean = 79.03) was assigned as the first experimental group using the POGIL model, Class XI Hospitality 2 (mean = 79.58) served as the second experimental group applying the Jigsaw model, and Class XI Hospitality 3 (mean = 81.39) functioned as the control group receiving conventional instruction. Meanwhile, at *Bandung Vocational School*, Class XI Tourism Service 1 (mean = 79.39) and Class XI Tourism Service 2 (mean = 82.58) were selected as supplementary samples to validate cross-institutional consistency in *Guest Service Protocol* instruction.

Altogether, the study involved 92 students from the Hospitality program at Lembang and 67 students from the Tourism Service program at Bandung, yielding a total sample of 159 participants. The similarity of the mid-semester averages across classes indicates comparable academic baselines, providing a strong foundation for evaluating instructional effects. To verify group equivalence on pre-test performance, a preliminary one-way ANOVA was conducted, which showed no statistically significant differences among groups ($p > .05$).

For the main hypothesis testing, an Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) was employed to compare post-test learning outcomes while controlling for pre-test scores, thereby adjusting for initial variability in student performance. This procedure enables a more precise estimation of the instructional impact of POGIL, Jigsaw, and conventional methods across both schools. The assumptions of normality, linearity, and homogeneity of regression slopes were examined prior to ANCOVA implementation. When assumptions were not fully met, nonparametric

rank-based alternatives such as the Kruskal–Wallis H and Wilcoxon Signed-Rank or Mann-Whitney U tests were applied following the recommendations of Murakami et al. (2023) and Bixhaku et al. (2023). Effect sizes were subsequently computed to quantify the magnitude of observed instructional differences, and all analyses were performed at an alpha level of .05 (Rubin, 2021; Ghanad, 2023).

This analytical framework ensures a rigorous and statistically controlled comparison of how inquiry-based, cooperative, and conventional pedagogies influence students’ cognitive mastery of *Guest Service Protocol* across both vocational contexts.

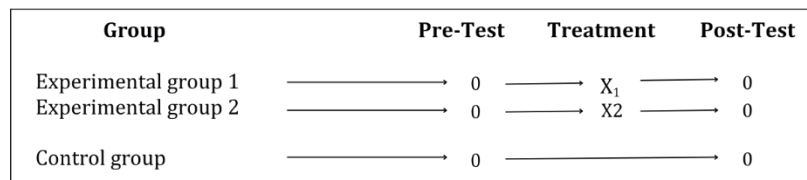


Figure 1. Paired Pretest-Posttest Control Group Design.

Figure 1 presents the conceptual model for this study. The independent variable is the instructional method, which has three levels: Process-Oriented Guided Inquiry Learning (X_1), the Jigsaw model (X_2), and conventional instruction (Control). Each method was implemented in a designated group, and all three groups were evaluated using identical instruments measuring Student Learning Outcomes (Y). The diagram’s three distinct arrows converging on the outcome variable (Y) visually represent the study’s comparative design, indicating that post-instruction performance differences can be attributed to the specific instructional method received.

As a quasi-experimental design, this approach supports causal inference by enabling structured comparisons between non-randomized groups (Maciejewski, 2020). All three groups completed pre- and post-tests under identical conditions, allowing the differential learning gains among the POGIL, Jigsaw, and control groups to serve as valid evidence of the relative effectiveness of each pedagogical approach on cognitive learning outcomes.

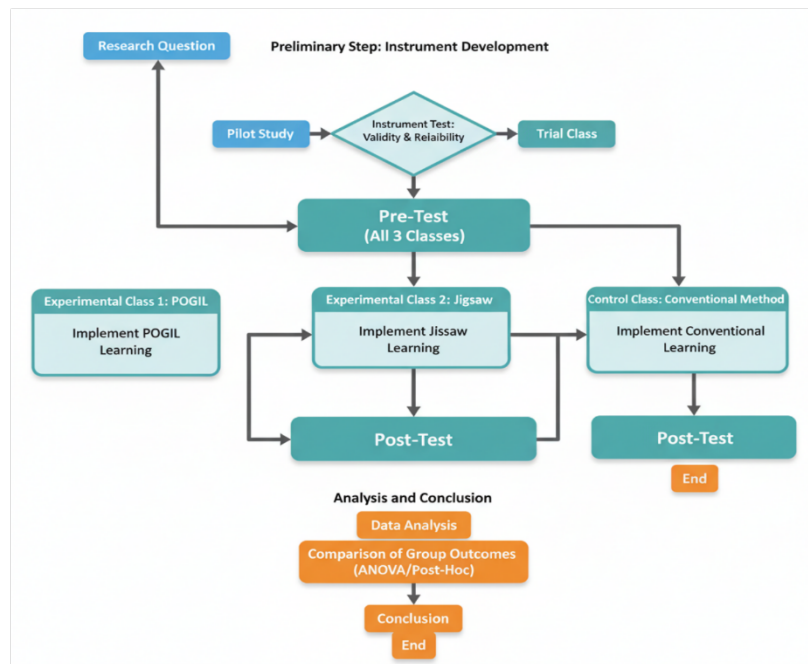


Fig. 2 Research Flow Chart

Figure 2 illustrates the study's multi-phase research workflow. The process begins with a preliminary Instrument Development phase, where a pilot study was conducted to ensure the validity and reliability of the test instrument. Following this preparation, the main experiment commences with a pre-test administered to all three participant groups. After establishing a baseline, the groups proceed through their assigned instructional interventions in three parallel tracks: one experimental group receives POGIL-based instruction, a second uses the Jigsaw model, and the control group follows the conventional method. Upon completion, a post-test is administered to all participants. The resulting data are then analyzed to compare the learning gains across the three groups, determining the relative effectiveness of each instructional strategy.

Table 2. Distribution of Multiple-Choice Items by Learning Outcome Domain

Variable	Variable Domain	Number of Question	Description	Source
Learning Outcomes	Cognitive (C)	26	Items assessing C1–C6: Questions 1, 2, 5, 6, 8, 11, 12, 14, 16, 17, 20, 22, 24, 28, 30, 31, 39, 41, 42, 48, 50, 51, 54, 55, 59	Bovier, E. R., & Dion, G. (2024).
	Affective (A)	24	Items assessing A1–A5: Questions 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 29, 32, 33, 36, 37, 38, 40, 42, 44, 45, 46, 47, 50, 51, 53, 54, 57	
	Psychomotor (P)	10	Items assessing P1–P4: Questions 11, 12, 14, 16, 20, 28, 30, 31, 35, 43	Akintomide, A., & Kim, D. J. (2024).
	Total	60		

Notes:

- Several test items are **double-tagged** (e.g., *C2 + A1* or *C4 + P1*), meaning they assess **multiple learning domains** and therefore appear in more than one category.
- Within each domain (Cognitive, Affective, or Psychomotor), item numbers are **organized in ascending order** for clarity and consistency.

Table 2 shows a full categorization of all 60 multiple-choice test questions that correspond to the three core learning outcome categories evaluated in this study. The 26 items in the Cognitive domain (C1–C6) assess students' recollection of information, understanding, analytical reasoning, evaluative judgment, and innovative problem-solving skills in relation to managing guest requests. The Affective domain (A1–A5) includes 24 items aimed at measuring students' attitudes and value orientations, ranging from basic receptivity to the internalization of professional hospitality dispositions. The Psychomotor domain (P1–P4) consists of 10 items that assess students' capacity to imitate procedures, manipulate tools or information, execute precise techniques, and articulate complex service actions. Several items are double-tagged (e.g., C2 + A1 or C4 + P1), reflecting their alignment with multiple domains; as such, they appear in more than one category. This multidimensional classification enables a more targeted evaluation of learning outcomes and facilitates nuanced analysis of instructional impact across cognitive, affective, and psychomotor competencies.

Result

Sample overview

The study involved students from two vocational institutions specializing in hospitality and tourism education: Lembang Tourism Development Vocational School (Hospitality program) and Bandung Vocational School (Tourism Service program). Participants were enrolled in Grade XI and represented both genders, aged between 16 and 17 years. The distribution of respondents based on school, class, age, and gender is summarized in Table 3.

Table 3. Demographic Distribution of Respondents by School, Class, Age, and Gender

School	Class	Number of Students	Age Range (Years)	Male (n)	Female (n)	Total (n)
Lembang Tourism Development Vocational School	XI Hospitality 1	31	16–17	24	7	31
	XI Hospitality 2	31	16–17	20	11	31
	XI Hospitality 3	29	16–17	18	11	29
Bandung Vocational School	XI Tourism Service 1	35	16–17	6	29	35
	XI Tourism Service 2	32	16–17	7	25	32
Total				75	83	158

Table 3 presents the demographic profile of the 158 student participants involved in this research. The sample comprises 75 male and 83 female students, predominantly aged between 16 and 17 years. The Hospitality group from Lembang Tourism Development Vocational School contributed 91 students across three classes, while Bandung Vocational School contributed 67 students from two tourism service classes. This distribution reflects a balanced representation of genders and class composition, ensuring the research findings capture diverse perspectives within the vocational hospitality and tourism education context.

Data Analysis

Following the item–total correlation analysis conducted at a significance level of $\alpha < .05$, 41 out of the original 60 multiple-choice items met the required validity thresholds and were retained for use in both the *Hospitality* and *Tourism Service* class assessments. These validated items were subsequently organized into the three targeted learning-outcome domains cognitive, affective, and psychomotor (Abbasi et al., 2023) representing the multidimensional competencies measured in the *Guest Service Protocol* module. Table 4 presents the distribution of the validated items across these domains, which formed the basis for evaluating student learning outcomes in both schools.

Table 4. Distribution of Validated Items by Learning-Outcome Domain

Variable	Domain	Number of Items	Description
Learning Outcomes	Cognitive (C)	18	Valid items assessing C1–C6 (e.g., comprehension, application, analysis, and creative problem-solving in guest service scenarios).
	Affective (A)	16	Valid items assessing A1–A5 (e.g., attitudes, empathy, and professional values toward guest interaction).
	Psychomotor (P)	7	Valid items assessing P1–P4 (e.g., performance precision and procedural fluency in service execution).

As shown in Table 4, among the 41 validated items, several demonstrated high discrimination power and were directly integrated into the final test instrument. Items that met validity criteria but exhibited borderline difficulty or discrimination indices were retained for future refinement. Meanwhile, 19 items were excluded due to non-significant item-total correlations or extreme difficulty values. Consequently, the finalized instrument comprised 41 validated items distributed across the three learning domains, providing a reliable measure of student competence in *Guest Service Protocol* across both vocational contexts.

To evaluate the comparative impact of Process-Oriented Guided Inquiry Learning (POGIL), the Jigsaw model, and conventional instruction, both descriptive and inferential analyses were performed using Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA). This approach enabled the comparison of post-test scores across instructional methods while controlling for pre-test differences, ensuring an accurate and statistically robust assessment of each teaching method's influence on students' cognitive learning outcomes.

Following the validation and reliability testing of the assessment instrument, the collected data were analyzed to measure changes in students' cognitive performance across the different instructional groups. Descriptive statistics were first computed to compare pre- and post-test mean scores for each class within the two vocational institutions. These values provided an initial indication of learning progress prior to the inferential analysis using ANCOVA. The visual summary in Figure 2 illustrates the comparative mean scores obtained by students from the *Hospitality classes* at Lembang Tourism Development Vocational School and the *Tourism Service classes* at Bandung Vocational School, highlighting the learning gains achieved under the POGIL, Jigsaw, and conventional teaching conditions.

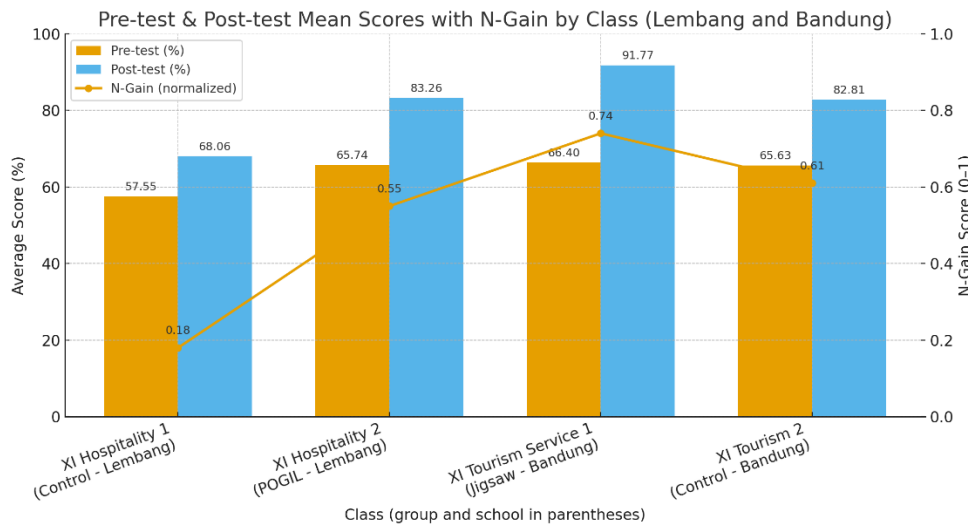


Figure 2. Comparison of Pre-Test, Post-Test, and Normalized Gain for Experimental (POGIL) and Control Groups.

Figure 2 above presents a comparative summary of the pre-test and post-test mean scores, together with normalized gain (N-gain) values for all four class groups across the two participating schools. The figure shows that both the *Hospitality classes* at Lembang Tourism Development Vocational School and the *Tourism Service classes* at Bandung Vocational School experienced substantial learning progress following the intervention. Among the groups, XI Tourism Service 1 (Jigsaw – Bandung) achieved the highest post-test mean score (91.77%) and the largest normalized gain (0.74), indicating a strong positive effect of cooperative learning on cognitive achievement. This was followed by XI Tourism Service 2 (Control – Bandung) with an N-gain of 0.61, XI Hospitality 2 (POGIL – Lembang) with 0.55, and XI Hospitality 1 (Control – Lembang) with 0.18.

Overall, these results highlight that both active learning models POGIL and Jigsaw produced greater improvements in student learning outcomes compared to conventional instruction. However, the notably higher N-gain achieved by the Jigsaw group suggests that cooperative learning yielded the most substantial cognitive advancement in *Guest Service Protocol* training across the two vocational contexts.

For a more thorough comparison of class performance between the two schools, Table 5 shows the mean, lowest, and maximum scores each cohort received on the pre- and post-tests, as well as the normalized gain (N-gain) values that correspond to those scores. These descriptive statistics show initial equivalency across the Hospitality and Tourism Service groups, confirming that all four classes started the intervention with similar baseline performance. Post-intervention outcomes, however, showed distinct variations, with both active-learning models POGIL and Jigsaw producing noticeably larger improvements than the traditional lecture-based programs.

Table 5. Characteristic Statistics for Normalized Gains and Pre- and Post-Test Scores

Class (Group & School)	Pre-test Mean	Post-test Mean	Min / Max
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XI Hospitality 1 (Control – Lembang)	57.55	68.06	16 / 76
XI Hospitality 2 (POGIL – Lembang)	65.74	83.26	24 / 92
XI Tourism Service 1 (Jigsaw – Bandung)	66.40	91.77	50 / 100
XI Tourism Service 2 (Control – Bandung)	65.63	82.81	46 / 98

As shown in Table 5, all groups demonstrated measurable improvement from pre- to post-test; however, the extent of learning gain varied considerably according to the instructional method employed. The Jigsaw group (XI Tourism Service 1) achieved the highest post-test mean (91.77%) and the largest normalized gain (0.74), followed by the Control class in Bandung (N-gain = 0.61) and the POGIL class in Lembang (N-gain = 0.55). The Control group in Lembang recorded the smallest gain (0.18), reflecting limited improvement under conventional instruction.

These findings indicate that both inquiry-based (POGIL) and cooperative (Jigsaw) learning approaches significantly enhanced students' cognitive performance in *Guest Service Protocol* compared to traditional teaching. Furthermore, the stronger performance of the Jigsaw cohort suggests that collaborative learning environments may yield the most substantial cognitive benefits within vocational hospitality and tourism education settings.

Before proceeding with the inferential analyses, the data were examined for normality to determine the suitability of parametric testing. The Kolmogorov–Smirnov and Shapiro–Wilk tests were applied to the pre-test and post-test score distributions for each group in both schools, as summarized in Table 6. The results show that most distributions yielded p -values below .05, indicating significant deviations from normality, particularly in the Hospitality classes at *Lembang Tourism Development Vocational School* (both control and experimental groups) and the control class at *Bandung Vocational School*. Only the Jigsaw experimental class at Bandung (pre- and post-test) and the pre-test of the Bandung control class met the normality assumption ($p > .05$).

Given these outcomes, the overall data set does not satisfy the assumptions required for parametric analysis. As recommended by Murakami et al. (2023), rank-based nonparametric procedures such as the Kruskal–Wallis H for K-independent samples were therefore selected as more appropriate analytical methods. Consistent with Lachin's (2020) guidelines, these methods provide robust inference when data violate distributional assumptions. Following verification of variance homogeneity, all subsequent inferential analyses were conducted using nonparametric techniques.

Table 6. Tests of Normality for Pre- and Post-Test Scores (Kolmogorov–Smirnov & Shapiro–Wilk)

Class / Group	Kolmogorov–Smirnov			Shapiro–Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Pre-Test – Control (Hospitality, Lembang)	0.165	33	0.023	0.935	33	0.048
Post-Test – Control (Hospitality, Lembang)	0.208	31	0.001	0.908	31	0.011
Pre-Test – Experimental (POGIL, Lembang)	0.192	31	0.005	0.923	31	0.029
Post-Test – Experimental (POGIL, Lembang)	0.174	31	0.018	0.932	31	0.048
Pre-Test – Control (Tourism Service, Bandung)	0.142	35	0.070	0.961	35	0.244
Post-Test – Control (Tourism Service, Bandung)	0.218	35	0.000	0.874	35	0.001
Pre-Test – Experimental (Jigsaw, Bandung)	0.142	32	0.100	0.940	32	0.075
Post-Test – Experimental (Jigsaw, Bandung)	0.136	32	0.138	0.961	32	0.298

Class / Group	Kolmogorov–Smirnov			Shapiro–Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.

*Note: Lilliefors Significance Correction applied for the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test.

As shown in Table 6, several score distributions—particularly in the Lembang classes and the Bandung control group violated normality assumptions ($p < .05$). Only the Jigsaw experimental group and the pre-test of the Bandung control class produced $p > .05$, indicating approximate normality. Consequently, nonparametric statistical tests were employed in subsequent analyses to ensure accurate and reliable interpretation of learning-outcome differences across instructional methods and school contexts.

Following confirmation that the data did not meet normality assumptions, a Kruskal–Wallis H test was performed to examine whether significant differences existed among the eight groups representing pre- and post-test scores across both schools. This test was selected because it allows comparison of multiple independent groups under nonparametric conditions, as recommended by Murakami et al. (2023) and Lachin (2020). The analysis compared the *Hospitality (POGIL and control)* classes at Lembang Tourism Development Vocational School and the *Tourism Service (Jigsaw and control)* classes at Bandung Vocational School, each assessed at both pre- and post-intervention phases.

As displayed in Table 7 below, the Kruskal–Wallis test revealed a statistically significant overall difference among the eight distributions ($H = 160.054$, $df = 7$, $p < .001$). Inspection of the mean ranks shows a clear upward shift from pre-test to post-test across all groups, with the largest improvements recorded in the Tourism Service experimental class (Jigsaw) and the Tourism Service control class at Bandung. The *Hospitality classes* in Lembang also demonstrated substantial, albeit smaller, increases in rank scores following instruction. These findings suggest that all teaching methods contributed to student learning, though the magnitude of improvement varied depending on the instructional strategy and institutional context

Table 7. Kruskal–Wallis H Test Summary of Pre- and Post-Test Scores Across Instructional Groups

School / Class (Group)	N	Mean Rank	Interpretation
Hospitality – Control (Lembang) – Pre-Test	31	47.69	Lowest initial scores, reflecting minimal mastery before instruction.
Hospitality – Control (Lembang) – Post-Test	31	154.79	Marked progress under conventional teaching, though smaller than experimental groups.
Hospitality – POGIL (Lembang) – Pre-Test	31	109.66	Moderate baseline readiness prior to guided-inquiry learning.
Hospitality – POGIL (Lembang) – Post-Test	31	117.56	Modest improvement consistent with inquiry-based engagement effects.
Tourism Service – Jigsaw (Bandung) – Pre-Test	35	86.36	Comparable baseline proficiency to other cohorts.
Tourism Service – Jigsaw (Bandung) – Post-Test	35	231.54	Highest rank overall, indicating strong gains from cooperative learning.
Tourism Service – Control (Bandung) – Pre-Test	32	83.27	Slightly lower starting point than its experimental counterpart.
Tourism Service – Control (Bandung) – Post-Test	32	196.84	Significant improvement, suggesting contextual reinforcement of conceptual learning.
Kruskal–Wallis H		160.054	
df		7	

School / Class (Group)	N	Mean Rank	Interpretation
Asymp. Sig. (p)		.000 (p < .001)	Indicates a statistically significant difference among groups.

Note. Grouping variable = Class.

Nonparametric Kruskal–Wallis test performed on pre- and post-test distributions across four instructional models (POGIL, Jigsaw, and two conventional control classes) in Lembang Tourism Development Vocational School and Bandung Vocational School

The results summarized in Table 7 confirm that instructional approach significantly affected learning outcomes across both institutions. The pronounced post-test gains in the Jigsaw group and the Bandung control class indicate that cooperative and contextually relevant teaching practices produced the most substantial improvements in Guest Service Protocol mastery, while the POGIL approach in the Lembang Hospitality context fostered steady conceptual growth. Together, these results reinforce the earlier descriptive trends and validate the effectiveness of active-learning models in enhancing cognitive achievement in vocational hospitality and tourism education.

Discussion

The findings of this study provide compelling evidence that active learning strategies particularly Process-Oriented Guided Inquiry Learning (POGIL) and Jigsaw cooperative learning produce significantly greater and more consistent improvements in *Guest Service Protocol* outcomes than conventional lecture-based instruction. Both at *Lembang Tourism Development Vocational School* (Hospitality program) and *Bandung Vocational School* (Tourism Service program), students exposed to structured collaborative inquiry advanced into higher performance levels following the intervention. The rightward shift in post-test score distributions observed across both experimental groups underscores the cumulative pedagogical effects of these active-learning models particularly their iterative phases of exploration, concept formation, and application in fostering deeper conceptual internalization and adaptive decision-making skills. These findings are consistent with previous studies by Idul and Caro (2022) and Mamombe and Mathabathe (2024), who similarly reported substantial gains in critical thinking and collaborative learning under guided inquiry frameworks.

Although students in the control classes also demonstrated measurable improvement, their post-test performance largely remained within the upper-middle range. This pattern aligns with prior research by Lin and Lee (2023) and Joshi and Lau (2021), which found that conventional instruction even when supplemented by demonstrations tends to yield surface-level comprehension. Such approaches may enable procedural competence but often fail to promote metacognitive awareness or transfer of knowledge to unfamiliar service scenarios. The limited progression observed in the conventional groups in both schools supports the interpretation that passive teaching modes lack the dynamic engagement necessary for complex problem-solving in hospitality contexts.

A comparative analysis of normalized gain values and mean rank scores highlights a distinct divergence between the instructional approaches. Students in the Jigsaw group

(Bandung) attained the highest normalized gain and mean rank, followed by the POGIL group (Lembang), while both control classes recorded comparatively smaller increases. These findings corroborate earlier studies by Özkanbaş and Taştan Kırık (2023) and Rodriguez et al. (2020), which emphasize that structured inquiry and cooperative interdependence enhance self-regulation and promote sustained cognitive engagement. Furthermore, students participating in POGIL and Jigsaw sessions reported higher motivation and ownership over learning an affective dimension that appeared far less evident in the control groups. Collectively, these results indicate that inquiry- and collaboration-based pedagogies do not only strengthen cognitive outcomes but also cultivate self-efficacy and intrinsic interest in vocational learning.

Due to the violation of normality assumptions observed in the Kolmogorov–Smirnov and Shapiro–Wilk tests, all inferential analyses were conducted using nonparametric procedures, consistent with the recommendations of Murakami et al. (2023) and Lachin (2020). The Kruskal–Wallis H test comparing eight data distributions (pre- and post-test results across four instructional groups) revealed a statistically significant difference among all groups ($H = 160.054$, $df = 7$, $p < .001$). Mean rank comparisons showed a clear upward shift across all cohorts, with the most substantial post-test gains recorded in the Tourism Service Jigsaw and Tourism Service control classes at Bandung, followed by moderate increases in the POGIL and Hospitality control classes at Lembang. These results confirm that while all teaching methods contributed positively to learning, the magnitude of improvement was highly dependent on instructional strategy and school context.

Beyond measurable score gains, both POGIL and Jigsaw learning environments fostered more cohesive and interactive classroom communities. Observational records indicated that students collaborated actively in solving service-related cases, demonstrated improved communication fluency, and displayed greater confidence in articulating procedural reasoning. Such collaborative engagement reflects the high-reliability teaming principles described by William et al. (2022), emphasizing shared cognition, distributed leadership, and mutual accountability. These social learning dynamics likely contributed to the durability of learning gains, as students transitioned from passive knowledge reception to active co-construction of understanding.

From a curriculum development perspective, the results underscore the transformative potential of integrating POGIL and Jigsaw modules into vocational hospitality and tourism training to better align teaching strategies with intended service competencies (Houghton, 2023). Rather than maintaining a rigid separation between theory and practice, guided and cooperative inquiry allow instructors to simulate authentic workplace challenges such as managing guest complaints or coordinating high-pressure service operations within classroom environments. Through scaffolded teamwork and reflective questioning, students develop not only conceptual clarity but also decision-making agility, professionalism, and empathy and also skills essential to the hospitality industry.

Scaling the adoption of these approaches requires a multi-tiered professional development strategy. As emphasized by Paseka et al. (2023), instructors must receive ongoing mentorship and peer collaboration opportunities to refine inquiry-based lesson design, manage cooperative group dynamics, and apply formative assessment effectively. Establishing “instructional leaders” or *POGIL and Jigsaw champions* within vocational institutions can

support consistent implementation fidelity, fostering a culture of reflective practice and continuous pedagogical innovation.

Several methodological considerations merit acknowledgment. First, the quasi-experimental design and reliance on intact class groups without random assignment limit external validity. Second, the relatively short intervention period and dependence on cognitive multiple-choice testing may not fully capture long-term learning retention or psychomotor and affective development. Third, although observational field notes enriched qualitative interpretation, systematic coding or triangulation with student reflections was not conducted. Future research should employ longitudinal, multi-institutional designs using mixed methods including performance-based assessments and structured interviews to capture the broader educational impacts of active learning models.

In conclusion, this study adds to the growing body of evidence supporting the integration of structured guided inquiry and cooperative learning within vocational education. The demonstrated success of POGIL and Jigsaw in enhancing cognitive, social, and motivational outcomes indicates that these frameworks can transform hospitality and tourism training into more learner-centered, inquiry-driven ecosystems. By shifting the instructional paradigm from passive content transmission to active knowledge construction, vocational institutions can more effectively prepare graduates to navigate the complex, adaptive challenges of the modern service industry.

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Conclusion

This study provides compelling evidence that the application of active learning models, particularly Process-Oriented Guided Inquiry Learning (POGIL) and Jigsaw cooperative learning, substantially enhances student learning outcomes in vocational hospitality and tourism education. Conducted across two institutions Lembang Tourism Development Vocational School (Hospitality program) and Bandung Vocational School (Tourism Service program) the research demonstrated that structured inquiry and cooperative engagement lead to superior cognitive development in Guest Service Protocol competencies compared to traditional lecture-based instruction. Through their systematic phases of exploration, concept construction, application, and reflection, these models fostered deeper conceptual understanding, improved procedural accuracy, and heightened learner autonomy.

While both control groups exposed to conventional lecture-demonstration formats exhibited measurable improvement, their learning gains were more modest and less consistent. The conventional method proved adequate for reinforcing factual knowledge and procedural recall but failed to fully engage students in reflective analysis or problem-solving. These results align with previous findings by Lin and Lee (2023) and Joshi and Lau (2021), who noted that passive instructional approaches often yield limited metacognitive growth. In contrast, students

in both experimental groups particularly those taught through the Jigsaw model at Bandung Vocational School that are demonstrated significant advancement, as evidenced by the highest mean ranks and normalized gain values observed in the study.

At Lembang Tourism Development Vocational School, the POGIL cohort also exhibited steady, comprehensive progress across pre- and post-assessment phases. The absence of learning regression among participants suggests that the guided-inquiry framework effectively accommodates diverse learner profiles while fostering analytical reasoning and teamwork. Similarly, the Jigsaw group in Bandung Vocational School achieved the most substantial post-test improvements, underscoring the power of cooperative interdependence and shared responsibility in enhancing retention and application of service procedures. Both active learning approaches cultivated an environment of active dialogue, peer support, and reflective thinking elements critical to developing service professionals capable of adapting to dynamic, real-world hospitality scenarios.

In conclusion, the findings strongly endorse POGIL and Jigsaw as pedagogically robust strategies for vocational education programs aiming to bridge theory and practice. Their learner-centered, interaction-driven frameworks promote critical thinking, decision-making flexibility, and interpersonal competence all of which are essential attributes in the contemporary hospitality and tourism industry. By moving beyond rote instruction toward inquiry-based and collaborative learning ecosystems, vocational institutions can create more authentic, skill-oriented classrooms that better prepare students to meet the evolving demands of global service environments.

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Healthy Lifestyle Makes an Impact: How Health Consciousness Increases Healthy Juice Purchase Intention?

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Abstract

This study aims to examine the influence of personal psychological characteristics, specifically health consciousness, on consumer attitudes and purchase intentions toward healthy juice. This research employed a quantitative approach through online questionnaire distribution. Three main variables were measured using a 5-point Likert scale and analyzed using simple linear regression via SPSS. The sample consisted of 70 respondents, primarily Gen Z individuals residing in Jakarta. The results indicate that health consciousness has a significant positive effect on attitudes toward healthy juice, and these attitudes significantly influence purchase intentions. This study offers a new perspective by identifying attitudes toward healthy juice as a mediating factor between health consciousness and purchase intention. The specific focus on healthy juice contributes to consumer research in the context of healthy food and beverages, particularly among urban Gen Z consumers. Practically, the findings provide insights for producers to design marketing strategies that highlight the health value of products and target health-conscious young consumers. Theoretically, this study enriches the literature on consumer behavior regarding healthy products.

Keywords: *Health Consciousness; Consumer Attitude; Purchase Intention; Healthy Juice; Gen Z*

Introduction

Worldwide, more than two billion adults and children are estimated to be overweight, and the obesity epidemic will continue to increase in the coming years (Mai & Hoffmann, 2015). Among the modifiable lifestyle behaviors often associated with obesity and weight gain, the consumption of sugary drinks (or sugar-sweetened beverages) stands out as a particularly prominent issue (Collado-Rivera et al., 2018). Consumption of sugary drinks has been linked not only to weight gain but also to type 2 diabetes, hypertension, and cardiovascular disease (Malik et al., 2010). Some evidence even suggests that consumption of sugary drinks may be associated with pancreatic cancer due to its role in increasing insulin production (Genkinger et al., 2012). awareness (i.e., the extent to which consumers are interested in their health and motivated to engage in preventive and health care behaviors) is often considered a remedy for combating the obesity epidemic, and many health campaigns address this motivation (Wall et al., 2009). Fruit juice is often considered a healthy beverage (Kumar et al., 2015). Indeed, little is known about how consumers consider sugar information when choosing fruit juice—despite warnings that excessive consumption of sweetened beverages can be harmful to health. Furthermore, while all sweetened beverages and other soft drinks are considered unhealthy and taxed by governments in most countries, fruit juice (despite its very high sugar content) is not included in the category of sweetened beverages and is largely untouched by policy. Furthermore, there are no mandatory warnings about the high sugar content in fruit juice and 100% milk (Donnelly et al., 2018) when consumers choose fruit juice (Sah et al., 2021).

Health awareness in society is now increasing, which consciously or unconsciously influences healthier eating patterns. Currently, many consumers are starting to switch to healthier food and beverage products, such as healthy juices, in an effort to maintain a healthy lifestyle. According to (Yadav & Pathak, 2016), consumers who are health-conscious tend to prefer products that focus on healthy eating. This can be seen from the awareness of health that influences decisions in choosing healthy juices (Yadav & Pathak, 2016).

Consumer awareness of healthy juices is greatly influenced by perceptions of the health benefits they offer. A positive attitude toward healthy juices is more common among people who believe in the health benefits of these juices. (Wang & Chu, 2020) state that attitudes toward healthy foods are significantly influenced by perceptions of the benefits and value of the product. This shows that a positive assessment of healthy juices can strengthen consumer purchasing value (Wang & Chu, 2020).

Purchase intent is a key indicator that bridges consumer attitudes and actual behavior. Consumers who have a positive attitude toward healthy juice and are health conscious are essentially more likely to purchase the product. Purchase intention for healthy foods is greatly influenced by perceptions of safety and health awareness (Hsu et al., 2016). It is important to understand how these two variables can influence consumers' desire to purchase healthy juice.

Although many studies have explored the relationship between health consciousness and purchasing decisions, there are still limitations in studies that specifically highlight attitudes toward healthy juices as mediators. Some studies only focus on organic products in general without exploring specific types of beverages. Purchasing decisions for fortified and healthy foods are often influenced by factors that have not been fully identified, especially in specific

product categories such as juice (Shamal & Mohan, 2017). Therefore, more in-depth research is needed to understand the specific dynamics of healthy juice purchase intentions (Shamal & Mohan, 2017).

By understanding the relationship between health awareness, attitudes toward healthy juices, and purchase intentions, this study can make an important contribution to the healthy food industry. (Rezai et al., 2017) states that consumer attitudes toward healthy products greatly influence purchasing decisions, so it is important for manufacturers to understand these factors when designing marketing strategies. Effective marketing of healthy juice products needs to consider consumer health awareness and provide relevant information to reinforce positive attitudes toward these products (Rezai et al., 2017).

This study aims to explore how health awareness and attitudes toward healthy juices influence consumer purchase intentions. The findings of this study are expected to provide deeper insights into consumer behavior in choosing healthy food products. Health awareness plays an important role in purchasing decisions for healthy products, and this study aims to enrich this understanding in the context of healthy juices (Michaelidou & Hassan, 2010).

1. Literature Review

Psychological factors are the main predictors of consumer purchasing behavior (Žabkar & Kolar, 2010), and researchers are increasingly focusing on these factors (Anýžová, 2017). Research shows that consumer health awareness significantly influences the consumption of healthy juices. Studies show that consumers drink more beverages that are considered healthy (Kim & House, 2014), and generally have knowledge about the differences, health benefits, and sugar content of various classifications of fruit juices (Duffett, 2018). Health consciousness is the extent to which consumers care about illness and poor health, and health-conscious consumers tend to lead healthy lifestyles (Newsom et al., 2005).

Health-conscious consumers feel a personal responsibility for their health, seek health information, and change their behavior (Hong, 2009). Health-conscious individuals are active participants in health management (Michaelidou & Hassan, 2010), and they tend to consume health supplements (Quinones et al., 2013). Therefore, because health consciousness can make a person more careful when making food choices (Chen, 2009), health consciousness influences consumer food purchases (Bower et al., 2003).

The Influence of Health Consciousness on Consumer Attitudes Toward Healthy Juice

Health consciousness is one of the psychological factors that significantly influences consumer behavior, especially in terms of food and beverage product selection (Chen, 2013). Research shows that individuals with high health consciousness tend to develop more positive attitudes toward products that are considered healthy, such as healthy juices. This health consciousness is related to a better understanding of the impact of diet on physical health and the decision to consume products that can improve their quality of life (Carbonneau et al., 2021).

Consumers with a high level of health consciousness will more often seek information about the nutritional benefits and ingredients in food and beverage products. This can create a positive attitude towards products that they consider to be in line with their health standards.

Healthy juices, as products rich in vitamins and nutrients, are the top choice for health conscious consumers.

Another study conducted by Pan et al. (2025) shows that consumers with high health awareness tend to have a more supportive attitude towards products that are considered good for their health. They are more open to products with clear health claims, such as healthy juices that contain natural ingredients and are free from harmful additives. This attitude encourages them to invest in more expensive but healthier products, such as healthy juices, even though price is one of the factors that can influence their purchasing decisions.

Consumer attitudes toward healthy food products are greatly influenced by their level of health consciousness (Panji et al., 2024). This study found that consumers with high health consciousness tend to choose products with natural ingredients and those that offer long-term health benefits. These consumers are also more concerned about the sugar content and additives in fruit juices, which influences their attitudes toward healthy juice products.

The importance of health awareness in influencing consumer choices in consuming healthy juices is clearly evident in the study (Carbonneau et al., 2021). Health-conscious consumers are more likely to avoid products with high sugar content and prefer juices that use natural ingredients and are low in calories. This shows that health awareness not only influences consumers' attitudes towards products, but also influences their preferences for specific characteristics of the product, such as taste, nutritional content, and packaging. Therefore, the researchers propose the following hypothesis:

H1. Health consciousness positively influences attitude toward healthy juice.

The Influence of Consumer Attitudes Toward Healthy Juice on Purchase Intention

Many studies have explored the relationship between attitude and purchase intention among consumers (Kuntz et al., 2012; Pigatto et al., 2017). The theory of planned behavior (Ajzen 1991, n.d.) also states that people who have a positive attitude toward a behavior are more likely to engage in that behavior. Previous research has shown that consumer attitudes positively influence purchase intention (Chang & Chen, 2022). Positive attitudes toward a product, including healthy juice, are often directly related to consumers' intention to purchase that product, demonstrating the importance of this psychological factor in the context of purchasing decisions.

Research conducted by (Chang & Chen, 2022) confirms that consumer attitudes toward healthy juice significantly influence their intention to purchase the product. Consumers who have a positive attitude toward the health benefits offered by healthy juice are more likely to purchase this product regularly. This attitude is not only influenced by perceptions of health benefits, but also by consumers' previous positive experiences with consuming healthy juice.

Attitudes toward health products, including healthy juices, act as a driving factor in consumers' purchase intentions (Nagaraj, 2021). Attitudes formed by factors such as taste quality, attractive packaging, and the credibility of health claims made by manufacturers can strengthen consumers' purchase intentions (Nagaraj, 2021). This shows that not only attitudes towards health benefits, but also external factors such as visual aspects and the information conveyed can strengthen consumers' intentions to buy healthy juice.

Another study conducted by (Bai et al., 2021) found that positive attitudes toward healthy juice, stemming from an understanding of nutrition and physical health, are directly related to purchase intent. Consumers who are aware of the importance of maintaining health through a healthy diet are more likely to buy healthy juice than those who do not pay attention to health issues in their food choices. Therefore, we state that in relation to functional foods, more positive consumer attitudes result in greater repurchase intentions, as stated in the following hypothesis:

H2. A positive attitude toward healthy juice positively influences consumer purchase intention.

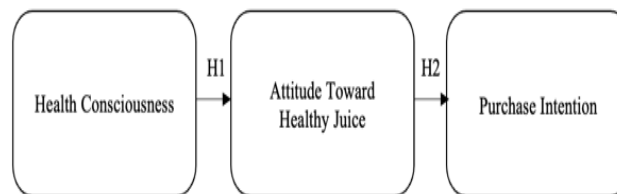


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework
Source: By researchers (2025)

Methodology

The questionnaire is divided into two parts. The second part of the questionnaire includes questions related to their demographic characteristics, such as gender, age, and education level. The second part of the questionnaire describes the measurement items for the three variables in this study. Health awareness is measured using four items. Attitude is measured using a six-item scale. Repurchase intention is measured using a four-item scale. Each variable is measured using a 5-point Likert scale, where 1 is "strongly disagree" and 5 is "strongly agree".

Sampling was used for data collection. The survey link was distributed via social media and through the researchers' personal contacts. Distribution of the Google form began in May 2025. No incentives were offered for participation, and respondents were informed that the survey results would only be used for research purposes. Of the 70 people who agreed to fill out the questionnaire, all were declared valid. Among the 70 respondents who were finally selected, 44 were women (62.9%), 46 (65.7%) were between 18 and 28 years old, and 32 (45.7%) had a high school education.

Using SPSS (Version 29) before testing the hypothesis, the researcher first conducted validity and reliability tests on the research instruments. The validity test was conducted using the Pearson correlation method between the item scores and the total construct scores of each variable. The statement items were declared valid if the correlation value showed significance ($p < 0.05$). Next, the reliability test. A construct was considered reliable if the alpha value was ≥ 0.7 , which indicated good internal consistency of the instrument.

After the instruments were declared valid and reliable, the researchers proceeded to test the hypotheses using simple linear regression analysis. The first hypothesis (H1) tested the effect of health consciousness on attitude toward healthy juice. The analysis was performed using Simple Linear Regression in SPSS, with attitude as the dependent variable and health

consciousness as the independent variable. The results noted in this analysis were the regression coefficient (Beta) and significance value ($p < 0.05$) to see if there was a significant effect, as well as the R Square value to measure the contribution of the independent variable to the dependent variable.

Next, the second hypothesis (H2) tests the effect of attitude toward healthy juice on purchase intention. This analysis was also conducted using simple linear regression, with purchase intention as the dependent variable and attitude as the independent variable. As with H1, the interpretation of the results focuses on the Beta value, p-value, and R Square.

All data used in this study were measured using a 1–5 Likert scale, so they were treated as interval data. Before the final interpretation, the researcher ensured that the basic assumptions of regression were met, including data normality, linearity of the relationship between variables, no multicollinearity (in multiple regression), and homoscedasticity of residuals.

Results

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

No.	Sociodemographics	Item	Percentage
1	Gender	Men	37.1
		Women	62.9
2	Age	Under 12 years old	4.3
		12 - 28 years	65.7
		29 - 44 years	28.6
		45 - 60 years	1.4
3	Highest level of education	Elementary school	5.7
		Secondary school	45.7
		University – Diploma	4.3
		University – Bachelor's Degree	42.9
		University – Postgraduate	1.4
4	Employment	Not working	2.9
		Student	60.0
		Part time worker	8.6
		Full time worker	28.6
5	Place of residence	West java	11.4

		Central java	4.3
		East java	5.7
		Jakarta	78.6

Source: Research data (2025)

The results of this study involved education (junior high school/high school) respondents with diverse socio at 45.7%, followed by bachelor's degree demographic characteristics. The graduates (D4/S1) at 42.9%. Meanwhile, the majority of respondents in this study diploma graduates (D1–D3) accounted for were female (62.9%), while males 4.3%, elementary school graduates (SD) accounted for 37.1% of the total accounted for 5.7%, and postgraduate participants. Based on age group, the graduates (S2/S3) accounted for 1.4%. The majority of respondents were in the 13.

In terms of employment, the largest 28 age range or Gen Z, accounting for proportion were students (60.0%), 65.7%. The next age group was followed by full-time workers (28.6%), Millennials (29–44 years old) with part-time workers (8.6%), and respondents with a percentage of 28.6%, followed by those who were not working (2.9%). The children under 12 years old (Gen Alpha) location of respondents' residences was at 4.3%, and Gen X (45–60 years old) was dominated by those residing in Jakarta 1.4%. (78.6%), while the rest came from the West in terms of highest level of education, Java (11.4%), East Java (5.7%), and most respondents completed secondary Central Java (4.3%).

Table 2. Hypothesis Test Results

Hypot hesis	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	β	t-value	p-value	Significance	Result
H1	Health Consciousness	Attitude Toward Healthy Juice	0.782	18.064	0.000	Significant	Accepted
H2	Attitude Toward Healthy Juice	Purchase Intention	0.861	32.262	0.000	Significant	Accepted

Source: Research data (2025)

The testing of two hypotheses in this study was conducted using regression analysis, which produced statistically significant findings: Hypothesis H1 tested the effect of Health Consciousness on Attitude Toward Healthy Juice. The analysis results show that Health Consciousness has a positive and significant effect on attitudes toward healthy juice, with a path coefficient of $\beta = 0.782$ and a t-value of 18.064 ($p = 0.000 < 0.05$). This means that the higher a person's health consciousness, the more positive their attitude toward healthy juice products. Therefore, this hypothesis is accepted.

Hypothesis H2 tests the effect of Attitude Toward Healthy Juice on Purchase Intention. The regression results show that attitude toward healthy juice significantly affects purchase intention, with a path coefficient of $\beta = 0.861$ and a t-value of 32.262 ($p = 0.000 < 0.05$). This finding confirms that a positive attitude toward healthy products strongly contributes to increasing purchase intention. This hypothesis is also accepted.

Overall, the results of this study show that the demographics of respondents, which are dominated by Gen Z and women with secondary to bachelor's degrees, have a fairly high level of health awareness. This is reflected in their positive attitudes towards healthy juice products, which ultimately encourages their intention to purchase. The implications of these findings indicate the importance of marketing strategies that target health-conscious young people, especially in urban areas such as Jakarta. In addition, product communication approaches should emphasize health values and healthy lifestyles that are relevant to the preferences of the Gen Z segment.

Discussion

In this study, we found that health consciousness has a positive and significant effect on individuals' attitudes toward healthy juice. This finding is consistent with various literature indicating that health consciousness plays an important role in shaping consumer preferences for food and beverage products. Previous research by (Chen, 2013) shows that health consciousness is one of the significant psychological factors influencing consumer behavior, particularly in terms of choosing healthier products. This confirms that individuals with a high level of health consciousness tend to prefer products that are considered beneficial to health, including healthy juices.

The results of this study provide strong support for the proposed hypothesis, namely that a positive attitude toward healthy juice has a positive effect on consumers' purchase intentions. These findings indicate that consumers who have a positive view of the health benefits offered by healthy juices are more likely to purchase these products regularly. This is in line with research conducted by (Huang et al., 2022), which states that consumer attitudes toward healthy juices have a significant influence on their intention to purchase these products.

A positive attitude toward healthy juices appears to play a key role in influencing consumer purchasing decisions. When consumers believe that healthy juices provide tangible health benefits, they are more likely to perceive these products as valuable and relevant to their needs. In this context, consumers see healthy juices not only as consumer products, but also as an investment in their healthy lifestyles. Consumers are more likely to choose products that they believe provide long-term health benefits.

This study makes an important contribution to understanding the relationship between consumer attitudes and purchase intentions. Positive attitudes can be shaped by various factors, including the influence of marketing campaigns that highlight the health benefits of healthy juices, as well as broader information about the positive effects of consuming natural and nutritious products. Therefore, it is important for marketers to convey messages that reinforce

consumers' positive perceptions of the health benefits of healthy juices, thereby increasing their purchase intention and loyalty to these products.

This study also confirms the positive relationship between attitude and purchase intention. It should be noted that purchase intention does not always translate into actual purchasing behavior. Other factors, such as price, ease of access, and direct experience with the product, can also play an important role in influencing purchasing decisions. External factors can interact with consumer attitudes to shape their final decisions. Therefore, further research is needed to explore in greater depth the factors that influence the conversion of purchase intent into actual purchasing behavior.

Conclusions

This study shows that health awareness plays an important role in shaping positive attitudes toward healthy juices, which in turn influence consumers' purchase intentions. The results confirm that consumers who are more aware of the importance of health tend to prefer products that are considered healthy, such as healthy juices. Positive attitudes toward these products are closely related to the desire to purchase healthy juices regularly. These findings emphasize the importance of health awareness in influencing consumers' decisions to choose healthy food products.

For healthy juice producers, this study provides valuable insight that health-conscious consumers are more likely to choose healthy juices. Therefore, marketing strategies that focus on the health benefits of the product and transparency of information regarding nutritional content can be an effective way to attract consumers. Additionally, considering that Gen Z constitutes the majority of respondents in this study, it is important for marketers to tailor marketing messages that align with their healthy lifestyles. Marketing that emphasizes health benefits can strengthen consumers' purchase intent and loyalty toward healthy juice products.

Of course, this study has several limitations. First, the sample used consisted mostly of young respondents, particularly those living in urban areas such as Jakarta. This certainly limits the scope of the findings and cannot be generalized to a wider population, both in terms of age and location. Second, although health awareness and positive attitudes toward healthy juices were the main focus, other factors such as price, product availability, and direct experience with the product were not discussed, even though these factors also have the potential to influence purchasing decisions.

Further research should use a more diverse sample in terms of age, education, and geographic location to obtain more representative results. In addition, more in-depth research on other external factors such as price, ease of access, and consumers' direct experience with the product could provide a more comprehensive understanding of healthy juice purchasing behavior. For future research, it would also be useful to explore further how marketing campaigns that highlight health benefits can influence purchase intent and ultimately convert that intent into actual purchasing behavior.

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Entrepreneurial Competence and Business Sustainability: The Mediating Role of Innovation among Local Culinary MSMEs in Kota Bandung, Indonesia

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Abstract

Entrepreneurial competence is widely recognized as a critical internal resource that enables micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) to innovate and sustain their businesses in dynamic and competitive environments. This study examines the relationship between entrepreneurial competence and business sustainability, with innovation serving as a mediating variable, among local culinary MSMEs in Kota Bandung, Indonesia. Using a quantitative research design, data were collected from 151 owners and managers of local culinary MSMEs and analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with SmartPLS 4. The findings reveal that entrepreneurial competence has a significant positive effect on innovation, and innovation, in turn, significantly enhances business sustainability. Moreover, entrepreneurial competence also demonstrates a significant direct effect on business sustainability, as well as an indirect effect through innovation, confirming the mediating role of innovation. These results suggest that entrepreneurial competence contributes more effectively to long-term business sustainability when it is translated into continuous innovation in products, processes, marketing, and organizational practices. This study extends the entrepreneurship literature by empirically validating the competence, innovation, sustainability mechanism within the context of local culinary MSMEs in an emerging economy. Practically, the findings provide valuable insights for entrepreneurs, policymakers, and support institutions in designing competency development and innovation-oriented programs to strengthen the sustainability and competitiveness of MSMEs in the culinary sector.

Keywords: *Entrepreneurial Competence; Innovation; Business Sustainability; Culinary Msmes; Entrepreneurship; Indonesia*

Introduction

Entrepreneurship plays a pivotal role in driving economic growth, fostering innovation, and enhancing social welfare, particularly in emerging economies. Entrepreneurial activities not only generate employment opportunities and income but also strengthen local economic structures through the development of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) (Srimulyani & Hermanto, 2021). In developing countries such as Indonesia, entrepreneurship is widely recognized as a strategic instrument for accelerating post-crisis economic recovery and promoting inclusive economic growth. Accordingly, the Indonesian government has consistently strengthened the MSME ecosystem through policies emphasizing innovation, digitalization, and human capital development (Alexandro, 2025).

Among various MSME sectors, the culinary industry represents one of the most dynamic segments due to its close relationship with local culture, tourism, and evolving consumer lifestyles. Local culinary MSMEs in Bandung have experienced rapid growth driven by creative food concepts and cultural differentiation. Despite their relative resilience, these enterprises face significant challenges in maintaining long-term business sustainability amid intensifying competition, changing consumer preferences, and rapid technological advancement (Nosike et al., 2024). These challenges underscore the importance of entrepreneurial competence as a critical internal capability that enables MSME owners to adapt effectively to environmental uncertainty.

Entrepreneurial competence refers to a combination of knowledge, skills, and personal attributes that enable entrepreneurs to identify opportunities, manage resources, formulate strategies, and take calculated risks (Ismail, 2022). Empirical studies have demonstrated that entrepreneurial competence significantly influences firm performance, innovation capability, and long-term sustainability, particularly within food and beverage MSMEs (Fazal et al., 2022; Najib et al., 2021). Scholars commonly classify entrepreneurial competence into opportunity competence, conceptual competence, strategic competence, and commitment competence (Luo et al., 2022; Marei et al., 2023). These competencies allow entrepreneurs to recognize market opportunities, solve business problems, formulate long-term strategies, and sustain commitment to business continuity.

Innovation is widely acknowledged as a central mechanism through which entrepreneurial competence is transformed into superior business outcomes. Drawing from Schumpeter's theory of economic development, innovation involves the introduction of new or improved products, processes, marketing methods, organizational practices, or value creation mechanisms (Omri et al., 2015; Schumpeter, 1934). In the context of culinary MSMEs, innovation commonly appears in the form of product diversification, process efficiency improvements, digital marketing adoption, and organizational adjustments (Najib et al., 2021; Srimulyani & Hermanto, 2021). Previous studies confirm that innovation enhances competitiveness, strengthens resilience to external shocks, and contributes positively to business sustainability (Ismail, 2022; Sulistyani et al., 2022).

Business sustainability refers to a firm's ability to survive and grow in the long term by balancing economic performance with social and environmental responsibilities. This concept is often framed through the triple bottom line perspective, which emphasizes economic, social,

and environmental sustainability (Fazal et al., 2022). For MSMEs, sustainability involves maintaining financial stability, fostering positive social relationships with employees and communities, and managing resources responsibly (Ameer & Othman, 2012). Prior research suggests that entrepreneurial competence and innovation play crucial roles in achieving sustainable business performance, as competent entrepreneurs are more capable of implementing innovative practices that improve efficiency, value creation, and adaptability (Eikelenboom & De Jong, 2019; Ismail, 2022).

Although previous studies have examined the relationships between entrepreneurial competence, innovation, and firm performance, empirical evidence that explicitly explains the mediating role of innovation in the relationship between entrepreneurial competence and business sustainability remains limited, particularly in the context of local culinary MSMEs in Indonesia. Addressing this gap, the present study investigates how entrepreneurial competence influences business sustainability both directly and indirectly through innovation. Grounded in the Resource-Based View (RBV), this study conceptualizes entrepreneurial competence as a strategic internal resource that fosters innovation and supports sustainable competitive advantage (Fazal et al., 2022). By focusing on local culinary MSMEs in Bandung, this research contributes to the entrepreneurship literature in emerging economies and offers practical implications for entrepreneurs and policymakers seeking to strengthen MSME sustainability through competency-based innovation strategies.

Methodology

This study adopted a quantitative research approach to examine the relationships among entrepreneurial competence, innovation, and business sustainability in local culinary micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in Bandung, Indonesia. A cross-sectional survey design was employed to capture perceptions and experiences of MSME owners and managers regarding their entrepreneurial competencies, innovation practices, and sustainability performance. Quantitative methods were selected to enable objective measurement of latent constructs and to test the proposed causal relationships using structural modeling techniques.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire distributed through both online and offline channels over a six-month period. Online data collection was conducted via Google Forms, while offline data were gathered during a workshop on export legality standardization for Indonesian culinary MSMEs targeting the Qatar market. This dual approach was intended to increase response diversity and improve data representativeness. The collected data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling based on Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS), which is suitable for exploratory research, prediction-oriented models, and complex relationships involving mediation effects.

Research Design and Sample

The population of this study consisted of local culinary MSMEs operating in Bandung, Indonesia. The sampling criteria were defined to ensure relevance and data quality. Eligible respondents were MSME owners, founders, or primary managers who were directly involved

in strategic and operational decision-making. In addition, the businesses were required to be actively operating at the time of the survey and to have been in operation for a minimum of six months to ensure that respondents had sufficient entrepreneurial experience.

A total of 151 valid responses were obtained and included in the analysis. The sample size satisfies the recommended minimum requirements for SEM analysis, which suggest that the number of observations should be at least five to ten times the number of indicators used in the model [14]. Given that this study employed 15 measurement indicators, the sample size was considered adequate for robust SEM–PLS estimation.

Measurement of Variables

The measurement instruments were adapted from prior empirical studies to ensure validity and theoretical consistency. Entrepreneurial competence was measured using four dimensions: opportunity competence, conceptual competence, strategic competence, and commitment competence (Ismail, 2022; Luo et al., 2022). These dimensions capture the entrepreneur's ability to identify opportunities, analyze and solve problems, formulate strategies, and maintain commitment to business continuity.

Innovation was operationalized through five dimensions: product innovation, process innovation, marketing innovation, organizational innovation, and value-added innovation (Najib et al., 2021; Omri et al., 2015). These dimensions reflect the extent to which MSMEs introduce new or improved products, enhance production processes, adopt innovative marketing practices, and adjust organizational structures to create additional value.

Business sustainability was measured based on the triple bottom line framework, encompassing economic sustainability, social sustainability, and environmental sustainability (Fazal et al., 2022; Ismail, 2022). Economic sustainability refers to financial stability and revenue continuity, social sustainability reflects ethical practices and social responsibility, and environmental sustainability focuses on efficient resource use and waste management.

All measurement items were assessed using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The complete list of measurement items is provided in the appendix.

Data Analysis Technique

Data analysis was conducted using SmartPLS 4 software. SEM–PLS was selected because it allows simultaneous evaluation of measurement models and structural relationships among latent variables and is appropriate for models involving mediation effects and relatively small sample sizes (Ali et al., 2018). The analysis followed a two-stage procedure. First, the measurement model was evaluated to assess convergent validity, discriminant validity, and reliability. Second, the structural model was assessed to test the proposed hypotheses and examine the direct and indirect relationships among entrepreneurial competence, innovation, and business sustainability.

Results

This section presents the empirical results of the study based on data collected from 151 local culinary micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in Kota Bandung, Indonesia. In

accordance with the GFORT template, the results are presented using a combination of narrative explanation and tables, covering respondent characteristics, descriptive statistics, measurement model evaluation, and structural model testing.

Table 1: Descriptive of Research Variables

Variable	Mean	Category
Entrepreneurial Competence	4.25	Very High
Innovation	4.26	Very High
Business Sustainability	4.29	Very High

As shown in Table 2, all research variables achieved high to very high mean values, indicating strong entrepreneurial competence, innovation capability, and sustainability orientation among local culinary MSMEs.

Table 2: Reability and Validity Assesment

Contract	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Validity
Entrepreneurial Competence	0.921	0.940	Valid
Innovation	0.930	0.947	Valid
Business Sustainability	0.922	0.942	valid

Table 2 confirms that all constructs meet the recommended thresholds for reliability and validity, demonstrating the robustness of the measurement model.

Table 3: Structural Model and Hypothesis testing

Hypothesis	Path	β	p-value	Result
H1	EC $\rightarrow$ BS	0.438	<0.001	Supported
H2	EC $\rightarrow$ IN	0.975	<0.001	Supported
H3	IN $\rightarrow$ BS	0.540	<0.001	Supported
H4	EC $\rightarrow$ IN $\rightarrow$ BS	0.527	<0.001	Supported

The structural model results presented in Table 3 indicate that all proposed hypotheses are supported. Entrepreneurial competence significantly influences innovation and business sustainability, both directly and indirectly through innovation, confirming the mediating role of innovation.

Discussion

The findings of this study provide strong empirical evidence that entrepreneurial competence plays a crucial role in enhancing business sustainability among local culinary MSMEs, both directly and indirectly through innovation. Consistent with prior entrepreneurship research, the results confirm that entrepreneurs who possess strong competencies in recognizing opportunities, formulating strategies, and maintaining commitment are better positioned to sustain their businesses in competitive and uncertain environments (Fazal et al., 2022; Marei et al., 2023).

The significant positive effect of entrepreneurial competence on innovation highlights the importance of internal entrepreneurial capabilities in driving innovative behavior. This finding supports earlier studies suggesting that competent entrepreneurs are more capable of transforming knowledge and skills into innovative products, processes, and marketing practices (Ismail, 2022; Luo et al., 2022). In the context of local culinary MSMEs, innovation often emerges through menu diversification, creative use of local ingredients, digital marketing adoption, and improvements in operational efficiency. These forms of innovation enable MSMEs to respond effectively to changing consumer preferences and intensifying competition.

Furthermore, innovation was found to have a significant positive effect on business sustainability, reinforcing the view that innovation is a key mechanism for achieving long-term business viability. This result aligns with previous empirical evidence indicating that innovative MSMEs are more resilient to external shocks and more capable of maintaining economic performance while addressing social and environmental concerns (Omri et al., 2015; Sulistyani et al., 2022). For culinary MSMEs, innovation contributes not only to financial sustainability but also to social value creation through employment and community engagement, as well as environmental sustainability through more efficient resource use.

Importantly, the mediation analysis demonstrates that innovation serves as a critical pathway through which entrepreneurial competence influences business sustainability. While entrepreneurial competence has a direct impact on sustainability, the indirect effect through innovation is substantial, indicating that competencies yield greater sustainability outcomes when translated into innovative practices. This finding supports the Resource-Based View (RBV), which emphasizes that internal resources such as entrepreneurial competence create sustainable competitive advantage when they are effectively deployed to generate value-creating activities, including innovation (Barney, 1991).

Overall, these findings suggest that strengthening entrepreneurial competence alone is not sufficient to ensure business sustainability unless it is accompanied by continuous innovation. For local culinary MSMEs in Bandung, the integration of entrepreneurial competence and innovation represents a strategic approach to achieving sustainable growth and long-term competitiveness.

Conclusions

This study investigated the relationship between entrepreneurial competence and business sustainability, with innovation as a mediating variable, among local culinary MSMEs in Bandung, Indonesia. Using a quantitative approach and SEM–PLS analysis, the findings confirm that entrepreneurial competence has a significant positive effect on innovation and business sustainability. Innovation was also found to significantly enhance business sustainability and to mediate the relationship between entrepreneurial competence and sustainability outcomes.

The study contributes to entrepreneurship literature by empirically validating the competence–innovation–sustainability mechanism within the context of local culinary MSMEs in an emerging economy. By integrating entrepreneurial competence and innovation within the

Resource-Based View framework, this research provides deeper insight into how internal entrepreneurial capabilities can be transformed into sustainable competitive advantage.

From a practical perspective, the findings highlight the importance of competency development programs that emphasize not only managerial and strategic skills but also innovation-oriented capabilities. Policymakers and support institutions are encouraged to design entrepreneurship development initiatives that foster opportunity recognition, strategic thinking, and continuous innovation, particularly for culinary MSMEs that rely heavily on creativity and local identity.

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations. The use of cross-sectional data limits the ability to capture dynamic changes in entrepreneurial competence and innovation over time. Additionally, the study focuses on culinary MSMEs in a single city, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Future research is recommended to employ longitudinal designs, expand the geographical scope, and explore additional variables such as digital orientation or entrepreneurial mindset to further enrich the understanding of business sustainability in MSMEs.

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The Influence of Food Involvement on Tourists' Food Variety Seeking and Food Neophobia

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Abstract

Gastronomic tourism has evolved into a holistic experience, but food exploration is often hindered by food neophobia. This study analyzes the influence of food involvement on food variety seeking and food neophobia among Indonesian tourists, focusing on three dimensions: attraction, identity, and social bonding. A survey was conducted with 204 tourists over 15 years old using an online questionnaire with a 5-point Likert scale. Regression results show that all food involvement dimensions significantly and positively influence food variety seeking, with identity as the strongest predictor. For food neophobia, only attraction and social bonding show significant negative effects. These findings suggest that food involvement enhances culinary exploration and reduces fear of new foods. Practically, this implies the importance of fostering culinary identity and social experiences in promoting Indonesian gastronomic tourism.

Keywords: *Food Involvement, Food Variety Seeking, Food Neophobia, Indonesia, Food Tourism.*

Introduction

The rapid and expansive development of global tourism marketing, coupled with the significant increase in holiday opportunities and the rising purchasing power of the working class over the last two decades, has fundamentally reshaped tourism demand (Derinalp Çanakçı & Birdir, 2020). Regional identity, diverse lifestyles, cultural heritage, beliefs, and local food traditions have emerged as the primary attractions that define the soul of a destination (Caber et al., 2018). Gastronomic factors have now evolved into a significant driver in both national and international tourism worldwide, shifting the tourism paradigm from mere site visitation to a holistic, sensory-driven experience that engages every sense of the traveler (Wolff & Larsen, 2019).

From the tourist's perspective, the experience of local cuisine is no longer regarded as a simple physiological necessity. Instead, it has evolved into a deep psychological need and a vital source of personal satisfaction (González et al., 2019). When traveling, beyond merely observing local culture and traditions, tourists exhibit a profound interest in experiencing local cuisine as an integral and inseparable part of their journey. Curiosity toward new flavors often becomes the strongest motivator for tourists when selecting a destination, playing a crucial role in forming food involvement and shaping unique culinary preferences (Pourfakhimi et al., 2021). The direct impact of this phenomenon is the escalating competition between destinations, which compels tourism stakeholders to offer more diverse and high-quality culinary products and services.

A fascinating phenomenon emerging within this context is food variety seeking, which represents the natural human tendency to pursue new sensory experiences through food (Hutabarat & Anggraini, 2024). In the realm of tourism, food variety seeking encourages travelers to explore the vast culinary landscape offered by a destination, pushing them to move beyond their comfort zones and create truly unforgettable memories (Pourfakhimi et al., 2021). This desire to explore is often triggered by a sense of boredom with daily culinary routines, a need for heightened sensory stimulation, or a broader ambition to explore a culture through the palate (Lee et al., 2018).

However, the inclination toward culinary exploration is not uniform across all travelers. Food neophobia (the fear or reluctance to try unfamiliar foods) remains a significant inhibiting factor that prevents many tourists from consuming local cuisine (Szakály et al., 2021). (Derinalp Çanakçı & Birdir, 2020). The primary reasons for this avoidance include a fear of foodborne illnesses, concerns regarding hygiene, extreme differences in taste profiles, or previous negative experiences (Sivrikaya & Pekerşen, 2020). Furthermore, environmental factors such as limited information about diverse foods, minimal exposure to varied dining in the past, and conservative cultural or social norms also play a role in reinforcing neophobic behavior in the culinary tourism context (Bugi et al., 2024).

Previous literature has demonstrated that the impact of food neophobia and food involvement on tourist well-being can be effectively assessed based on the PERMA model, comprising Positive Emotions, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Achievement (Gao et al., 2018). Research has proven that food involvement strengthens the contribution of authentic food experiences toward all dimensions of PERMA, whereas food neophobia tends

to diminish these positive effects. Furthermore, other studies have examined how the quality of street food experiences specifically encompassing outcome quality, interaction, and environment influences destination image, life satisfaction, and word of mouth (WOM) (Bugi et al., 2024). While these factors generally foster a positive destination image and encourage positive WOM, food neophobia has been shown to significantly weaken these positive outcomes, acting as a critical moderating barrier.

While Derinalp Çanakçı and Birdir (2020) have previously explored the relationship between food involvement, food variety seeking, and food neophobia among foreign tourists in Turkey, focusing on the dimensions of attraction and identity. There remains a critical research gap that needs to be addressed, particularly within the context of domestic tourists in Indonesia. Their study indicated that the "identity" dimension did not have a significant effect on the dependent variables, while "attraction" consistently did. Consequently, this research develops that understanding further by introducing a third dimension: social bonding. This study tests the model within the specific context of Indonesian domestic tourists to gain a more comprehensive understanding of how attraction, identity, and social bonding simultaneously influence culinary exploration and neophobia levels.

In the specific context of Indonesian tourism, individuals with high food neophobia tend to reject local culinary offerings even when those foods are the primary attraction of the region. This behavior leads to a loss of vital and authentic cultural experiences and limits their participation in social interactions such as communal dining which is an essential pillar of Indonesian culture. This phenomenon carries a high level of urgency; the culinary tourism sector holds massive economic potential for Indonesia. A failure to understand the factors affecting tourist consumption could lead to significant lost economic opportunities and the underutilization of Indonesia's rich culinary heritage. Ultimately, unmanaged food neophobia could create a gap between the country's culinary potential and the actual realization of the tourist experience, impacting the global competitiveness of Indonesia's tourism destinations.

Based on this background, this study aims to analyze the influence of food involvement on the tendencies of food variety seeking and food neophobia among tourists in Indonesia, focusing on the dimensions of attraction, identity, and social bonding. To achieve this, the study proposes and tests eight hypotheses:

- H1: Food Involvement (FI) has a positive and significant relationship with Food Variety Seeking (FVS).
- H2: Attraction (within FI) has a positive and significant influence on Food Variety Seeking (FVS).
- H3: Identity (within FI) has a positive and significant influence on Food Variety Seeking (FVS).
- H4: Social Bonding (within FI) has a positive and significant influence on Food Variety Seeking (FVS).
- H5: Food Involvement (FI) has a negative and significant relationship with Food Neophobia (FN).
- H6: Attraction (within FI) has a negative and significant influence on Food Neophobia (FN).

H7: Identity (within FI) has a negative and significant influence on Food Neophobia (FN).

H8: Social Bonding (within FI) has a negative and significant influence on Food Neophobia (FN).

The deep understanding of these complex interactions is expected to provide significant theoretical contributions to tourism science and consumer psychology. Practically, the findings are intended to offer valuable strategic guidance for Indonesian stakeholders, including local governments, culinary industry players, and destination managers to develop effective strategies that minimize psychological barriers, enhance tourist engagement, and ultimately foster loyalty toward Indonesia's tourism destinations.

Methodology

This study adopts a quantitative research design utilizing a survey method to empirically examine the relationships between food involvement, food variety seeking, and food neophobia among domestic tourists in Indonesia. By employing a structured approach, this research aims to provide a statistically rigorous analysis of how different dimensions of culinary involvement influence exploratory behaviors and psychological barriers in a tourism context.

Participants and Data Collection

The data collection process was conducted between April 29 and May 12, 2025. A "drop and collect" survey method was implemented, distributed primarily through social media platforms to ensure a broad reach across various regions in Indonesia. This online distribution strategy was selected for its practical advantages, including ease of implementation, time efficiency, and cost-effectiveness. A total of 250 questionnaires were distributed to tourists aged 15 years and older who had experience traveling outside their place of residence. Out of the total responses received, 204 questionnaires were deemed valid and proceeded to the data analysis stage, while 46 responses were excluded due to invalidity or incomplete data.

Measurement Instruments

The research instrument consisted of three primary scales, all of which were measured using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree." The food involvement (FI) construct was measured using a modified 15-item scale adapted from the frameworks developed by Kyle et al (2007), Robinson and Getz (2016), and Pourfakhimi et al. (2019), which is categorized into three correlated dimensions. Attraction, Identity, and Social Bonding. To determine the tourists' tendency to seek food variety (FVS), a modified 9-item VARSEEK scale was utilized, based on the foundational work of Van Trijp and Steenkamp (1992) and Lee et al. (2020). Lastly, the food neophobia (FN) variable was assessed using a 12-item scale adapted from Pliner and Hobden (1992) and Tarinc et al. (2023). This scale was specifically modified to align with the cultural and environmental context of respondents in Indonesia, ensuring that the items accurately reflect the local tourism landscape.

Data Analysis Techniques

The collected data were processed using SPSS software, with the reliability of each scale calculated through the Cronbach's Alpha method. Factor analysis was also employed to verify

the validity of the items within the modified scales. The statistical analysis followed a two-stage approach: first, correlation analysis was used to identify the initial relationships between the variables. Subsequently, multiple linear regression analysis, incorporating both partial T-tests and F-tests was performed to test the hypothesized effects and determine the significance of each dimension of food involvement on both food variety seeking and food neophobia.

Result

The reliability test results demonstrate that all constructs in this study possess a high level of internal consistency. The first construct, which consists of 15 items, yielded a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.798, reflecting high reliability. The second construct, comprising 9 items, achieved an alpha value of 0.845, indicating excellent reliability. Meanwhile, the third construct, which consists of 11 items, obtained a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.802, also falling within the reliable category. These values signify that all instruments used in the questionnaire are capable of measuring their intended constructs consistently and are dependable for further statistical analysis.

Tabel 1. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Variabel	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Female	134	65.7
	Male	70	34.3
Age	15-24	165	80.9
	25-35	29	14.2
	36-46	6	2.9
	47-60	4	2.0
Education	Junior High School	2	1.0
	Senior High School / Vocational High School	56	27.5
	Bachelor's Degree	141	69.1
	Postgraduate Degree	5	2.5
Regional	Aceh	2	1.0
	Sumatera Utara	3	1.5
	Sumatera Selatan	1	0.5
	Sumatera Barat	8	3.9
	Kepulauan Riau	1	0.5
	Kalimantan Timur	1	0.5
	DKI Jakarta	31	15.2
	Banten	7	3.4
	Jawa Barat	89	43.6
	Jawa Tengah	12	5.9

DI Yogyakarta	19	9.3
Jawa Timur	22	10.8
Bali	3	1.5
Nusa Tenggara Timur	1	0.5
Sulawesi Selatan	4	2.0

The demographic profile of the respondents, including gender, age, education level, and regional origin (province), is summarized in Table 1. Among the 204 respondents, the highest percentages for each variable were observed in females (65.7%), the 15-24 age group (80.9%), those with a Bachelor's degree (69.1%), and residents of West Java (43.6%).

The results of the Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) performed on the 15-item food involvement scale, as presented in Table 2, yielded three distinct factors that align with the theoretical dimensions: Attraction, Identity, and Social Bonding. Similarly, the analysis of the VARSEEK scale (9 items) in Table 3 identified a single factor with an Eigenvalue of 5.204 and a total explained variance of 57.823%, confirming a strong and unidimensional construct structure. For the food neophobia scale, as shown in Table 4, the EFA results produced two factors, namely Fear and Novelty (novelty seeking reversed), with a total explained variance of 56.113%.

The EFA results demonstrate that all constructs possess good construct validity, with items clustering according to their respective theoretical dimensions. All factor loading values were found to be above 0.45, and the cumulative variance explained for each construct exceeded the minimum threshold of 40%. Consequently, these instruments are deemed appropriate and valid for use in subsequent statistical analyses.

Involvement	Factor Loading	Eigenvalue	Var iance (%)	Item Mean
Attraction (5 items)		4	19.5	3
		.077	62	.972
When I travel, one of the things I look forward to most is eating the local food.	.834			
Switching my preference from food-related activities to other activities would require a significant rethink.	.607			
I often discuss food-related activities with my friends.	.590			
I feel that a large part of my life's activities revolves around food.	.533			
Food-related activities are very important to me.	.458			

Identity (5 items)		1	14.9	3
		.700	.50	.646
I take pride in my knowledge of food and cooking	.777			
Dining etiquette reveals a lot about a person	.750			
When I partivipate in food-related activities, I want others to notice me	.736			
I am considered a true "foodie" by those around me	.697			
When I participate in food-related activities, I feel I can truly be myself.	.604			
Social Bonding (5 item)		1	11.7	4
		.164	.64	.108
Sharing memorable dining experiences strengthens my bonds with friends.	.565			
Most of my friends are food lovers.	.558			
I enjoy cooking for my friends.	.541			
I seek advice from people who are knowledgeable about food when choosing a place to eat.	.501			
I often reminisce about culinary experiences with my family and friends.	.487			
Total			46.2	
		76		

	F	E	Va	
Variety Seeking	actor	igen	riance	M
Variety Seeking	Loadin	V	(%	ean
	g	alue	)	
Variety Seeking		4	57.	3
		.147	.823	.916
I visit new restaurants for their uniqueness.	.8			
	77			
I visit new restaurants for the variety they offer.	.7			
	95			
I find it pleasant to try foods that I am unfamiliar with.	.7			
	41			
I am very curious to know what kind of foods people from other countries eat.	.7			
	26			
I enjoy eating exotic foods.	.7			
	24			
When eating out, I like to try the most unusual dishes, even if I am not sure I will like them.	.6			
	61			

When preparing meals or snacks, I enjoy trying out new recipes.	.6	30			
It is important to me to look for a wide range of new food options.	.6	05			
I am intrigued by menu items that are unfamiliar to me.	.5	56			
Total				57.	
				823	
	F	E	Va	M	
	actor	igen	riance	ean	
Food Neophobia	Loadin	g	Value	(%)	
Fear (7 item)		3	34.	3	
		.856	176	.058	
I do not trust new foods.	.8				
	29				
I feel anxious when I have to try new local foods.	.7				
	93				
I am afraid of eating foods that I have never eaten before.	.7				
	72				
I am very limited in my food choices.	.7				
	45				
Local foods look too strange to eat.	.7				
	41				
If I do not know what is in a food, I will not try it.	.6				
	53				
I am very particular about the foods I choose to eat.	.5				
	44				
Novelty (4 item)		2	2	2.	
		.317	1.937	227	
I always taste new and different foods.	.8				
	31				
I look for foods from various countries.	.7				
	73				
I enjoy trying out new local restaurants.	.7				
	49				
I will eat almost any type of food.	.6				
	89				
Total			5		
			6.113		

Correlation

		Attrac tion	Id entity	Social Bonding
Food Variety Seeking	Correlation Coefficient	.530* *	.5 63**	.488**
	Significance Level (one-tailed)	.000	.0 00	.000
	n	204	2 04	201
Food Neophobia	Correlation Coefficient	-.242	- .141	-.240
	Significance Level (one-tailed)	.000	.0 22	.000
	n	204	2 04	204

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Square	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
1	Reg ression	2717.822	3	905.941	46.017	.00 0 ^b
	Res idual	3937.408	20 0	19.687		
	Tot al	6655.230	20 3			

a. Dependent Variable: Food Variety Seeking

b. Predictors: (Constant), Attraction, Identity, Social Bonding

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Square	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
1	Reg ression	790.479	3	263.493	5.756	.00 1 ^b
	Res idual	9156.168	20 0	45.781		
	Tot al	9946.644 7	20 3			

- a. Dependent Variable: Food Neophobia
b. Predictors: (Constant), Attraction, Identity, Social Bonding

Coefficients ^a						
Model	Unstandardized B	Coefficients Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Significance	Tolerance
(Constant)	2.831	3.134		.903	.367	
Attraction	.636	.159	.270	4.010	.000	.651
Identity	.581	.127	.321	4.563	.000	.598
Social Bonding	.438	.173	.173	2.530	.012	.632

Coefficients ^a						
Model	Unstandardized B	Coefficients Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Significance	Tolerance
(Constant)	49.887	4.780		10.437	.000	
Attraction	-.527	.242	-.183	-2.180	.030	.651
Identity	.130	.194	.059	.669	.504	.598
Social Bonding	-.560	.264	-.181	-2.118	.035	.632

The correlation analysis reveals that all three dimensions of food involvement—attraction, identity, and social bonding, have significant relationships with both food variety seeking (FVS) and food neophobia (FN). The attraction dimension shows a significant positive correlation with FVS ($r = 0.530$; $p < 0.01$), suggesting that individuals with a higher interest in

food are more likely to seek variety. Similarly, identity shows a significant positive correlation with FVS ($r = 0.563$; $p < 0.01$), indicating that those who view food as part of their self-identity are more open to diverse culinary experiences. Furthermore, social bonding is also significantly and positively correlated with FVS ($r = 0.488$; $p < 0.01$), highlighting that food's role in strengthening social ties encourages exploratory behavior toward new dishes.

Conversely, all three dimensions of food involvement show a significant negative correlation with food neophobia. Both attraction ($r = -0.242$; $p < 0.01$) and social bonding ($r = -0.240$; $p < 0.01$) are negatively associated with FN, meaning that as attraction or social connection through food increases, the fear of new foods decreases. Meanwhile, identity also exhibits a negative correlation, albeit a weaker one ($r = -0.141$; $p < 0.05$).

Multiple linear regression analysis was conducted to further examine these relationships. The ANOVA test results for the Food Variety Seeking (FVS) model confirm the model's overall significance (Sig. < 0.05). The findings show that all dimensions of food involvement positively and significantly influence FVS. Specifically, attraction has a significant effect ($\beta = 0.636$, $p = 0.000$), implying that higher food attraction leads to a greater tendency for variety seeking. Identity is also significant ($\beta = 0.581$, $p = 0.000$), showing that food's role in self-identity drives the desire to try new foods. Additionally, social bonding significantly contributes to FVS ($\beta = 0.438$, $p = 0.012$), reinforcing the idea that social dining experiences promote culinary exploration.

For the Food Neophobia (FN) model, the ANOVA test also indicates that the overall regression model is significant (Sig. < 0.05). The results show that attraction has a significant negative influence on FN ($\beta = -0.527$, $p = 0.030$), suggesting that higher attraction reduces the level of neophobia. Social bonding also significantly and negatively influences FN ($\beta = -0.560$, $p = 0.035$), indicating that social ties formed through food help lower the reluctance to try unfamiliar dishes. However, the identity dimension was found to be non-significant ($\beta = 0.130$, $p = 0.504$), suggesting that an individual's food-based identity does not significantly impact their tendency to reject new foods.

Discussion

Food Involvement and Food Variety Seeking

The results confirm that Food Involvement (FI) has a positive and significant relationship with Food Variety Seeking (FVS). The correlation analysis across the different dimensions of food involvement reveals a consistent yet nuanced pattern in how they influence culinary exploration and food-related anxiety.

The identity dimension exhibits the highest correlation with food variety seeking ($r = 0.563$; $p < 0.01$). This finding reinforces the propositions of Self-Concept Theory, which suggests that food serves as a medium for identity expression and "self-extension" (Belk, 1988). When individuals integrate food into their self-concept, they become more proactive in exploring diverse food types to enrich and communicate their personal identity. This phenomenon aligns with Symbolic Self-Completion Theory, which explains that individuals utilize symbolic consumption to complete and express their desired social identities (Wicklund

& Gollwitzer, 1982). The attraction dimension shows a strong correlation with food variety seeking ($r = 0.530$; $p < 0.01$), indicating that the hedonic and sensory appeal of food acts as a primary motivator for culinary exploration. This finding supports Sensation Seeking Theory, which posits that individuals with a high need for stimulation will seek out new experiences to maintain an optimal level of arousal (Zuckerman, 1994). In the context of culinary tourism, food attraction creates intrinsic motivation that drives tourists to explore diverse flavors, textures, and sensory experiences as a form of novelty-seeking behavior.

Although the social bonding dimension shows a relatively lower correlation with food variety seeking ($r = 0.488$; $p < 0.01$), it remains a vital factor in facilitating exploratory behavior through mechanisms of social facilitation and social proof. Food acting as a "social connector" creates a supportive context that encourages individuals to be more open to new culinary experiences, especially when shared with others. This is consistent with Social Cognitive Theory, which emphasizes the role of social learning and modeling in shaping consumer behavior (Bandura, 1991).

The Role of Attraction in Driving Food Variety Seeking

The study found that the attraction dimension has a positive and significant influence on Food Variety Seeking (FVS). This dimension reflects the hedonic aspect of involvement, characterized by the pleasure, anticipation, and satisfaction derived from eating activities (Sivrikaya & Pekerşen, 2020). The finding that attraction is the strongest predictor of FVS indicates that the hedonic drive is the primary catalyst in the pursuit of new culinary experiences. This expands upon Self-Determination Theory, suggesting that food-based recreational motivation among tourists is not merely functional—satisfying a biological need—but is deeply emotional and sensory. The need for pleasure and enjoyment serves as a more powerful intrinsic motivator compared to extrinsic motivations, such as social status or normative compliance.

Tourists who are drawn to the dining experience are not simply seeking satiation; they are pursuing sensations, stories, and the aesthetic value of the food they consume (Seo & Kim, 2023). Food attraction activates three key components: sensory anticipation (the expectation of a pleasant sensory experience), emotional priming (a positive affective state that facilitates openness to new experiences), and cognitive curiosity (an intellectual drive to understand and explore culinary uniqueness) (Kim & Eves, 2012).

Consequently, food becomes an integral part of the travel narrative itself rather than a mere peripheral necessity. Within this context, seeking variety is no longer just a rational choice or a response to boredom; it is an essential component of a fulfilling life experience. This explains why tourists with high attraction scores are willing to take risks and invest resources to explore diverse local menus, as the sensory rewards far outweigh the perceived effort of exploration.

Identity as a Driver for Food Variety Seeking

The findings indicate that the identity dimension has a positive and significant influence on Food Variety Seeking (FVS). Food is an integral component in the formation of both personal and social identities (Brunsø et al., 2021). When food serves as a symbol of status,

cultural values, or self-expression, individuals are driven to seek culinary experiences that reflect or expand upon that identity. In the field of food sociology, this is referred to as gastropolitics—the way in which food choices become a means for individuals to negotiate social meanings and personal values (Choe & Kim, 2018).

In the context of gastronomic tourism, trying new foods is not merely an act of consumption; it is a process of identity formation and self-extension. Tourists who identify themselves as "food enthusiasts" or "cultural explorers" will consistently seek out culinary experiences that validate and reinforce these identities (Robinson & Getz, 2016). Here, food variety seeking is not just an expression of taste preference, but a form of affiliation with values such as diversity, cultural openness, and even the accumulation of symbolic capital through consumption.

This behavior aligns with Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital, which posits that culinary knowledge and experience function as a form of symbolic capital (Bourdieu, 1986). For these tourists, exploring diverse and unfamiliar foods provides "social currency" that enhances their standing within their social circles. By engaging with a wide array of local cuisines, individuals demonstrate a level of cultural competence and cosmopolitanism, effectively using their varied food experiences to communicate their sophisticated identity to others.

Social Bonding as a Facilitator for Food Variety Seeking

The study further reveals that the social bonding dimension has a positive and significant influence on Food Variety Seeking (FVS). Food possesses an inherently strong social dimension, and its involvement reflects the social facilitation effect and normative influence within culinary decision-making. These findings support Social Cognitive Theory, which emphasizes the role of modeling and social referencing in shaping behavior (Ruddock et al., 2021). When dining experiences are intertwined with social interactions—such as cooking together, recommending dining venues, or sharing culinary stories—the motivation to explore new foods increases significantly (Szakály et al., 2021).

Food socialization creates both normative and referential influences, where the decision to try a new dish may be triggered by the example set by others or the desire to build and maintain social relationships (Dursun & Gümüş, 2024). Within a social group, the act of trying a variety of foods can become a shared goal, transforming individual curiosity into a collective activity.

Furthermore, social involvement in food activities fosters a sense of security and trust, two psychological factors capable of reducing the perceived risk associated with trying unfamiliar or "foreign" foods (Tarinc et al., 2023). In this context, social bonding does not only strengthen interpersonal relationships; it also indirectly expands a tourist's food preferences by providing a "safety net" of social approval. Consequently, the presence of companions and the act of engaging in food-related social networks act as a bridge that allows individuals to cross over their usual culinary boundaries and embrace variety.

Food Involvement and Food Neophobia

The negative correlation pattern between the dimensions of food involvement and food neophobia reveals distinct psychological mechanisms for each dimension. The attraction and social bonding dimensions exhibit nearly identical correlation strengths ($r = -0.242$ and $r = -0.240$, respectively), indicating that hedonic experiences and social support possess equal effectiveness in mitigating anxiety toward novel foods.

In contrast, the identity dimension shows a notably weaker correlation ($r = -0.141$; $p < 0.05$). This phenomenon can be explained through Cognitive Dissonance Theory; when food becomes an integral part of one's identity, individuals may experience an internal conflict between the desire to maintain identity consistency and the need for exploration that potentially threatens their established "comfort zone."

These findings suggest that food involvement as an identity construct possesses a double-edged effect. While it significantly enhances variety seeking, it does not exert a strong influence in reducing neophobia. This occurs because the exploration of unfamiliar foods may pose a perceived risk to the consistency of a well-defined culinary identity. In other words, an individual may strive to be a "foodie" (high variety seeking) yet still harbor psychological reluctance or caution when faced with foods that are too far removed from their identity-based preferences.

The Role of Attraction in Mitigating Food Neophobia

The regression analysis confirms that attraction exerts a significant negative influence on food neophobia (FN), suggesting that as an individual's attraction to food increases, their fear of novel foods diminishes. This relationship can be elucidated through Affective Override Theory, which posits that strong positive emotional experiences toward an object can effectively suppress perceived risks or underlying fears (Lerner et al., 2015). Tourists who possess a deep emotional attraction to food tend to prioritize exploration opportunities over the potential risks associated with unfamiliar tastes, textures, or ingredients (Mineo & Taketani, 2023).

Furthermore, attraction as a dimension of involvement fosters an approach-oriented attitude toward culinary stimuli. According to the approach-avoidance framework (Elliot, 2014), individuals with high levels of attraction demonstrate a proactive orientation toward approaching—rather than avoiding—food stimuli, even when those stimuli are novel or unfamiliar. In the context of the travel experience, this hedonic attraction acts as a psychological buffer, transforming a potentially threatening encounter with "strange" food into an enticing opportunity for sensory gratification.

The Non-Significant Influence of Identity on Food Neophobia

The lack of a significant relationship between identity and food neophobia highlights the inherent complexity of how self-concept relates to food rejection (Reddy & Van Dam, 2020). Food identity possesses a dualistic nature; it can be inclusive, characterized by an openness to new experiences, or exclusive, focused on maintaining traditional and fixed preferences (Akhni, 2020). Consequently, individuals may experience an internal identity conflict between their roles as a "cultural explorer" and a "tradition preserver." This conflict often leads to

inconsistent behaviors where one's identity does not directly or predictably influence neophobic tendencies. When food is tied to a rigid or conservative identity, the self-concept may actually reinforce a reluctance to engage with novel culinary stimuli.

In other words, the identity dimension of food involvement can establish cultural boundaries that restrict openness to variety (Francis, 2025). This underscores that the effect of identity on neophobia is highly contextual, contingent upon whether an individual utilizes food as a tool for social inclusion opening oneself to other cultures or as a mechanism for exclusion to safeguard personal values and traditions (Reddy & Van Dam, 2020). For many tourists, even those who identify strongly with food, the perceived threat of a "new" food to their established cultural or personal identity can offset the desire for exploration, resulting in the non-significant statistical relationship observed in this study.

Social Bonding as a Catalyst for Reducing Food Neophobia

The finding that social bonding significantly reduces food neophobia lends empirical support to the social facilitation theory in decision-making. This theory posits that the presence or influence of others can enhance an individual's confidence and effectively mitigate fear (Ruddock et al., 2021). In a culinary context, social support and references from close peers or family members serve as critical catalysts, encouraging individuals to sample foods they might have previously avoided.

Furthermore, shared dining experiences create a psychologically safe space for culinary exploration (Dursun & Gümüş, 2024). When an individual attempts to try a novel food within a positive social framework, the subjective risk associated with the experience is significantly lowered. This suggests that the collective nature of social bonding acts as a "risk-buffer," where the social reward of sharing a meal outweighs the individual hesitation toward the unknown. These results indicate that community-based or group-oriented strategies in local food promotion can be a highly effective approach to overcoming resistance toward unfamiliar or foreign cuisines. By leveraging the power of social influence, destination marketers can transform a potentially anxious experience into a shared moment of discovery.

This study investigated the effects of visual design and online customer reviews on trust and purchase intention within online food delivery applications. The findings demonstrate that both visual design and online customer reviews significantly enhance consumer trust. However, only online customer reviews directly influence purchase intention, indicating that user-generated content plays a more decisive role in consumer decision-making than visual appeal alone.

The study contributes to digital consumer behavior literature by highlighting the distinct functions of visual and informational cues within online food delivery environments. While visual design strengthens trust and product perceptions, online customer reviews serve as the primary determinant of purchasing decisions.

Practically, restaurant operators and platform managers should prioritize strategies that encourage authentic customer reviews while simultaneously maintaining high-quality food photography. Future research should employ larger samples, investigate potential mediating

effects, and examine additional variables such as perceived value, satisfaction, and platform reputation to further explain consumer purchase behavior in digital food service contexts.

Conclusion

Based on the analysis of 204 tourists in Indonesia, this study concludes that food involvement exerts a significant influence on tourist food consumption behavior, specifically regarding food variety seeking (FVS) and food neophobia (FN). Overall, food involvement is proven to have a significant positive impact on food variety seeking; the higher an individual's involvement with food, the greater their tendency to explore diverse culinary options. All three dimensions of food involvement (attraction, identity, and social bonding) demonstrate a significant positive influence on food variety seeking, with the identity dimension emerging as the strongest contributor.

Conversely, food involvement also shows a significant negative influence on food neophobia, indicating that deeper involvement with food can effectively reduce anxiety or fear toward unfamiliar or novel dishes. However, not all dimensions are equally significant in mitigating food neophobia; only attraction and social bonding were proven to be effective, while identity showed no significant effect.

Theoretically, these results reinforce the relevance of Involvement Theory within the context of gastronomic tourism and provide empirical support for several psychological frameworks, including Optimal Stimulation Level Theory, Self-Determination Theory, and Social Cognitive Theory.

The practical implications of these findings suggest that tourism marketing strategies should focus on enhancing emotional engagement, fostering a culinary identity among tourists, and encouraging social interactions that strengthen the local dining experience. By doing so, destination marketers can effectively convert culinary anxiety into exploratory behavior, ultimately promoting local food heritage to a wider audience.

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Adventure Tourism as a Pathway to Regenerative Tourism: A Thematic Analysis of Canyoneering Experiences in Indonesia

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Abstract

Regenerative tourism has emerged as an alternative paradigm that seeks to restore ecological systems, strengthen community well-being, and foster reciprocal relationships between humans and nature. While the concept has gained increasing scholarly attention, empirical studies examining how regenerative principles are experienced by tourists remain limited, particularly within adventure tourism contexts. This study explores how canyoneering participants interpret and narrate their experiences and examines the extent to which these narratives reflect regenerative tourism values. An exploratory qualitative approach was employed using twelve participant narratives collected from reflective accounts of canyoneering experiences in West Java, Indonesia. Data were analyzed through thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke's six-phase framework. Four interrelated themes emerged: emotional and sensory connection to nature, psychological restoration and mental clarity, personal transformation and enhanced self-efficacy, and pro-environmental awareness and stewardship intentions. The findings suggest that canyoneering extends beyond recreational adventure by facilitating meaningful encounters with nature that contribute to emotional well-being, self-development, and environmental responsibility. These outcomes align closely with key regenerative tourism principles, particularly the cultivation of reciprocal human–nature relationships and the promotion of positive ecological consciousness. This study contributes to the growing regenerative tourism literature by providing empirical evidence from an adventure tourism setting and demonstrating how immersive nature-based experiences can serve as pathways toward regenerative tourism outcomes.

Keywords: *Regenerative Tourism, Adventure Tourism, Canyoneering, Tourist Experience*

Introduction

Adventure tourism has become one of the fastest-growing sectors of the global tourism industry, driven by increasing demand for immersive, meaningful, and experience-based travel. Unlike conventional tourism, adventure tourism combines physical activity, direct engagement with natural environments, and elements of uncertainty or challenge, creating opportunities for deeper emotional and psychological experiences (Buckley, 2012). Consequently, scholars have increasingly recognized adventure tourism not only as a recreational activity but also as a context in which personal growth, environmental awareness, and transformative experiences may occur.

Simultaneously, tourism scholarship has witnessed a growing shift from sustainability toward regenerative tourism. Whereas sustainable tourism primarily seeks to reduce negative environmental and social impacts, regenerative tourism emphasizes the active restoration and renewal of ecological systems, community well-being, and human–nature relationships (Cave & Dredge, 2020). Regenerative tourism therefore represents a more ambitious approach that positions tourism as a catalyst for positive ecological and social change rather than merely minimizing harm.

Central to regenerative tourism is the notion that meaningful tourism experiences can foster deeper connections between visitors and destinations, encouraging stewardship, care, and reciprocity. Recent conceptual discussions suggest that transformative tourism experiences may play an important role in achieving regenerative outcomes. However, empirical evidence examining how tourists experience and interpret regenerative values remains limited, particularly within adventure tourism settings. Existing studies on adventure tourism have largely focused on risk, safety management, motivation, and performance outcomes (Pomfret & Bramwell, 2016), while comparatively little attention has been given to the potential regenerative dimensions of adventure experiences.

Canyoneering provides an especially relevant context for exploring these issues. The activity requires participants to navigate natural canyon systems through hiking, climbing, rappelling, and water-based movement, resulting in intense sensory engagement and direct interaction with natural landscapes. Such characteristics may facilitate experiences associated with nature connectedness, psychological restoration, personal transformation, and environmental stewardship, all of which are central to regenerative tourism discourse.

Despite these possibilities, little is known about how participants themselves interpret and narrate their canyoneering experiences in ways that reflect regenerative tourism values. Addressing this gap, the present study investigates participant narratives of canyoneering experiences in Indonesia. Specifically, the study seeks to answer the following research question: *How do canyoneering participants narrate their experiences in ways that reflect regenerative tourism principles?* By examining participant narratives through thematic analysis, this study contributes empirical insights into the role of adventure tourism as a potential pathway toward regenerative tourism.

Literature review

Adventure Tourism and Transformative Nature-Based Experiences

Adventure tourism is widely recognized as a form of tourism that combines physical activity, interaction with natural environments, and elements of perceived risk or challenge (Buckley, 2012). Unlike conventional tourism experiences that primarily focus on leisure and consumption, adventure tourism encourages active participation and direct engagement with natural landscapes. Such experiences often generate strong emotional, cognitive, and sensory responses that contribute to meaningful personal outcomes (Pomfret & Bramwell, 2016).

Research suggests that adventure tourism experiences can extend beyond recreation by facilitating psychological and emotional benefits. Participants frequently report feelings of accomplishment, increased self-confidence, resilience, and personal growth after engaging in physically demanding outdoor activities (Houge Mackenzie & Brymer, 2020). The combination of challenge, uncertainty, and immersion in nature creates opportunities for self-reflection and transformative learning, allowing individuals to reassess their capabilities and relationship with the natural world.

Moreover, immersive adventure experiences often strengthen emotional attachment to natural environments. Direct encounters with landscapes, ecosystems, and natural processes can foster a sense of connectedness that influences visitors' environmental attitudes and behaviors. This emotional bond with nature is increasingly recognized as an important precursor to environmentally responsible behavior and stewardship. Consequently, adventure tourism may play a broader role in shaping values and behaviors that extend beyond the tourism experience itself.

The experiential characteristics of adventure tourism are particularly relevant to contemporary discussions on tourism transformation and regeneration. Through embodied interaction with nature, participants are not merely observers but active contributors to meaning-making processes that shape their perceptions of both self and environment. This perspective positions adventure tourism as a potentially valuable context for understanding how tourism experiences can contribute to broader regenerative outcomes.

Regenerative Tourism: Beyond Sustainability

The concept of regenerative tourism has emerged as a response to perceived limitations of sustainable tourism approaches. While sustainable tourism seeks to minimize negative environmental, social, and economic impacts, regenerative tourism aims to create net-positive outcomes by actively restoring ecosystems, strengthening community resilience, and enhancing human well-being (Cave & Dredge, 2020). Rather than focusing solely on impact reduction, regenerative tourism emphasizes renewal, reciprocity, and the long-term flourishing of social and ecological systems.

Regenerative tourism draws inspiration from regenerative thinking in ecology, agriculture, and systems theory, which views living systems as interconnected, adaptive, and capable of continuous renewal. Within this paradigm, tourism is conceptualized as part of a broader socio-ecological system in which destinations, communities, visitors, and natural

environments are mutually dependent. As a result, tourism development should not merely sustain existing conditions but actively contribute to improving the health and vitality of destinations.

A fundamental principle of regenerative tourism is the recognition that meaningful change begins with human relationships and values. Tourists are no longer viewed simply as consumers of experiences but as participants in interconnected systems who can contribute to ecological and social regeneration through their actions, attitudes, and behaviors. Consequently, understanding how visitors experience, interpret, and respond to tourism encounters becomes essential for evaluating the regenerative potential of tourism activities.

Although regenerative tourism has gained considerable conceptual attention, empirical studies investigating regenerative experiences from the tourist perspective remain limited. Existing scholarship has primarily focused on destination governance, planning frameworks, and conceptual discussions, while less attention has been given to how regenerative principles are manifested within individual tourism experiences. This gap highlights the need for research that explores the experiential dimensions of regeneration, particularly in tourism settings characterized by strong human–nature interactions.

Adventure Tourism as a Pathway to Regenerative Outcomes

Recent discussions in regenerative tourism suggest that transformative visitor experiences may serve as important mechanisms through which regenerative outcomes emerge. Experiences that encourage reflection, emotional engagement, and deeper connections with nature can foster values aligned with environmental stewardship, care, and responsibility. In this regard, adventure tourism offers a particularly relevant context because of its immersive and experiential nature.

The physically demanding and emotionally engaging characteristics of adventure tourism create conditions that facilitate personal transformation. Through overcoming challenges, managing uncertainty, and interacting directly with natural environments, participants may develop increased self-awareness, resilience, and appreciation for ecological systems. These experiences can contribute to what regenerative scholars describe as inner regeneration, referring to changes in attitudes, values, and perceptions that support broader ecological and social transformation.

Adventure tourism may also contribute to ecological regeneration indirectly through the development of pro-environmental attitudes and stewardship intentions. When participants develop stronger emotional bonds with natural environments, they may become more motivated to protect and care for those environments in the future. Such outcomes align with regenerative tourism's emphasis on fostering reciprocal relationships between humans and nature rather than treating nature solely as a resource for consumption.

Despite these theoretical connections, empirical evidence linking adventure tourism experiences with regenerative tourism outcomes remains scarce. Existing adventure tourism research has largely concentrated on motivation, risk management, satisfaction, and behavioral outcomes (Pomfret & Bramwell, 2016), while studies explicitly examining regenerative dimensions remain limited. Therefore, further investigation is needed to understand how

adventure tourism participants experience and interpret regenerative values during and after their engagement with nature-based activities.

Participant Narratives as a Lens for Understanding Regenerative Experiences

Narratives have become an important methodological approach in tourism research because they provide insight into how individuals construct meaning from their lived experiences. Through narratives, researchers can examine emotional responses, reflections, value formation, and identity development that may not be captured through quantitative approaches. Narrative inquiry is particularly useful for exploring transformative and regenerative dimensions of tourism because such phenomena are often subjective, emotional, and deeply personal.

Tourism narratives reveal how individuals interpret encounters with places, people, and environments. They provide evidence of the ways in which tourism experiences influence attitudes, perceptions, and future behavioral intentions. Reflective accounts, testimonials, and personal stories therefore offer valuable sources of data for examining how regenerative values emerge through tourism participation.

In the context of canyoneering, participant narratives can illuminate how direct engagement with natural environments influences emotional well-being, personal development, and environmental awareness. Analyzing these narratives allows researchers to identify recurring patterns that reflect regenerative tourism principles, including nature connectedness, psychological restoration, personal transformation, and stewardship intentions. Consequently, narrative analysis provides an appropriate methodological lens for examining the regenerative potential of adventure tourism experiences.

Methodology

This study employed a quantitative research approach using a cross-sectional survey design to investigate the relationships among visual design, online customer reviews, trust, and purchase intention. The target population consisted of active users of online food delivery applications in Indonesia.

A purposive sampling technique was adopted to ensure that respondents possessed relevant experience with food delivery services. To be included in the study, respondents were required to have used a food delivery application and completed at least one food purchase transaction during the previous three months. Based on these criteria, a total of 82 valid responses were obtained and included in the analysis.

Data were collected using a structured online questionnaire consisting of closed-ended questions measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). Measurement items for visual design, online customer reviews, trust, and purchase intention were adapted from previous studies examining consumer behavior in online environments.

The collected data were analyzed using SPSS software. Instrument quality was assessed through validity and reliability testing. Classical assumption tests, including normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity assessments, were subsequently performed to ensure

the suitability of the regression model. Multiple regression analysis was employed to test the proposed hypotheses and examine the direct relationships among variables (Hair et al., 2019; Sekaran & Bougie, 2016).

Result and Discussions

The thematic analysis revealed four interrelated themes that illustrate how canyoneering experiences may contribute to regenerative tourism outcomes: (1) strengthened emotional and sensory connection to nature, (2) psychological restoration and enhanced mental clarity, (3) personal transformation and increased self-efficacy, and (4) emergence of pro-environmental awareness and stewardship intentions. Collectively, these themes suggest that canyoneering functions not only as an adventure activity but also as a transformative experience capable of fostering deeper human–nature relationships and encouraging regenerative values.

Strengthened Emotional and Sensory Connection to Nature

The most prominent theme emerging from participant narratives was a heightened emotional and sensory connection to nature. Participants frequently described feelings of immersion, presence, and emotional attachment while navigating waterfalls, canyon walls, flowing rivers, and forested landscapes. Rather than viewing nature as a scenic backdrop, participants experienced themselves as part of the natural environment, creating a sense of belonging and interconnectedness, as explained by one participant: “*Standing between the waterfalls made me feel calm and truly connected to nature.* (N)”

This finding reinforces previous research suggesting that adventure tourism facilitates embodied engagement with natural environments through direct physical and sensory interaction (Pomfret & Bramwell, 2016). Unlike passive sightseeing experiences, canyoneering requires participants to navigate natural features through climbing, rappelling, swimming, and walking, creating a heightened awareness of environmental conditions and ecological processes.

From a regenerative tourism perspective, this sense of connection is particularly significant. Regenerative tourism emphasizes reciprocal relationships between humans and nature, where visitors develop not only appreciation for natural environments but also a sense of responsibility toward them (Cave & Dredge, 2020). The narratives suggest that immersive engagement with natural landscapes may cultivate emotional bonds that support regenerative outcomes. Rather than perceiving nature as a resource to be consumed, participants described experiences characterized by respect, awe, and appreciation.

The findings therefore support the argument that meaningful interactions with nature can serve as a foundation for regenerative tourism. Emotional attachment to natural environments has been widely associated with environmentally responsible attitudes and stewardship behaviors. In the context of canyoneering, the physical and sensory intensity of the experience appears to strengthen this attachment, providing a pathway through which regenerative values may emerge.

Psychological Restoration and Enhanced Mental Clarity

A second theme concerned the restorative effects of canyoneering on participants' psychological well-being. Many narratives described feelings of relaxation, stress relief, and mental clarity following immersion in natural environments. Participants frequently contrasted the experience with the pressures of daily life, emphasizing how the activity allowed them to disconnect from routine responsibilities and reconnect with themselves, as illustrated by one participant: "*After the activity, my mind felt lighter and clearer.* (M)"

These findings align with previous studies indicating that nature-based adventure activities contribute positively to psychological well-being by reducing stress, improving mood, and enhancing emotional resilience (Houge Mackenzie & Brymer, 2020). The combination of physical activity and environmental immersion appears to generate restorative benefits that extend beyond simple recreation.

The findings also contribute to regenerative tourism literature by highlighting the concept of personal regeneration. While regenerative tourism is often discussed in relation to ecological restoration and community resilience, emerging perspectives increasingly recognize the importance of human well-being as an integral component of regenerative systems. Visitors who experience psychological renewal may be more capable of developing meaningful relationships with destinations and engaging in responsible environmental behavior.

Furthermore, the restorative benefits reported by participants suggest that adventure tourism can function as a form of nature-based well-being experience. The natural setting, combined with focused physical engagement, encourages participants to become fully present in the moment, thereby reducing cognitive overload and promoting emotional balance. Such outcomes are consistent with regenerative tourism's objective of enhancing both ecological and human flourishing rather than focusing solely on environmental protection.

Personal Transformation and Increased Self-Efficacy

Beyond emotional connection and psychological restoration, participants frequently described experiences of personal transformation. Successfully navigating challenging terrain, overcoming fears, and completing physically demanding tasks generated feelings of achievement, confidence, and self-belief, as explained by participant: "*Facing the challenges during the activity helped me feel more confident in myself.* (O)"

This finding supports previous research indicating that adventure tourism experiences can foster personal growth and self-efficacy through exposure to manageable risk and challenge (Houge Mackenzie & Brymer, 2020). The canyoneering environment requires participants to confront uncertainty, trust their abilities, and adapt to changing conditions. Successfully overcoming these challenges often produces a strong sense of accomplishment and personal competence.

From a regenerative tourism perspective, personal transformation represents an important dimension of regeneration. Regenerative approaches emphasize that external change often begins with internal transformation. Visitors who develop greater self-awareness,

resilience, and confidence may become more receptive to environmental values and more willing to engage in behaviors that support ecological and social well-being.

The narratives suggest that transformation occurred not merely through physical accomplishment but through reflective engagement with the experience itself. Participants frequently described moments of self-discovery and renewed confidence that extended beyond the immediate activity. Such findings support the view that adventure tourism can facilitate transformative learning processes that contribute to broader regenerative outcomes.

Importantly, this theme demonstrates that regeneration is not limited to ecosystems and destinations. Regeneration can also occur at the individual level through experiences that enhance psychological resilience, emotional well-being, and personal capacity. Consequently, canyoneering may contribute to regenerative tourism by fostering both ecological awareness and individual development simultaneously.

Emergence of Pro-Environmental Awareness and Stewardship Intentions

The final theme highlights participants' growing awareness of environmental responsibility following their canyoneering experiences. Exposure to relatively pristine natural environments appeared to increase participants' appreciation for environmental conservation and motivate intentions to engage in environmentally responsible behavior, as noted by one participant: *"This experience made me more aware of the importance of keeping nature clean, especially regarding waste. (X)"*

This finding is particularly relevant to regenerative tourism because stewardship and environmental care are central components of regenerative thinking (Cave & Dredge, 2020). Participants did not merely express appreciation for nature; many articulated a desire to protect and preserve natural environments for future generations. Such reflections indicate a shift from passive enjoyment toward active responsibility.

The emergence of stewardship intentions may be explained by the strong emotional and sensory connections identified in the first theme. Previous tourism research suggests that individuals who develop emotional attachment to natural environments are more likely to engage in conservation-oriented behaviors (Pomfret & Bramwell, 2016). The present findings support this proposition by demonstrating how immersive adventure experiences can strengthen environmental awareness and encourage stewardship attitudes.

These findings also suggest that adventure tourism operators have opportunities to intentionally incorporate regenerative principles into experience design. Environmental interpretation, conservation messaging, and opportunities for visitor participation in environmental initiatives may further strengthen the relationship between nature immersion and stewardship outcomes. Consequently, canyoneering experiences can serve not only as recreational products but also as educational platforms that promote regenerative values.

Toward a Regenerative Adventure Tourism Framework

Taken together, the four themes reveal a sequential process through which regenerative outcomes may emerge in adventure tourism contexts. Participants first develop an emotional and sensory connection with nature through direct immersion in the environment. This

connection contributes to psychological restoration and mental well-being, which in turn facilitates personal transformation and increased self-efficacy. These experiences subsequently encourage greater environmental awareness and stewardship intentions.

This progression suggests that canyoneering may function as a regenerative tourism pathway whereby nature immersion influences emotional, psychological, and behavioral outcomes. The findings therefore extend regenerative tourism literature by providing empirical evidence that adventure tourism experiences can contribute to regeneration at both individual and ecological levels. While previous studies have primarily discussed regenerative tourism conceptually, the present study demonstrates how regenerative values can emerge organically through participant experiences in nature-based adventure settings.

Ultimately, the findings support the proposition that adventure tourism can move beyond recreation and entertainment to become a catalyst for personal renewal, environmental consciousness, and regenerative relationships between humans and nature. Such outcomes are particularly important as tourism destinations seek approaches that not only minimize impacts but also contribute positively to the long-term well-being of people and ecosystems.

Conclusion

This study explored canyoneering experiences through a regenerative tourism lens by examining participant narratives from nature-based adventure activities in West Java, Indonesia. The findings revealed four interconnected dimensions of regenerative experience: emotional and sensory connection to nature, psychological restoration, personal transformation, and pro-environmental awareness. Together, these themes demonstrate that canyoneering extends beyond recreation and adventure by creating opportunities for deeper engagement with natural environments, personal growth, and environmental responsibility.

The study contributes to the emerging regenerative tourism literature by providing empirical evidence that adventure tourism experiences can support regenerative outcomes at the individual level. The findings suggest that direct immersion in natural environments fosters meaningful human–nature relationships, which subsequently promote emotional well-being, self-efficacy, and stewardship intentions. These outcomes align with regenerative tourism’s emphasis on creating positive impacts through reciprocal relationships between visitors and ecosystems rather than merely minimizing negative effects.

From a practical perspective, the results indicate that adventure tourism operators and destination managers can enhance regenerative outcomes by designing experiences that encourage environmental interpretation, reflective engagement, and responsible interaction with nature. Such approaches may strengthen visitors’ emotional attachment to destinations while fostering long-term conservation awareness.

Despite these contributions, the study is exploratory in nature and relies on a limited number of participant narratives. Future research should incorporate in-depth interviews, longitudinal approaches, and comparative studies across different adventure tourism settings to better understand how regenerative outcomes develop over time. Further investigation may also examine how regenerative adventure experiences influence actual environmental

behaviors beyond stated intentions. Overall, this study highlights the potential of canyoneering as a pathway toward regenerative tourism by demonstrating how immersive adventure experiences can contribute to personal renewal, environmental consciousness, and more meaningful relationships between humans and nature.

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Regenerative Tourism Practices in Selasari Tourism Village, Pangandaran: A Qualitative Exploration of Ecological Restoration, Cultural Revitalization, and Community Empowerment

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Abstract

This study investigates the implementation and potential of regenerative tourism in Selasari Tourism Village, Pangandaran Regency, Indonesia. Regenerative tourism goes beyond the concept of sustainability by emphasizing active ecological restoration, cultural revitalization, and collective community well-being. Employing a qualitative descriptive approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews with tourism managers, Pokdarwis members, local guides, community leaders, and visitors, supported by field observations and document analysis. The findings highlight three core dimensions of regenerative practices in Selasari. First, ecological restoration is reflected in the protection of karst landscapes, responsible management of cave and river-based activities, and community-led waste reduction initiatives that aim to improve long-term ecosystem resilience. Second, cultural regeneration is strengthened through the preservation of traditional arts, local gastronomy, and community storytelling embedded within tourism experiences. Third, local economic empowerment is evident through inclusive entrepreneurship, fair-profit distribution mechanisms, and participatory governance involving BUMDes and community tourism groups. Despite these achievements, key challenges remain, including inconsistent visitor management, limited institutional capacity, and the need for stronger policy integration across village, district, and provincial levels. Overall, Selasari Tourism Village holds significant potential to develop into a leading model of regenerative tourism in Indonesia, provided that collaborative planning, ecological monitoring, and knowledge-sharing systems are continuously enhanced. This study contributes to the growing scholarly discussion on regenerative tourism by offering a grounded understanding of how rural destinations can restore ecological integrity while simultaneously strengthening community livelihoods.

Keywords: *Regenerative Tourism; Tourism Village; Ecological Restoration; Cultural Revitalization; Community Empowerment.*

Introduction

Tourism development has long been promoted as a strategic instrument for regional economic growth, particularly in rural and peripheral destinations where alternative livelihood opportunities are limited (UNWTO, 2018). Through employment creation, infrastructure development, and small-scale entrepreneurship, tourism is often positioned as a catalyst for local prosperity. However, conventional tourism models—especially those driven by mass visitation and market-oriented growth—have increasingly been associated with environmental degradation, cultural commodification, and social inequality (Bramwell & Lane, 2011). In many destinations, tourism growth has occurred at the expense of ecosystem integrity and community wellbeing, raising fundamental questions about the long-term viability of tourism-led development.

In response to these challenges, the concept of sustainable tourism emerged as a dominant framework aimed at balancing economic, environmental, and socio-cultural dimensions of tourism development. Sustainable tourism emphasizes resource conservation, community participation, and intergenerational equity (UNWTO, 2005). Despite its normative appeal and widespread policy adoption, sustainable tourism has been subject to growing criticism. Scholars argue that sustainability often focuses on minimizing negative impacts rather than transforming the underlying structures that produce environmental degradation and social exclusion (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2018). As a result, sustainable tourism is frequently characterized as a less harmful approach rather than a genuinely transformative one (Sharpley, 2020).

Against this backdrop, regenerative tourism has emerged as an alternative paradigm that seeks to move beyond sustainability toward positive, restorative, and transformative outcomes. Rather than aiming to sustain existing conditions, regenerative tourism emphasizes the active restoration of ecological systems, the revitalization of local cultures, and the enhancement of collective community wellbeing (Bellato et al., 2023). Rooted in regenerative development theory and systems thinking, this approach conceptualizes destinations as living socio-ecological systems capable of learning, adaptation, and renewal (Mang & Reed, 2012). Tourism, within this perspective, is not an external economic activity imposed on a place, but an embedded process that should contribute to the health and resilience of both human and natural systems.

A key distinction between sustainable and regenerative tourism lies in their respective goals. While sustainability seeks to maintain balance and prevent further degradation, regenerative tourism aspires to create net-positive impacts, whereby tourism activities leave destinations ecologically healthier, culturally stronger, and socially more resilient than before (Dredge, 2022). This paradigm shift places strong emphasis on place-based approaches, community stewardship, and the co-creation of value between hosts and visitors (Pollock, 2019). Consequently, regenerative tourism requires deep local engagement, participatory governance, and long-term commitment to ecological and cultural regeneration.

In the context of developing countries, particularly those rich in biodiversity and cultural heritage such as Indonesia, regenerative tourism offers a compelling framework for rethinking rural tourism development. Indonesia has actively promoted tourism villages as engines of

inclusive growth, cultural preservation, and environmental conservation. Tourism villages function as localized systems where natural resources, cultural practices, and community institutions intersect, making them particularly suitable for regenerative tourism experimentation (Suansri, 2013). However, existing studies on Indonesian tourism villages have largely focused on community-based tourism and sustainability, with limited attention to regenerative principles and practices.

Selasari Tourism Village, located in Pangandaran Regency, West Java, represents a distinctive rural destination characterized by karst landscapes, cave and river-based tourism, and strong community involvement in tourism management. The village is managed collaboratively through local institutions such as Pokdarwis and BUMDes, reflecting participatory governance structures commonly found in Indonesian tourism villages. While Selasari is often framed within ecotourism or community-based tourism narratives, many of its practices—such as ecosystem protection, cultural storytelling, and inclusive local entrepreneurship—implicitly resonate with regenerative tourism principles.

Despite the growing international discourse on regenerative tourism, empirical, place-based studies that explore how regenerative practices emerge and operate at the village level remain scarce, particularly in Southeast Asian contexts. Most existing literature remains conceptual or focuses on developed-country destinations (Bellato et al., 2023; Dredge, 2022). This lack of grounded empirical research limits the understanding of how regenerative tourism can be operationalized within rural, community-led destinations in the Global South.

Therefore, this study aims to explore the implementation and potential of regenerative tourism practices in Selasari Tourism Village, Pangandaran Regency, Indonesia. Specifically, it examines three interrelated dimensions: (1) ecological restoration, (2) cultural revitalization, and (3) community empowerment. By employing a qualitative descriptive approach, this research seeks to contribute to the growing body of regenerative tourism scholarship while providing context-sensitive insights for policymakers, destination managers, and community stakeholders engaged in rural tourism development.

Literature review

Evolution of Regenerative Tourism

The concept of regenerative tourism has evolved as a response to the perceived limitations of sustainable tourism. While sustainable tourism emphasizes maintaining balance among economic, environmental, and socio-cultural dimensions, it has been criticized for its incremental and mitigation-oriented nature (Sharpley, 2020). In many cases, sustainability practices focus on reducing negative impacts rather than addressing the root causes of ecological degradation and social inequality embedded within tourism systems (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2018).

Regenerative tourism represents a paradigm shift that reframes tourism as a restorative and transformative process. Drawing from regenerative development, systems ecology, and indigenous worldviews, regenerative tourism emphasizes the renewal of ecological systems, the strengthening of social relations, and the co-evolution of human and natural systems (Mang

& Reed, 2012). Bellato et al. (2023) define regenerative tourism as an approach that seeks to generate net-positive outcomes by embedding tourism activities within the living systems of a place.

Unlike sustainability, which often treats destinations as systems to be managed and controlled, regenerative tourism views destinations as complex adaptive systems that require learning, adaptation, and continuous feedback (Dredge, 2022). This perspective positions tourism actors particularly local communities not merely as beneficiaries or managers, but as stewards and co-creators of regenerative change.

Core Dimensions of Regenerative Tourism

Although regenerative tourism literature is still emerging, scholars generally converge on several core dimensions that distinguish regenerative practices from conventional and sustainable tourism models. These dimensions include ecological restoration, cultural revitalization, and community empowerment (Bellato et al., 2023; Pollock, 2019).

Ecological Restoration

Ecological restoration is a foundational pillar of regenerative tourism. Rather than limiting environmental damage, regenerative tourism actively contributes to ecosystem recovery, biodiversity enhancement, and long-term ecological resilience (Dredge, 2022). In nature-based destinations, this may involve habitat restoration, protection of sensitive landscapes, community-led conservation initiatives, and environmental education embedded within tourism experiences.

Research suggests that tourism can play a constructive role in ecological restoration when local communities are empowered as environmental stewards and when tourism revenues are reinvested into conservation efforts (Buckley, 2012). Regenerative tourism emphasizes the interdependence between healthy ecosystems and community livelihoods, recognizing that environmental degradation ultimately undermines tourism viability itself.

Cultural revitalization refers to the renewal and strengthening of local cultural practices, knowledge systems, and identities through tourism. Unlike conventional cultural tourism which often commodifies culture as a consumable product—regenerative tourism views culture as a living and evolving system embedded within everyday community life (Pollock, 2019).

Tourism experiences that integrate storytelling, traditional arts, rituals, and local gastronomy can serve as platforms for intergenerational knowledge transmission and cultural pride (Richards, 2018). When communities maintain control over how their culture is represented and shared, tourism can contribute to cultural continuity rather than erosion. Regenerative tourism thus emphasizes cultural integrity, authenticity, and community agency as essential components of destination regeneration.

Ecological Restoration Regenerative Tourism in Rural and Village Contexts

Community empowerment is widely recognized as a critical success factor in regenerative tourism development. Empowerment involves not only economic participation but also decision-making authority, institutional capacity, and social capital (Scheyvens, 1999). Regenerative tourism requires governance structures that enable inclusive participation, transparent benefit-sharing, and collective ownership of tourism outcomes (Dredge, 2022).

Empirical studies demonstrate that community-led tourism initiatives are more likely to produce equitable and resilient outcomes when local institutions—such as cooperatives, tourism groups, or village enterprises—play a central role in planning and management (Sawu et al., 2024). Participatory governance strengthens local agency and enhances the capacity of communities to adapt to environmental, economic, and social change.

Regenerative Tourism in Rural and Village Contexts

Rural destinations and tourism villages provide fertile contexts for regenerative tourism due to their close relationships between people, place, and culture. Tourism villages often rely on natural landscapes, traditional livelihoods, and strong social networks, aligning closely with regenerative principles of place-based development and community stewardship (Suansri, 2013).

In Indonesia, the tourism village model has been promoted as a strategy for inclusive development, cultural preservation, and environmental conservation. Previous studies on Indonesian tourism villages have largely focused on community-based tourism, sustainability, and ecotourism (Nuryanti, 1993; Suansri, 2013). While these frameworks share similarities with regenerative tourism, they often lack explicit emphasis on restoration, regeneration, and systems transformation.

Recent international research highlights the need for more empirical, qualitative studies that examine how regenerative tourism principles are enacted in practice, particularly in developing-country and rural contexts (Bellato et al., 2023; Dredge, 2022). Such studies are essential for translating regenerative tourism from abstract theory into operational strategies that are sensitive to local socio-cultural and ecological conditions.

Despite the growing academic interest in regenerative tourism, there remains a significant gap in context-specific, village-level empirical research, particularly within Southeast Asia. Most existing studies are conceptual or focus on destinations in developed economies, limiting their applicability to rural communities in the Global South.

Moreover, limited research has examined how regenerative tourism practices intersect across ecological, cultural, and socio-economic dimensions within a single destination. Understanding these intersections is crucial for assessing the holistic regenerative potential of tourism villages.

Accordingly, this study adopts a qualitative exploratory approach to examine regenerative tourism practices in Selasari Tourism Village, focusing on ecological restoration, cultural revitalization, and community empowerment as interrelated dimensions of destination regeneration.

Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative descriptive research design to explore regenerative tourism practices in Selasari Tourism Village, Pangandaran Regency, Indonesia. A qualitative approach is appropriate because regenerative tourism involves complex social, cultural, and ecological processes that are deeply embedded within local contexts and cannot be adequately captured through quantitative measurement alone (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Qualitative descriptive research enables the researcher to capture participants' perspectives, lived experiences, and meanings related to tourism practices in a naturalistic setting.

This design is particularly suitable for exploratory studies aiming to generate contextual understanding rather than theory testing. By focusing on rich description and thematic interpretation, the study seeks to uncover how regenerative tourism principles are enacted in everyday tourism practices at the village level.

The research was conducted in Selasari Tourism Village, located in Pangandaran Regency, West Java Province, Indonesia. The village is characterized by karst landscapes, cave and river-based tourism attractions, and a strong reliance on natural and cultural resources. Tourism development in Selasari is primarily managed through community-based institutions, including Kelompok Sadar Wisata (Pokdarwis) and Badan Usaha Milik Desa (BUMDes), in collaboration with village authorities and local residents.

Selasari was selected as the study site due to its growing recognition as a nature-based tourism village and its observable alignment with regenerative tourism dimensions, including environmental stewardship, cultural preservation, and community participation. The village provides a relevant and information-rich case for examining regenerative tourism practices in a rural Indonesian context.

Participants in this study were selected using purposive sampling, which allows the researcher to identify information-rich individuals who possess relevant knowledge and experience related to tourism development in Selasari (Patton, 2015). The participants included:

- Tourism managers and Pokdarwis leaders
- Members of BUMDes involved in tourism management
- Local tour guides and tourism service providers
- Community leaders and elders
- Visitors who had participated in tourism activities in Selasari

This diverse range of participants enabled the study to capture multiple perspectives on regenerative tourism practices, governance structures, and perceived outcomes. Data collection continued until thematic saturation was achieved, meaning no new substantive insights emerged from additional interviews (Guest et al., 2006).

Semi-structured, in-depth interviews were conducted to explore participants' experiences, perceptions, and interpretations of tourism practices in Selasari. An interview guide was developed based on the regenerative tourism literature, focusing on ecological restoration, cultural revitalization, and community empowerment. The semi-structured format

allowed flexibility for probing emergent themes while ensuring consistency across interviews (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015).

Interviews were conducted in Indonesian, audio-recorded with participants' consent, and later transcribed verbatim for analysis.

Participant and non-participant observations were conducted during tourism activities, community meetings, and cultural events. Observations focused on environmental management practices, visitor behavior, cultural performances, and community interactions. Field notes were recorded systematically to capture contextual details and non-verbal dynamics that complemented interview data (Yin, 2018).

Data analysis followed a thematic analysis approach as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006). The process involved six stages:

- Familiarization with the data through repeated reading of transcripts and field notes
- Initial coding of meaningful units related to regenerative tourism dimensions
- Searching for themes across codes
- Reviewing and refining themes
- Defining and naming themes
- Interpreting themes in relation to existing literature

Themes were organized around the three analytical dimensions: ecological restoration, cultural revitalization, and community empowerment. Manual coding was employed to maintain close engagement with the data and to allow reflexive interpretation.

To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, the study applied criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability as proposed by Lincoln and Guba (1985). Credibility was enhanced through data triangulation across interviews, observations, and documents. Member checking was conducted by sharing preliminary findings with selected participants for validation.

Thick description was provided to support transferability, while an audit trail documenting research decisions and analytical steps was maintained to enhance dependability and confirmability.

Ethical considerations were carefully addressed throughout the research process. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study, and informed consent was obtained prior to data collection. Anonymity and confidentiality were ensured by using pseudonyms and removing identifiable information from transcripts and reports. The study adhered to ethical guidelines for social research involving human participants (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Result

This section presents the empirical findings of the study, derived from in-depth interviews, field observations, and document analysis conducted in Selasari Tourism Village. The findings are organized around three key dimensions of regenerative tourism: ecological restoration, cultural revitalization, and community empowerment. These dimensions emerged consistently across data sources and reflect the core regenerative practices observed in the village Text.

Ecological Restoration Practices

Ecological restoration emerged as a central theme in Selasari's tourism practices, particularly in relation to the protection of karst landscapes, cave ecosystems, and river environments. Local stakeholders demonstrated a strong awareness of the fragility of natural resources and the need to manage tourism activities responsibly.

Tour guides and Pokdarwis members reported implementing informal visitor management strategies, including limiting group sizes for cave exploration, enforcing rules against touching cave formations, and educating visitors about environmental conservation. Observational data confirmed that guides actively reminded tourists to avoid littering and prohibited behaviors that could damage natural formations.

Community-led waste management initiatives were also evident. Residents regularly organized collective clean-up activities along rivers and tourism pathways, particularly after peak visitation periods. While formal waste infrastructure remains limited, these practices reflect a growing sense of collective responsibility for environmental stewardship.

"We realize that if the caves and rivers are damaged, tourism here will not survive. So, we remind visitors and also remind ourselves to protect nature," (Local guide, interview).

These practices indicate an emerging restorative mindset, where tourism is viewed as dependent on ecosystem health rather than merely exploiting natural attractions.

Cultural Revitalization through Tourism Activities

Cultural revitalization was identified as another significant outcome of tourism development in Selasari. Tourism activities in the village incorporate local traditions, storytelling, and gastronomy as integral components of visitor experiences rather than as standalone performances.

Interviews with community elders and tourism managers revealed that cultural narratives related to local history, caves, and ancestral practices are often shared during guided tours. This storytelling approach serves both educational and identity-strengthening functions, reinforcing community pride while enhancing visitor understanding of local culture.

Traditional food preparation also plays a role in cultural regeneration. Local culinary offerings emphasize traditional recipes using locally sourced ingredients, often prepared and served by community members in homestays or small food stalls. These practices support cultural continuity and provide additional income opportunities for households.

"Tourism makes young people interested again in local culture. They learn stories from elders because tourists ask about them," (Community leader, interview).

Field observations further indicated that cultural activities are embedded within daily community life rather than staged exclusively for tourists, suggesting a more organic form of cultural regeneration.

Community Empowerment and Local Economic Participation

Community empowerment emerged as a cross-cutting theme underpinning ecological and cultural practices. Tourism development in Selasari is characterized by broad community participation facilitated through Pokdarwis and BUMDes. These institutions coordinate tourism activities, manage finances, and mediate decision-making processes among stakeholders.

Economic participation is distributed across various community roles, including local guides, homestay operators, food vendors, parking attendants, and artisans. Interview data suggest that profit-sharing mechanisms, although informal, are perceived as relatively fair by community members.

“Tourism income is shared according to roles. Not everyone gets the same amount, but everyone gets a chance to be involved,” (Pokdarwis member, interview).

Women and youth were reported to be increasingly involved in tourism-related activities, particularly in culinary services, digital promotion, and guiding. However, participants also acknowledged limitations in managerial capacity, marketing skills, and formal training, which constrain the scalability of tourism benefits.

Governance and Institutional Dynamics

Governance structures play a critical role in shaping regenerative tourism practices in Selasari. The collaboration between village authorities, Pokdarwis, and BUMDes enables participatory decision-making, although coordination remains largely informal.

Document analysis revealed that tourism planning documents emphasize community involvement and environmental conservation, but lack explicit references to regenerative tourism concepts or systematic monitoring indicators. Stakeholders expressed a need for stronger institutional support and clearer policy integration with district and provincial tourism frameworks.

Despite these limitations, strong social cohesion and trust among community members contribute to adaptive governance and collective problem-solving.

Challenges Identified by Stakeholders

While regenerative practices are evident, several challenges were consistently identified across interviews:

- Inconsistent visitor management, particularly during peak seasons
- Limited human resource capacity, especially in administration and digital marketing
- Absence of formal ecological monitoring systems
- Weak policy integration across governance levels

These challenges highlight the need for capacity building, institutional strengthening, and cross-level collaboration to sustain regenerative outcomes.

Discussion

This study explores regenerative tourism practices in Selasari Tourism Village through the lenses of ecological restoration, cultural revitalization, and community empowerment. The discussion interprets the empirical findings by situating them within the broader regenerative tourism and community-based tourism literature, highlighting both convergences and contextual specificities.

Ecological Restoration as Community Stewardship

The findings demonstrate that ecological restoration in Selasari is primarily enacted through community stewardship rather than formal conservation mechanisms. Practices such as limiting visitor behavior in caves, collective river clean-ups, and environmental education reflect a restorative orientation that aligns with regenerative tourism principles emphasizing ecosystem renewal and long-term resilience (Dredge, 2022).

Unlike conventional sustainable tourism approaches that focus on minimizing environmental impacts, Selasari's practices illustrate a shift toward active responsibility for ecosystem health, even in the absence of formal monitoring systems. This supports Bellato et al.'s (2023) argument that regenerative tourism often emerges organically from place-based practices rather than top-down policy frameworks. The reliance on local knowledge and moral responsibility further resonates with regenerative development theory, which prioritizes ecological relationships and local stewardship over technocratic control (Mang & Reed, 2012).

However, the absence of structured ecological indicators in Selasari also highlights a critical limitation. Without systematic monitoring, restorative intentions may not translate into measurable ecological outcomes. This challenge echoes findings from other rural destinations, where community-led conservation efforts require institutional support to ensure long-term effectiveness (Buckley, 2012).

Cultural Revitalization Beyond Commodification

Cultural revitalization in Selasari extends beyond performative displays for tourists, functioning instead as a process of cultural reaffirmation and intergenerational transmission. The integration of storytelling, traditional gastronomy, and everyday cultural practices into tourism experiences reflects regenerative tourism's emphasis on living culture rather than cultural commodification (Pollock, 2019).

This finding contrasts with critiques of cultural tourism that highlight the risk of cultural dilution and staged authenticity (Richards, 2018). In Selasari, community control over cultural narratives enables tourism to reinforce cultural identity and pride. Such practices align with regenerative tourism's goal of strengthening cultural systems as integral components of destination regeneration (Bellato et al., 2023).

Nevertheless, cultural revitalization remains vulnerable to market pressures as visitation increases. Without clear cultural governance frameworks, there is a risk that cultural expressions may become increasingly standardized or commercialized. This tension

underscores the importance of community-led cultural guidelines to safeguard cultural integrity while engaging with tourism markets

Community Empowerment and Regenerative Governance

Community empowerment emerges as a foundational element enabling ecological and cultural regeneration in Selasari. The involvement of Pokdarwis and BUMDes facilitates participatory governance, inclusive economic participation, and collective ownership of tourism outcomes. These findings corroborate Scheyvens' (1999) empowerment framework, which emphasizes economic, social, political, and psychological dimensions of community empowerment in tourism.

In the context of regenerative tourism, empowerment is not merely an outcome but a precondition for regeneration (Dredge, 2022). Selasari's governance model reflects this principle by embedding tourism management within local institutions and social networks. This supports recent empirical research demonstrating that regenerative tourism thrives where communities retain agency over decision-making and benefit distribution (Sawu et al., 2024).

However, limitations in human resource capacity and administrative skills constrain the village's ability to scale regenerative impacts. These findings echo broader challenges identified in rural tourism destinations, where strong social capital is often not matched by institutional capacity and technical expertise (Suansri, 2013).

Community Regenerative Tourism in a Rural Indonesian Context

This study contributes to regenerative tourism literature by providing empirical evidence from a rural Indonesian tourism village, a context underrepresented in existing research. The findings suggest that regenerative tourism does not necessarily require explicit adoption of regenerative terminology or formal frameworks. Instead, regenerative practices can emerge from community-based tourism traditions, local environmental ethics, and collective cultural values.

This supports calls for more context-sensitive interpretations of regenerative tourism, particularly in Global South settings where community-based tourism models are already well established (Bellato et al., 2023). In Selasari, regenerative tourism manifests as a continuation and deepening of community-based tourism principles rather than a radical departure from them.

Community Theoretical and Practical Implications

Theoretically, this study reinforces regenerative tourism as a place-based, emergent, and relational process, extending existing conceptual frameworks with empirical insights from a village-level case. It demonstrates how ecological restoration, cultural revitalization, and community empowerment are interconnected rather than discrete dimensions.

Practically, the findings suggest that policymakers and destination managers should focus on strengthening community institutions, building ecological monitoring capacity, and facilitating knowledge exchange rather than imposing rigid regenerative tourism models.

Supporting villages like Selasari requires enabling environments that allow locally grounded regenerative practices to evolve organically.

Conclusions

This study examined regenerative tourism practices in Selasari Tourism Village, Pangandaran Regency, Indonesia, through a qualitative exploration of ecological restoration, cultural revitalization, and community empowerment. The findings reveal that Selasari demonstrates multiple regenerative tourism practices that have emerged organically from community-based tourism traditions, local environmental ethics, and participatory governance structures.

Ecological restoration in Selasari is reflected in community-led stewardship of karst landscapes, caves, and river ecosystems. Although these practices remain largely informal, they signify a restorative orientation that prioritizes long-term ecosystem health over short-term tourism gains. Cultural revitalization is evident through the integration of storytelling, traditional gastronomy, and everyday cultural practices into tourism experiences, reinforcing cultural identity and intergenerational knowledge transmission. Community empowerment underpins these processes, facilitated through inclusive participation, local entrepreneurship, and collective governance mechanisms involving Pokdarwis and BUMDes.

The study highlights that regenerative tourism does not necessarily require explicit adoption of regenerative terminology or formalized frameworks. Instead, regenerative practices can emerge through locally grounded actions when communities retain agency over tourism development and when tourism is embedded within living socio-ecological systems. However, several challenges remain, including limited institutional capacity, inconsistent visitor management, and the absence of systematic ecological monitoring. Addressing these challenges is essential for sustaining and scaling regenerative outcomes.

From a theoretical perspective, this research contributes to regenerative tourism scholarship by providing empirical evidence from a rural tourism village in the Global South, a context that remains underrepresented in existing literature. The findings reinforce the view of regenerative tourism as a place-based, relational, and emergent process that extends and deepens community-based tourism principles rather than replacing them.

Practically, the study suggests that policymakers and destination managers should focus on strengthening community institutions, enhancing human resource capacity, and fostering cross-level policy integration to support regenerative tourism development. For Selasari Tourism Village, future efforts should prioritize collaborative planning, ecological monitoring, and knowledge-sharing systems to ensure that tourism continues to restore ecological integrity while enhancing community wellbeing.

Future research may adopt longitudinal or comparative approaches to assess the long-term impacts of regenerative tourism practices across different tourism villages and regional contexts. Such studies would further advance understanding of how regenerative tourism can contribute to resilient and equitable rural development.

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The Influence of Social Media User-Generated Content Sources on Destination Image and Revisit Intention in Bandung Nature Tourism

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Abstract

This study investigates the distinct influence of Social Media User-Generated Content (UGC) sources on Destination Image and the subsequent Revisit Intention within the crucial context of Bandung Nature Tourism. Given that UGC, serving as influential Electronic Word-of-Mouth (e-WOM), is fundamental in shaping pre-travel expectations and subsequent behavioral intentions, understanding the varying impact of its sources is vital for destination competitiveness and sustainable growth in West Java. This research adopts a structured quantitative methodology, utilizing the established theory of UGC relational ties. Specifically, the study is designed to test the distinct influence of all three UGC source types, there are: Strong Ties (recommendations from close friends and family), Weak Ties (content from acquaintances or online communities/influencers), and Tourism Ties (information from official tourism agencies and platforms) on the cognitive and affective components of Destination Image. Data will be collected through questionnaires administered to visitors of Bandung's nature attractions to ensure contextual relevance and focus. The core analytical approach involves Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to test the overall conceptual framework. Major hypotheses posit that UGC from certain sources significantly influences Destination Image, and this positive image subsequently influences the tourists' Revisit Intention. The findings will provide critical, empirically-based recommendations for local tourism management in West Java regarding the prioritization of digital marketing strategies and investment in specific UGC platforms to foster long-term tourist loyalty and enhance the region's overall destination image.

Keywords: *User-Generated Content, Destination Image, Tourist Behaviour, Nature Tourism, Social Media Marketing.*

Introduction

The development of digital technology and social media has fundamentally changed the landscape of the tourism industry, particularly in the way travelers seek information, plan trips, and make destination decisions. Social media is now not just a communication platform, but has become the main source of tourism information that greatly affects the perception and behavior of tourists (Zhang et al., 2017). In this context, User-Generated Content (UGC) shared through various social media platforms plays a crucial role as a form of Electronic Word-of-Mouth (e-WOM) that is able to shape the expectations and decisions of tourists before they visit a destination. Content created and shared by social media users, such as photos, videos, reviews, and recommendations, has significant persuasive power because it is considered more authentic and trustworthy compared to official promotions from destination managers.

Bandung as one of the main tourist destinations in Indonesia, especially West Java, has a very diverse natural tourist attraction ranging from mountainous areas, tea plantations, waterfalls, to volcanic craters that attract domestic and foreign tourists. Bandung's abundant natural tourism potential needs to be managed with the right digital marketing strategy to increase the competitiveness of destinations and encourage repeat visits. However, in today's digital era, the success of destination marketing is no longer entirely dependent on conventional promotional efforts, but is heavily influenced by how the destination is perceived and talked about by tourists in the digital space. This makes understanding how UGC from various sources affect destination image very important for tourist destination managers in Bandung.

Previous research has shown that Destination Image is an important factor that influences the decision of tourists to visit or revisit a destination (Ilieva, 2022). Destination image It consists of two main components, namely the cognitive component related to knowledge and belief about the physical attributes of the destination, and the affective component related to feelings and emotions towards the destination. These two components are formed through various sources of information, including personal experiences, official promotions, and what is increasingly dominant is information from social media. In this context, UGC has a unique ability to form both components Destination Image This is because it presents a real perspective from the experiences of other tourists who have visited the destination.

What is interesting to study further is that not all UGCs have the same influence on the formation of Destination Image and Revisit intention. The theory of relational ties in the context of UGC distinguishes three types of content sources based on the proximity of the relationship between the creator and the recipient of information (Omeish et al., 2024). First, Strong ties refers to recommendations and content that come from close friends and family members who have strong personal relationships. Second, Weak ties refers to content created by acquaintances, members of online communities, or Influencers who do not have a direct personal relationship but still have a certain influence. Third, Tourism ties is information that comes from official travel agencies, government tourism websites, and other official platforms that have institutional credibility.

The differences in the characteristics of these three sources of UGC raise important questions about the extent to which each source affects tourists' perception of Bandung's natural tourist destinations. Some studies show that Strong ties tends to have a stronger influence due

to the high trust factor, but the reach is limited (Andreas & Roslina, 2025). Instead, the content of the Weak ties such as Influencers It has a wider reach and is able to attract the attention of a larger audience, although its level of trust can vary. Meanwhile, Tourism ties It offers more structured and institutionally credible information, but is often considered less authentic due to its promotional nature.

In the context of Bandung's natural tourism, understanding the dynamics of influence from various sources of UGC is very relevant considering the increasingly fierce competition for tourist destinations, not only at the national level but also regionally in Southeast Asia. Natural tourism has unique characteristics where visual and emotional experiences are very dominant, so visual content on social media such as Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook has a very big role in shaping the perception and interest of potential tourists. However, there is still a significant research gap in understanding the specifics of how each type of UGC source contributes to the formation of destination images and ultimately influences the revisit intention of tourists in the context of Indonesia's natural tourism, especially Bandung.

This research is important because it provides a deeper and more structured understanding of the mechanisms of influence of UGC on tourist behavior. By identifying which sources of UGC are most effective in shaping Destination Image positive and encourage the intention to revisit, this study can provide strategic recommendations for managers of natural tourism destinations in Bandung and West Java in general. The findings of this study are expected to help tourism stakeholders in allocating digital marketing resources more efficiently, choosing the right social media platforms, and developing collaboration strategies with various types of content creators to maximize the impact of destination promotion (Su et al., 2020). Furthermore, this study contributes to the academic literature on digital destination marketing by providing empirical evidence of the natural tourism context in Indonesia which is still relatively limited in study compared to urban or cultural tourism destinations.

Based on the background that has been described, this study aims to answer several specific research questions. First, how does UGC from strong ties (close friends and family) affect the destination image of Bandung's natural tourism? Second, how does UGC from weak ties (acquaintances and influencers) affect the destination image of Bandung's natural tourism? Third, how does the UGC of tourism ties (official tourism agents and platforms) affect the destination image of Bandung's natural tourism? Fourth, how does destination image affect tourists' revisit intention towards Bandung's natural tourist destinations? Fifth, is there a significant difference in the level of influence between the three types of UGC sources on the formation of destination image and revisit intention?

The main objective of this study is to analyze and measure the different influences of each source of social media UGC (strong ties, weak ties, and tourism ties) on the destination image of Bandung's natural tourism, as well as to test how the destination image subsequently affects revisit intention Tourists. Specifically, this study aims to: (1) examine the influence of UGC from the three types of sources on the cognitive and affective components of the destination image; (2) analyze the influence of destination image on tourist revisit intention; (3) identify which sources of UGC have the strongest influence in the context of Bandung's natural tourism; and (4) provide data-driven strategic recommendations for natural tourism destination managers in Bandung in optimizing their digital marketing strategies.

This research is expected to make a significant contribution both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, this study enriches the academic literature on digital destination marketing, especially in the context of UGC and tourist behavior in Indonesia's natural tourism destinations. This research also contributes to the development of relational ties theory in the context of tourism by providing empirical evidence from different cultural and geographical contexts. Practically, the findings of this study provide strategic guidance for Bandung's natural tourism destination managers, the West Java Tourism Office, and other tourism stakeholders in designing more effective digital marketing strategies, allocating promotional budgets more efficiently, choosing the right platforms and content types, and building strategic collaborations with content creators that have an optimal impact on the formation of positive destination images and tourist loyalty long-term.

Literature review

User-Generated Content (UGC) as Electronic Word-of-Mouth

User-Generated Content It has become a phenomenon that is changing the way consumers search for and process information about products and tourist destinations. UGC refers to various forms of digital content such as reviews, photos, videos, and testimonials created and shared by ordinary users on social media platforms, not by organizations or companies (Filieri et al., 2018). In the context of tourism, UGC serves as a form of Electronic word-of-mouth which is very influential because of its nature which is considered more objective and trustworthy compared to official promotional materials. Tourists tend to trust the experiences and opinions of fellow tourists more because they are perceived as having no direct commercial interests.

The power of UGC in influencing tourists' decisions lies in its authenticity. Content created based on real experiences provides a more realistic picture of what travelers can expect when visiting a destination. Research by (Lu & Stepchenkova, 2015) shows that UGC has a more significant impact on purchase intention compared to content created by an official brand or organization. This is because modern consumers, particularly millennials and Gen Z, tend to be skeptical of traditional advertising and are more likely to seek validation from other people's experiences before making travel decisions.

Relational Ties Theory in the Context of UGC

Not all UGC sources have the same level of influence on the recipient of information. Theory relational ties explains that the power of information influence depends on the type of relationship between the giver and receiver of the information. In the context of social media and tourism, this theory distinguishes three main categories of UGC sources that each have different characteristics and mechanisms of influence (Chung & Koo, 2015).

Strong ties refers to strong personal connections such as family and close friends. Information from these sources has a very high level of trust due to the presence of emotional bonds and deep knowledge of each other's preferences and needs. When a close friend recommends a tourist destination, the recommendation tends to be taken more seriously because of the trust that has been built in the relationship. Weak ties includes acquaintances, members of the online community, and Influencers on social media. While they don't have a

deep personal connection, they have a wider reach and can introduce new information that may not be available online Strong ties. Tourism ties is a relationship with official tourism entities such as Destination Marketing Organizations, travel agencies, and online booking platforms that offer structured information and institutional credibility (Joseph et al., 2024)

H1: UGC from strong ties has a positive effect on the destination image of Bandung's natural tourism.

H2: UGC from weak ties has a positive effect on the destination image of Bandung's natural tourism.

H3: UGC from tourism ties has a positive effect on the destination image of Bandung's natural tourism.

Destination Image and Its Components

Destination image It is defined as the overall perception, belief, and impression that a person has about a tourist destination. This concept is very important in tourism studies because it influences the decision-making process of tourists from destination selection to post-visit satisfaction. Destination image It consists of two main components that are interrelated but have different characteristics (Pensos et al., 2017).

The cognitive component has to do with knowledge and beliefs about the physical attributes of a destination such as natural scenery, amenities, accessibility, and available activities. This component is rational and is based on objective information about the destination. Meanwhile, the affective component relates to feelings, emotions, and emotional responses to destinations. This component is more subjective and relates to how the destination makes tourists feel happy, relaxed, or excited. Research shows that the UGC of social media is able to influence these two components simultaneously because the visual content and narrative of the shared experience can provide factual information while evoking an emotional response (Almeida & Moreno-Gil, 2017). In the context of natural tourism, the visual components of UGC such as photos and videos play a very dominant role. Beautiful natural scenery, adventure activities, and unique moments captured by other travelers can create Destination Image powerful and attractive. This positive image of the destination then becomes a determining factor in the decision of tourists to visit or not to visit the destination.

Revisit Intention as an Indicator of Destination Loyalty

Revisit intention Or the intention to revisit is one of the important indicators of the success of a tourist destination. This concept reflects the loyalty of tourists and their desire to repeat the tourist experience in the same destination. In an era where competition between destinations is getting tighter, retaining tourists who have already visited is more efficient than constantly looking for new tourists (Nguyen Viet et al., 2020).

Revisit intention influenced by various factors, however Destination Image Consistently being one of the strongest predictors. When tourists have a positive perception of a destination, both cognitively and affectively, they tend to have a greater desire to revisit the destination in the future. In addition, satisfied travelers will also recommend the destination to others, creating a positive cycle of word-of-mouth that benefits the destination (Sharma & Nayak, 2019). In the context of Bandung's natural tourism, Revisit intention It has become very

relevant as many tourists make repeat visits to explore different natural attractions or to re-experience a pleasant experience. The geographical proximity factor of Jakarta and other big cities also makes Bandung a feasible destination for repeat visits, both for weekend tours and long vacations.

H4: Destination image has a positive effect on the revisit intention of tourists in Bandung's natural tourist destinations.

Conceptual Framework of Research

Based on the literature review that has been described, this study develops a conceptual framework that connects the three types of UGC sources (strong ties, weak ties, and tourism ties) with destination image as a mediating variable, which then influences revisit intention as an outcome variable. This framework is based on the theory of relational ties and the theory of destination image which have been widely validated in previous tourism research. This research model is designed to comprehensively examine how various sources of information on social media contribute to the formation of destination image and ultimately affect tourists' loyalty to Bandung's natural tourist destinations.

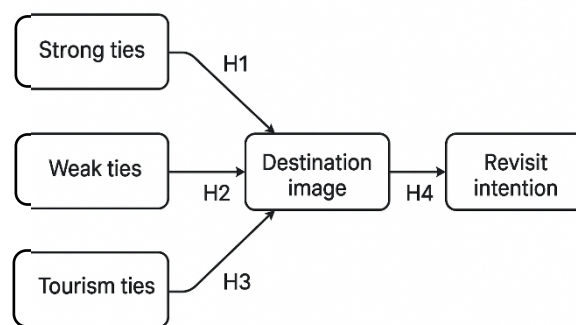


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Methodology

Research Design and Approach

This study adopts a quantitative approach with a design Cross-sectional survey to test the causal relationship between the variables studied. The quantitative approach was chosen because it allowed researchers to measure the specific influence of various UGC sources on Destination Image and Revisit intention systematically and objectively. The design of this study is explanatory and aims to explain the cause-and-effect relationship between variables through testing the hypotheses that have been formulated. This method is considered appropriate because it is able to provide generalizable results to a wider population with a measurable level of validity and reliability (Hair & Alamer, 2022).

Population and Sample

The population in this study is all tourists who have visited natural tourist destinations in Bandung in the last six months and actively use social media as a source of tourism

information. The selection of a six-month period is intended to ensure that respondents still have a clear enough memory of their experience and the UGC exposure they received prior to the visit. The sampling technique used was purposive sampling with specific criteria, namely respondents were at least 18 years old, had visited at least one natural tourist destination in Bandung, and used social media to find information before visiting.

The determination of sample size in this study follows the guidelines for analysis Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) which requires a minimum number of samples. Based on the general rule in SEM, the minimum sample size is 5 to 10 times the number of indicators used in the research model (Kline, 2018). Taking into account the complexity of the model that includes four main variables with a total of 24 indicators, the minimum sample size required is 240 respondents. However, to anticipate the possibility of incomplete or invalid data, this study targeted the collection of data from 300 respondents to ensure the adequacy of data in the analysis.

Research Instruments

The data collection instrument used is a structured questionnaire developed based on instruments that have been validated in previous research with adaptation according to the context of Bandung's natural tourism. The questionnaire consists of five main sections covering the demographic characteristics of the respondents, the UGC exposure of the Strong ties, Weak ties, and Tourism ties, perception of Destination Image (cognitive and affective components), and Revisit intention. Each construct is measured using a 5-point Likert scale, where 1 indicates "strongly disagree" and 5 indicates "strongly agree". The use of the Likert scale was chosen because of its ease in measuring respondents' attitudes and perceptions in a structured manner (Sarstedt & Mooi, 2014).

The validity of the research instrument was tested through two stages, namely the validity of the content conducted through expert judgment by three experts in the field of tourism and digital marketing, and the validity of the construct tested using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). The reliability of the instrument is measured using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient with an acceptable minimum value of 0.70. Prior to the main data collection, this study conducted a questionnaire trial on 30 respondents to ensure that the instrument could be well understood and produce reliable data.

Data collection techniques

Data collection was carried out online using a digital survey platform that was disseminated through various social media channels and online tourism communities. The method of distributing the questionnaire includes posts on the Facebook group of the nature tourism community lovers, Instagram, and other communication platforms relevant to the target respondents. Before filling out the questionnaire, respondents were given a brief explanation of the purpose of the research and the guarantee of the confidentiality of their personal data. The data collection process is expected to last for two months to reach the target number of respondents that have been determined.

Data Analysis Techniques

The data analysis in this study uses the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with the Partial Least Squares (PLS) through SmartPLS 4.0 software. The selection of PLS-SEM is based on several considerations, namely its ability to analyze complex models with many constructs and indicators, does not require strict data normality assumptions, and is suitable for predictive research (Hair & Alamer, 2022). The analysis is carried out in two main stages, namely evaluation Measurement Model (measurement model) and evaluation Structural Model (structural model). At the evaluation stage Measurement Model, this study tested the validity and reliability of the construct through several criteria. Convergent validity is measured using the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) with a minimum criterion of 0.50 and Loading Factor Minimum 0.70. The formula for calculating AVE is:

$$AVE = \frac{\sum \lambda_i^2}{n}$$

where λ_i is the loading factor of each indicator and n is the number of indicators. The reliability of the construct was evaluated using Composite Reliability (CR) with a minimum value of 0.70. The CR formula is:

$$CR = \frac{(\sum \lambda_i)^2}{(\sum \lambda_i)^2 + \sum var(ei)}$$

where $var(ei)$ is the error variance of each indicator. The validity of the discriminant was tested using the Fornell-Larcker criteria and the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) with a maximum value of 0.85.

At the evaluation stage Structural Model, this study examines the relationship between constructs through path coefficients (Path Coefficient) and the degree of significance using the Bootstrapping with 5000 subsamples. The hypothesis is accepted if the t-statistical value > 1.96 (significance 5%) and the $p < \text{value } 0.05$. The predictive ability of the model is evaluated using a determination coefficient (R^2) which indicates the proportion of variance of endogenous variables that can be explained by exogenous variables. The R^2 value of 0.75 is considered substantial, 0.50 moderate, and 0.25 weak (Sarstedt et al., 2022). In addition, this study also calculates effect size (f^2) to assess the substantive contribution of each exogenous variable to the endogenous variable, where values of 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 indicate small, medium, and large effects, respectively.

Result

Respondent Characteristics

This study succeeded in collecting data from 312 respondents who are domestic tourists who have visited natural tourist destinations in Bandung in the last six months. Of the total, as many as 300 respondents met the data completeness criteria and were used for further analysis. The respondent profiles show a fairly diverse distribution of various demographic characteristics relevant to the context of the study. Based on gender, the majority of respondents were women as many as 178 people (59.3%) while men amounted to 122 people (40.7%). The age composition of respondents was dominated by the age group of 25-34 years old as many as 142 people (47.3%), followed by the age group of 18-24 years as many as 89 people (29.7%), the age group of 35-44 years as many as 52 people (17.3%), and the age group of 45 years and

above as many as 17 people (5.7%). This age distribution reflects the characteristics of social media users who are active and have an interest in natural tourism.

In terms of education, most of the respondents had a bachelor's education background (S1) as many as 186 people (62.0%), diploma as many as 64 people (21.3%), postgraduate (S2/S3) as many as 38 people (12.7%), and high school/equivalent as many as 12 people (4.0%). This relatively high level of education shows that respondents have good digital literacy in using social media to find tourism information. The job characteristics of the respondents varied quite a bit with private employees being the largest group (41.7%), followed by entrepreneurs (23.3%), civil servants (16.0%), students (12.7%), and other professions (6.3%). Regarding visit behavior, as many as 124 respondents (41.3%) stated that they had visited Bandung's natural tourism 2-3 times in the past year, 98 respondents (32.7%) visited more than 3 times, 58 respondents (19.3%) visited for the first time, and 20 respondents (6.7%) only visited once a year. This data indicates that Bandung has a strong enough attraction to encourage repeat visits.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Characteristics	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	122	40,7%
	Women	178	59,3%
Age	18-24 years old	89	29,7%
	25-34 years old	142	47,3%
	35-44 years old	52	17,3%
	≥ 45 years old	17	5,7%
Education	High School/Equivalent	12	4,0%
	Diploma	64	21,3%
	Bachelor (S1)	186	62,0%
	Postgraduate	38	12,7%
Jobs	Students	38	12,7%
	Private Employees	125	41,7%
	Civil Servants/ASN	48	16,0%
	Entrepreneurship	70	23,3%
	Others	19	6,3%
Frequency of Visits	First time	58	19,3%
	1 time/year	20	6,7%
	2-3 times/year	124	41,3%
	> 3 times/year	98	32,7%

In the context of using social media to find tourist information, Instagram became the most dominant platform used by 156 respondents (52.0%), followed by TikTok as many as 78 respondents (26.0%), Facebook as many as 42 respondents (14.0%), and other platforms such as YouTube and Twitter as many as 24 respondents (8.0%). The dominance of Instagram and TikTok reflects tourists' preference for visual content that is engaging in shaping perceptions of natural tourist destinations.

Evaluation of the Measurement Model

The first stage in the PLS-SEM analysis is to evaluate the measurement model to ensure that the research instrument has adequate validity and reliability. This evaluation includes testing the convergent validity, construct reliability, and discriminant validity of the entire construct used in the research model. The results of the convergent validity test showed that all indicators had an outer loading value that was above the threshold of 0.70 with a value range between 0.742 to 0.891. This indicates that each indicator is able to measure its latent construct well. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value for all constructs also shows satisfactory results, where the lowest value is 0.637 for the Weak Ties construct and the highest value is 0.728 for the Revisit Intention construct. All AVE values are above the minimum criterion of 0.50, which means that each construct is able to explain more than 50% of the variance of its indicators.

Table 2. Convergent Validity and Reliability Test Results

Construct	Item	Outer Loading	AVE	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability
Strong Ties	ST1	0,842	0,694	0,872	0,902
	ST2	0,831			
	ST3	0,856			
	ST4	0,802			
Weak Ties	WT1	0,784	0,637	0,841	0,875
	WT2	0,797			
	WT3	0,815			
	WT4	0,742			
	WT5	0,825			
Tourism Ties	TT1	0,868	0,712	0,891	0,918
	TT2	0,851			
	TT3	0,823			
	TT4	0,833			
Destination Image	DI1	0,801	0,681	0,903	0,926
	DI2	0,836			
	DI3	0,824			
	DI4	0,847			
	DI5	0,812			
	DI6	0,791			
Revisit Intention	RI1	0,891	0,728	0,882	0,914
	RI2	0,865			
	RI3	0,849			
	RI4	0,806			

Note: AVE = Average Variance Extracted

The evaluation of construct reliability is carried out through two indicators, namely Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability (CR). The results of the analysis showed that the entire construct had Cronbach's Alpha values ranging from 0.841 to 0.903, where all of these values exceeded the threshold of 0.70. Similarly, the CR value ranges from 0.875 to 0.926, far

above the minimum standard of 0.70. These two indicators confirm that the research instrument has excellent internal consistency and is reliable for measuring the constructs studied. Discriminant validity was tested using the Fornell-Larcker criteria and the Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio (HTMT). The Fornell-Larcker criterion shows that the square root of the AVE of each construct is greater than the correlation of that construct with the other constructs, indicating that each construct is unique and distinguishable from each other.

Table 3. Discriminatory Validity - Fornell-Larcker Criteria

Construct	ST	WT	ID	DI	RI
Strong Ties (ST)	0,833				
Weak Ties (WT)	0,624	0,798			
Tourism Ties (TT)	0,557	0,648	0,844		
Destination Image (DI)	0,712	0,689	0,641	0,825	
Revisit Intention (RI)	0,598	0,612	0,563	0,748	0,853

Note: The value of diagonal (bold) is the square root of AVE

The HTMT value for all construct pairs is below 0.85, with the highest value being 0.817 for the relationship between Strong Ties and Destination Image. These results strengthen the evidence that discriminant validity is met and there is no problem of multicollinearity between constructs in the research model.

Structural Model Evaluation

After the measurement model is proven to be valid and reliable, the next stage is the evaluation of the structural model to test the causal relationship between the constructs and testing the research hypothesis. The evaluation begins by looking at the value of the determination coefficient (R^2) which indicates the predictive ability of the model. The results of the analysis showed that the Destination Image variable had an R^2 value of 0.628, which means that 62.8% of the variance in the Destination Image can be explained together by the three sources of UGC (Strong Ties, Weak Ties, and Tourism Ties). This R^2 value falls into the moderate to substantial category, indicating that the model has good predictive power. Meanwhile, the Revisit Intention variable has an R^2 value of 0.559, which means that 55.9% of the variance in revisit intent can be explained by Destination Image. This value is also included in the moderate category and shows that the image of the destination is a strong predictor of tourist loyalty.

Table 4. Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesis	Pathway	Coefficient (β)	t-Statistics	p-Value	f^2	Verdict
H1	Strong Ties → Destination Image	0,384	6,247	0,000	0,182	Accepted

H2	Weak Ties → Destination Image	0,312	5,128	0,000	0,124	Accepted
H3	Tourism Ties → Destination Image	0,228	3,894	0,000	0,068	Accepted
H4	Destination Image → Revisit Intention	0,748	18,542	0,000	1,271	Accepted

Note: t-table ($\alpha=5\%$) = 1.96; $f^2 > 0.02$ (small), > 0.15 (medium), > 0.35 (large)

Hypothesis testing was carried out using the bootstrapping method using 5000 subsamples to obtain a stable estimate. The test results showed that all four research hypotheses were accepted with a very high level of significance ($p < 0.001$). The first hypothesis (H1) that the UGC of Strong Ties has a positive effect on the Destination Image is proven by the path coefficient $\beta = 0.384$ ($t = 6.247$; $p = 0.000$). An effect size value (f^2) of 0.182 indicates that Strong Ties have a medium effect on the formation of destination image. The second hypothesis (H2) about the influence of Weak Ties on the Destination Image was also accepted with a path coefficient of $\beta = 0.312$ ($t = 5.128$; $p = 0.000$) and an f^2 value of 0.124 which belongs to the intermediate effect category. Although the influence of Weak Ties is slightly smaller than that of Strong Ties, it is still significant and substantial in shaping tourists' perception of destinations.

The third hypothesis (H3) regarding the influence of Tourism Ties on Destination Image showed positive and significant results with a path coefficient of $\beta = 0.228$ ($t = 3.894$; $p = 0.000$). An f^2 value of 0.068 indicates that Tourism Ties has a small but still meaningful effect in the context of this study. Although its influence is the least among the three sources of UGC, information from official sources still contributes significantly in shaping the image of the destination. The fourth hypothesis (H4) which states that Destination Image has a positive effect on Revisit Intention is shown to have a very strong influence with a path coefficient of $\beta = 0.748$ ($t = 18.542$; $p = 0.000$). The f^2 value of 1.271 shows a very large effect, confirming that destination image is the main determinant factor in shaping tourists' intention to revisit Bandung's natural tourist destinations. The predictive relevance (Q^2) value obtained was 0.431 for Destination Image and 0.389 for Revisit Intention. Both Q^2 values are above zero, which indicates that the model has good predictive relevance and is able to accurately predict endogenous variables. Overall, the results of the structural model evaluation confirm that the research model has good predictive power and all hypotheses proposed are empirically proven.

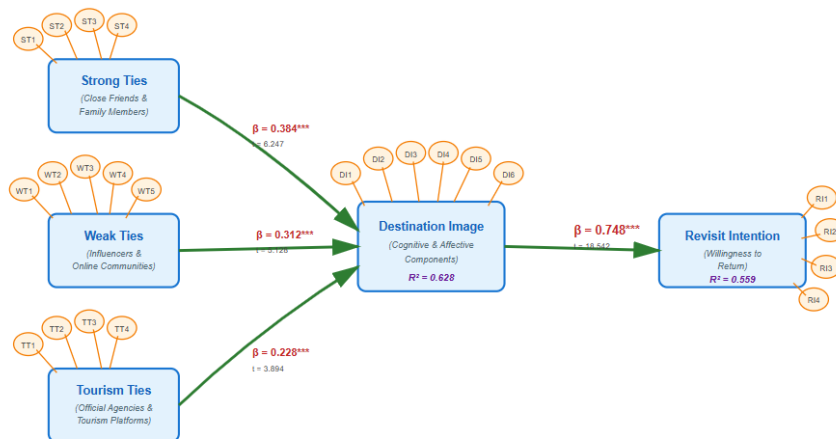


Figure 1. Structural Model of the Research (PLS-SEM Results)

Note: *** $p < 0.001$; β = path coefficient; R^2 = coefficient of determination

The structural model in Figure 1 shows the causal relationship between the constructs that have been tested through PLS-SEM analysis. All three sources of UGC (Strong Ties, Weak Ties, and Tourism Ties) had a significant influence on Destination Image, with Strong Ties contributing the largest ($\beta = 0.384$), followed by Weak Ties ($\beta = 0.312$), and Tourism Ties ($\beta = 0.228$). Furthermore, Destination Image proved to be a very strong predictor of Revisit Intention with a path coefficient of $\beta = 0.748$. This model successfully explains 62.8% variance in Destination Image and 55.9% variance in Revisit Intention, demonstrating substantial predictive power in the context of Bandung's natural tourism.

Discussion

The UGC Effect of Strong Ties on Destination Image

The results showed that UGC from strong ties had a positive and significant influence on the destination image of Bandung's natural tourism destination with a path coefficient of $\beta = 0.384$ ($t = 6.247$; $p < 0.001$), making it the most influential source of UGC among the three types studied. These findings confirm that recommendations from family and close friends play a dominant role in shaping tourists' perceptions of a destination. The power of this influence can be explained through a high interpersonal trust mechanism, where tourists tend to trust information coming from their immediate social circle more because it is considered more authentic and has no hidden commercial motives.

These findings are in line with research showing that the visual and narrative content of a person's personal experiences has a strong impact on shaping the image of a destination, especially when the information comes from a source that has an emotional proximity to the recipient (Hu & Geng, 2024). In the context of Bandung's natural tourism, respondents revealed that they were more interested in visiting a location after seeing photos and hearing first-hand stories from friends or family who had visited, compared to viewing content from other sources. These characteristics indicate that Strong ties Not only does it convey factual information about the destination, but it also transmits an emotional experience that makes the image of the destination more vivid and personal.

Nevertheless, it should be noted that although Strong ties has a strong influence, its information coverage is relatively limited compared to other UGC sources. These findings are consistent with research that identifies that although personalized recommendations from close circles are highly influential, the limitations of social networks make them Strong ties Unable to reach a wider audience (Zaim et al., 2024). Therefore, destination marketing strategies need to consider how to encourage satisfied travelers to share their experiences more widely, not just in their personal circles.

The Effect of UGC from Weak Ties on Destination Image

The second hypothesis that states that UGC from Weak ties has a positive effect on Destination Image proved by the coefficient of the β path = 0.312 ($t = 5.128$; $p < 0.001$). Although the effect is slightly lower than Strong ties, Weak ties still has a substantial

contribution in shaping the perception of tourists. These results indicate that the content of the Influencers, online communities, and acquaintances on social media have a significant ability to influence the image of destinations, especially through engaging visualizations and engaging-minded storytelling. Strength Weak ties lies in its ability to introduce new perspectives and information that may not be available in the network Strong ties. Research shows that content created by Influencers and online communities often present unique aspects of destinations that are not yet widely known, such as hidden photo spots, authentic local activities, or new ways to enjoy the destination (Rohman, 2025). In the context of Bandung's highly visual natural tourism, the content of the Weak ties on platforms like Instagram and TikTok are instrumental in creating Visual Storytelling that is able to arouse the desire to visit. The findings of this study also confirm that the digital era has changed the way tourists seek information, with social media platforms becoming the main source in the tourism decision-making process. Digital communication strategies that combine informative and emotional aspects have proven to be effective in shaping destination perceptions and increasing interest in visits (Nadiastuti et al., 2025). In practice, Bandung's natural tourism destination managers need to develop a collaboration strategy with Content Creator and Influencers that has an audience relevant to the destination's target market. This collaboration should not only be transactional, but also give creative freedom to the Influencers to convey their experiences authentically, as authenticity is a key factor that makes UGC from Weak ties Remain trusted by the audience.

The Influence of UGC from Tourism Ties on Destination Image

The results of the third hypothesis test show that the UGC of the Tourism ties have a positive and significant effect on Destination Image with a pathway coefficient $\beta = 0.228$ ($t = 3.894$; $p < 0.001$), although with a smaller effect than the other two UGC sources. These findings indicate that information from official sources such as Destination Marketing Organization (DMOs), travel agencies, and official tourism platforms still have an important role to play in shaping the image of a destination, although not as strong as the organic content of individuals. A relatively smaller influence than Tourism ties can be explained through tourists' perception that official content tends to be promotional and less objective compared to organic UGC. Modern travelers, especially millennials and Gen Z, tend to be more skeptical of official promotions and more seek validation from other travelers' experiences before making a decision (Wang et al., 2023). Nevertheless, Tourism ties It remains of strategic value because it provides structured, institutionally credible and comprehensive information about destinations that is difficult to obtain from individual sources.

Research shows that the role of governments and official tourism organizations in using social media to promote destinations has a positive impact on tourists' intention to visit, although this impact needs to be mediated by other factors such as perceived value and emotional attachment (Tang et al., 2024). In this context, managers of Bandung's natural tourist destinations need to develop a communication strategy that not only focuses on direct promotion, but also encourages the creation of authentic and emotional organic UGC. This strategy can be done through programs that facilitate travelers to share their experiences, such as hashtag campaigns, photo competitions, or programs Ambassador which involves loyal

tourists as destination ambassadors. Furthermore, these findings also show the importance of integration between official content and organic UGC in the social media ecosystem. Research indicates that destination images are no longer solely produced by institutions, but rather co-created through the dynamic interplay between official branding, digital platforms, and traveller narratives (Rohman, 2025). Therefore, DMOs and destination managers need to adopt a more collaborative approach, where official content serves as a foundation of information that is then enriched by authentic experiences and perspectives from travelers.

The Influence of Destination Image on Revisit Intention

The most significant finding in this study is the very strong influence of Destination Image against Revisit intention with a path coefficient of $\beta = 0.748$ ($t = 18.542$; $p < 0.001$) and a value of effect size $f^2 = 1.271$ which indicates a very large effect. These results confirm that positive perceptions of destinations, both cognitively and affectively, are the main determinants in shaping tourists' intention to revisit. These findings are consistent with previous studies that have shown that destination imagery is a strong predictor of traveller's behavioral intent (Firdaus et al., 2024; Nguyen & Tong, 2023).

In the context of Bandung's natural tourism, a positive image of a destination is formed through a combination of cognitive components that include knowledge of natural beauty, accessibility, adequate facilities, and affective components that include feelings of pleasure, relaxation, and emotional satisfaction experienced during visits. When these two components are well integrated, travelers not only have enough information about the destination but also have an emotional attachment that drives them to revisit the destination in the future. Research shows that positive emotional experiences have an important role in shaping the image and behavioral intentions of tourists, especially in the context of spiritual and natural tourism that emphasizes the experiential aspects of the (Devi et al., 2025).

Furthermore, these findings provide very important practical implications for destination managers. By understanding that Destination Image has a very strong mediation role between various sources of UGC and Revisit intention, destination marketing strategies should not only focus on increasing the number of first visits, but also on building and maintaining a positive and sustainable image of the destination. This can be done through ensuring the quality of travelers' experiences, developing adequate facilities, maintaining environmental sustainability, and creating memorable experiences that will encourage travelers to share their positive stories on social media (Devi et al., 2025).

Theoretical and Practical Implications

Theoretically, this research makes an important contribution in enriching the literature on digital destination marketing by integrating theory relational ties in the context of Indonesian tourism. The findings of this study confirm that not all sources of UGC have the same influence, and understanding these differences is important for the development of more effective marketing strategies. This research also broadens the understanding of the concept e-WOM image which emphasizes the role of digital content in shaping the image of destinations in the era of social media (Hu & Geng, 2024).

Practically, this study recommends that managers of Bandung's natural tourism destinations adopt an integrated and multi-source digital marketing approach. These strategies include: first, encouraging satisfied travellers to share their experiences in personal social circles; Second, develop strategic collaboration with Influencers and Content Creator that have values and audiences that are aligned with the destination; third, optimizing the role of official content as a credible and comprehensive source of information; and fourth, creating a digital ecosystem that facilitates the creation and distribution of authentic and emotional organic UGC (Meliawati et al., 2025). With this holistic approach, Bandung's natural tourism destinations can maximize the potential of social media in improving the image of the destination and encouraging long-term tourist loyalty.

Conclusion

Summary

This study aims to analyze the different influences of three types of social media User-Generated Content sources on destination image and revisit intention in the context of Bandung's natural tourism. Based on the analysis of Structural Equation Modeling on 300 tourist respondents who have visited Bandung's natural tourist destinations, the results of the study show comprehensive and significant findings. Partially, the three sources of UGC studied, namely strong ties, weak ties, and tourism ties, were all proven to have a positive and significant influence on the formation of destination image. Strong ties, which represent recommendations from family and close friends, showed the most dominant influence with the highest path coefficient of 0.384, indicating that interpersonal trust and emotional closeness play a crucial role in shaping travelers' perceptions of destinations. Weak ties, which included content from influencers and online communities, showed substantial influence with a coefficient of 0.312, proving that wide reach and compelling visual storytelling can significantly influence the image of destinations. Meanwhile, tourism ties from official tourism sources showed a more moderate influence with a coefficient of 0.228, but still made an important contribution in providing institutionally structured and credible information.

The most significant finding in this study was the very strong influence of destination image on revisit intention with a path coefficient of 0.748 and a very large effect size of 1.271. These results confirm that destination image, which consists of cognitive and affective components, is a major predictor in shaping tourist loyalty and intention to revisit. Simultaneously, the three UGC sources were able to explain 62.8% of the variance in the destination image, indicating that the research model has substantial predictive power. Furthermore, destination images were able to explain 55.9% variance in revisit intent, indicating that the formation of a positive image is a key mechanism in building long-term destination loyalty.

These findings reinforce the theory of relational ties in the context of digital tourism which emphasizes that the power of information influence depends on the type of relationship between the giver and receiver of information. Although strong ties have the most powerful influence due to the high trust factor, they still make a substantial contribution through a wider reach and the ability to introduce new perspectives that may not be available in a personal network. Meanwhile, although tourism ties show relatively less influence, these official sources

still have strategic value in providing comprehensive information and institutional credibility that complements the organic content of individuals. This research also provides empirical evidence that in the digital era, the formation of destination images is no longer solely controlled by destination marketing organizations, but is the result of dynamic interactions between various sources of information in the social media ecosystem.

The results of this study have significant theoretical implications by enriching the literature on digital destination marketing, especially in the context of Indonesian natural tourism which is still relatively limited in its studies. The integration of relational ties theory with the concepts of destination image and revisit intention provides a comprehensive analytical framework to understand the complex mechanisms of shaping tourist perceptions and behaviors in the digital era. Practically, this finding provides strategic guidance for Bandung's natural tourism destination managers, the West Java Tourism Office, and other tourism stakeholders in designing a more effective and efficient digital marketing strategy. The study also confirms that in the midst of increasingly fierce destination competition, a deep understanding of the dynamics of digital information sources is key to maintaining competitiveness and building long-term tourist loyalty.

Practical Recommendations

Based on the findings of the research, Bandung's natural tourism destination managers and related stakeholders need to implement several integrated practical strategies. First, given the dominance of strong ties influence, destination managers must develop systematic programs that encourage travelers to share their positive experiences in personal social circles. This program can be in the form of creative hashtag campaigns that are easy to remember and relevant to the identity of the destination, visual content competitions with attractive prizes, or social media challenges that invite tourists to capture unique moments during their visit. This strategy should be designed to facilitate the creation of authentic content that reflects the real experience of travelers, rather than just promotional content that seems contrived.

Second, strategic collaboration with content creators and influencers must be prioritized given the significant influence of weak ties. This partnership should not be purely transactional, but built on the alignment of values between influencers and destination characters. Destination managers need to selectively curate influencers who have an audience according to the target market, high credibility, and authentic communication style. Creative freedom should be given to influencers to convey their experiences genuinely, as authenticity is the key to audience trust. Familiarization trip programs designed specifically for content creators can be an effective strategy to produce high-quality content that elevates the uniqueness of Bandung's natural tourist destinations.

Third, although tourism ties show less influence, optimizing the role of official content remains important as a credible information foundation. The Tourism Office and Destination Marketing Organization need to transform their communication approach from promotional to more educational, inspiring, and interactive. Official content should not only present practical information about accessibility, amenities, and attractions, but also elevate local stories, environmental preservation, and cultural values that make destinations more meaningful. The use of technology such as virtual tours, 360-degree content, or augmented reality can increase

the appeal of official content and provide an immersive preview experience for potential travelers.

Fourth, an integrated approach that synergizes the three sources of UGC needs to be realized through a cohesive digital ecosystem. Destination social media platforms should be dynamic interaction spaces that not only distribute official content, but also amplify organic content from travelers and influencers. User-generated content curation strategies can be implemented by re-displaying the best content from travelers on official channels, giving recognition to content creators, and building an engaged digital community. A brand ambassador or destination advocate program that involves loyal travelers as destination ambassadors can create a sustainable positive cycle of word-of-mouth.

Fifth, investment in improving the quality of the tourist experience is a fundamental prerequisite considering the strong influence of destination image on revisit intention. Destination managers must ensure that the actual on-the-ground experience meets or even exceeds the expectations formed through UGC on social media. This includes the development of adequate infrastructure, the maintenance of environmental sustainability, the provision of comfortable supporting facilities, the training of tourism actors in providing quality services, and the creation of memorable unique moments. When the actual experience is satisfying, travelers will naturally share positive content that reinforces the imagery of the destination and attracts new tourists.

Sixth, a digital monitoring and evaluation system needs to be built to track sentiments, trends, and content patterns circulating on social media. Big data analysis from UGC can provide valuable insights into tourist preferences, areas that need improvement, and opportunities for the development of new tourism products. Social listening tools can help identify potential reputational crises early on and allow for a quick and appropriate response. Data from social media monitoring can also be the basis for more evidence-based strategic decision-making in the allocation of marketing resources and destination development.

heoretical Recommendations

Theoretically, this research contributes to the development of a digital destination marketing analysis model by integrating relational ties theory into the context of Indonesian tourism. Further research is suggested to develop this model by including additional variables that can enrich understanding of the factors that influence travelers' decisions and behaviors. Variables such as perceived value, tourist satisfaction, place attachment, or authenticity can be integrated to get a more comprehensive picture of the mechanism of establishing destination loyalty. The study may also explore moderation variables such as demographic characteristics, travel motivation, or level of travel experience that might influence the strength of relationships between variables in the model.

In addition, testing this research model on various types of tourist destinations, such as cultural tourism, urban tourism, culinary tourism, or marine tourism, as well as in various geographical areas in Indonesia is highly recommended to test the consistency and generalization of findings. A cross-destination comparative approach can uncover unique and contextual patterns that enrich destination marketing theory. Longitudinal research that looks at the dynamics of the influence of UGC on destination image and revisit intention over time will also provide a deeper understanding of the evolution of traveler perceptions and the factors

influencing long-term loyalty. The use of mixed-method methods that combine quantitative and qualitative approaches is also recommended to gain richer insights into the psychological and social mechanisms behind the influence of various sources of UGC.

Implications

This research has significant practical implications for the management of Bandung's natural tourist destinations, the West Java Tourism Office, local governments, and local communities. The findings on the dominance of strong ties emphasize that destination marketing strategies should go beyond traditional promotional approaches and focus on creating exceptional experiences that encourage travelers to voluntarily share their positive stories. Destination managers need to position every satisfied traveler as a potential brand advocate who can influence the travel decisions of people in their social circle. The significant role of weak ties also underscores the importance of investing in collaboration with the ecosystem of content creators and influencers as a long-term strategy to expand promotional reach and build destination awareness among a wider audience.

From an academic perspective, this research enriches the literature on digital destination marketing in Indonesia by presenting an integrative model that connects digital information sources, image formation, and tourist loyalty. These findings also broaden our understanding of how natural tourism destinations can leverage social media dynamics to increase competitiveness and build a strong positioning in an increasingly competitive tourism market. This research contributes to the development of electronic word-of-mouth theory in the context of tourism by identifying the specific mechanisms by how various digital information sources interact to shape tourist perceptions and behaviors.

Research Limitations

Several limitations need to be considered in interpreting the results of this study. First, this study only covers natural tourist destinations in Bandung, so generalization of findings to other types of destinations or different geographical areas must be done carefully. The unique characteristics of highly visual and experiential natural tourism may result in different patterns of UGC influence compared to cultural tourism or urban tourism. Second, cross-sectional research designs only capture respondents' perceptions at a single point in time, without considering the dynamics of changes in perception and behavior in the long term. Longitudinal research is needed to understand how the influence of different sources of UGC evolves over time and how the actual visit experience affects travelers' perceptions of the content they consume previously.

Third, even if the sample size meets the statistical criteria for SEM analysis, data collection through online and offline questionnaires has the potential to cause respondent bias regarding the interpretation of the question or the motivation for responding. Fourth, this research model was able to explain 62.8% variance in destination image and 55.9% variance in revisit intention, leaving a significant portion of other factors outside the model that have not been identified, such as economic factors, accessibility, seasonal factors, actual service quality, or the influence of conventional promotional campaigns. Fifth, this study did not distinguish between the specific social media platforms used by respondents, even though the characteristics of different platforms may affect how UGC is consumed and its effectiveness in

shaping perceptions. These limitations open up opportunities for further research with a wider scope, more comprehensive variables, and more diverse methodologies.

Future Research

Future research may explore several directions of development that expand and deepen the findings of this research. First, testing the model on different types of tourist destinations and diverse geographical contexts will provide a more comprehensive understanding of how destination contexts affect the dynamics of UGC influence. Comparative research between natural tourism, cultural tourism, culinary tourism, and urban tourism can reveal unique patterns that are relevant to the characteristics of each type of destination. Second, longitudinal research that observes changes in travelers' perceptions and behaviors over time will provide deeper insights into the formation of destination loyalty and the factors that influence repeat visit decisions.

Third, the integration of additional moderation and mediation variables such as credibility perception, information quality, source expertise, or parasocial interaction can enrich the model and reveal more complex mechanisms in the influence of UGC on travelers' decisions. Fourth, research with a mixed-method approach that combines quantitative surveys with in-depth interviews or qualitative content analysis will provide a more holistic understanding of the travelers' experience in consuming and producing UGC. Fifth, big data analysis from social media platforms using text mining, sentiment analysis, or network analysis techniques can reveal organic patterns of UGC distribution and consumption that are difficult to capture through traditional surveys. The directions of this research will contribute to the development of more sophisticated and responsive digital destination marketing theories and practices to the dynamics of the digital era.

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The Influence of Taste and Quality Perception on Consumer Purchasing Decisions of Donaly Potato Donuts

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the influence of taste and perceived quality on consumer purchase decisions for the Donaly Potato Donuts product. Using a quantitative approach with a cross-sectional survey design, data were collected through questionnaires from 116 purposively selected respondents. The research instrument was tested for validity and reliability, and multiple linear regression analysis was applied to examine the relationships among variables. The results indicate that both taste and perceived quality have a significant partial and simultaneous effect on purchase decisions. Validity tests confirmed that most items were valid, and Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.806 indicated that the instrument was reliable. Classical regression assumptions such as normality, multicollinearity, and homoscedasticity were generally met, although moderate multicollinearity was identified between independent variables. These findings highlight the importance of sensory experience and perceived product quality in shaping consumer decision-making. Therefore, business practitioners are advised to consistently integrate strategies that enhance both taste and product appearance to foster consumer loyalty and expand market reach. This research also contributes to the theoretical development of consumer behavior in the local-based snack food sector.

Keywords: *Taste, Perceived Quality, Purchase Decision, Consumer, Linear Regression*

Introduction

The food and beverage industry continues to grow rapidly, both through product innovation by manufacturers and increasing consumer demand for further innovation. The snack food industry, in particular, has experienced significant growth, one example being the emergence of potato donuts, which offer a softer texture and higher nutritional content than wheat flour-based donuts (Barus, 2023). Donaly Potato Donuts, a major player in this market, competes by offering unique flavors and high-quality potato as the main ingredient (Master, 2024).

However, despite its large market potential, Donaly's Potato Donuts faces challenges in ensuring that consumers are influenced by taste and perceived quality in their purchasing decisions. Several studies have shown that taste does not always significantly influence satisfaction or repeat purchases (Samari et al. , 2023), while Zeithaml also stated that perceived quality often does not guarantee a purchasing decision without sufficient actual experience (Bisnis et al. , 2018). This creates a research gap that needs further exploration, especially in the context of MSMEs in the snack food sector.

This study aims to empirically test the influence of taste and perceived quality on consumer purchasing decisions for Donaly Potato Donuts, and how these decisions affect consumer satisfaction. This study uses a quantitative approach with a cross-sectional survey design, where data is collected through questionnaires distributed to 116 respondents selected purposively. The research instrument is tested for validity and reliability using item-total correlation techniques and Cronbach's Alpha. Furthermore, multiple linear regression analysis is conducted using SPSS to test the relationship between the independent variables (Taste and Perceived Quality) and the dependent variables (Purchase Decision and Consumer Satisfaction).

The results of the study indicate that both taste and perceived quality significantly influence purchasing decisions. Regression analysis using SPSS shows that the regression model used meets classical assumptions such as normality, multicollinearity, and homoscedasticity, although there are indications of moderate multicollinearity between taste and perceived quality. With this approach, this study aims to provide practical recommendations for MSMEs to improve the competitiveness of their products through consistent management of taste quality and product appearance, which will improve purchasing decisions and consumer satisfaction. This study also contributes to the development of consumer behavior theory in the local snack food sector.

Literature review

Taste

Flavor is a key sensory component in food products, playing a significant role in attracting consumer attention and satisfaction (Angga, Qomariah, and Izzuddin, 2020; Sianturi, Muliani, and Rukmini Sari, 2021). Potato donuts, a variation of flour- and potato-based donuts, are considered to have a unique and distinct flavor. Several studies have shown that a pleasant and consistent taste can significantly influence purchasing decisions and consumer satisfaction (Sianturi, Muliani, and Rukmini Sari, 2021; ARTAMEVIAH, 2022). Furthermore, Drummond

& Brefere explain that flavor encompasses elements of aroma, texture, and temperature, all of which contribute to creating a pleasurable culinary experience. In the context of food product marketing, flavor relates not only to the taste of the food itself but also to the overall experience consumers experience when consuming it. (Windi, 2023).

The process of recognizing taste begins with the sense of sight. Food visuals, such as shape, color, and cleanliness, provide a very strong initial impression and can increase appetite and trigger a decision to try the product (Angga, Qomariah, and Izzuddin, 2020). Food aroma, received by the sense of smell, also plays a significant role in shaping consumers' taste perception and emotional attachment to the product (Angga, Qomariah, and Izzuddin, 2020; Maimunah, 2020). Biologically, aroma is transmitted to the brain via the olfactory nerve, triggering perceptions of pleasure or distaste.

The sense of taste, especially the tongue, serves as the pinnacle of the taste assessment process. The tongue can distinguish five basic tastes—sweet, salty, sour, bitter, and umami which are processed by taste buds (papillae) that act as sensory receptors (Maimunah, 2020). This combination of flavors creates a unique taste experience that determines consumer acceptance of the food. In previous research, asserts that satisfying taste significantly influences purchasing decisions and consumer satisfaction because consumers seek products that provide sensory pleasure and positive experiences. (Njoto, 2016; Angga, Qomariah and Izzuddin, 2020).

Focusing on the potato donut itself, consumers tend to pay great attention to the soft texture and distinctive potato aroma, which has an impact on the desire to repurchase the product. (Maimunah, 2020; Puspitaningsih and Jin Xiaoyan, 2022). Taste is the main trigger for snack purchasing decisions because it is directly related to emotions and perceptions of product quality. (Sianturi, Muliani and Rukmini Sari, 2021). Other studies also show that taste is a major trigger in snack purchasing decisions, as it is directly related to emotions and quality perceptions.

Perception of Quality

Perceived quality reflects the consumer's subjective view of the overall quality of a product compared to expectations or industry standards. study (Adinugraha and H Michael, 2015) stated that perceived quality is related to dimensions such as visual appearance, degree of ripeness, and packaging. Purnomo in his research adding that positive perceptions will increase trust in the brand and increase the likelihood of consumers feeling satisfied and making repeat purchases. (Bisnis et al. , 2018).

However, a study of potato donuts found that the influence of perceived quality on purchasing decisions was not always statistically significant, although the direction of the relationship remained positive (Samari et al. , 2023). This suggests that even when perceived quality is good, other factors such as price and prior experience also influence consumer decisions.

Purchasing Decisions as a Mediator

Purchasing decisions serve as the final process in a series of consumer evaluations of the products offered. This model also acts as a mediating variable in the relationship between independent variables (such as taste, perceived quality, and product attributes) and consumer satisfaction (Preacher and Hayes, 2008). Factors that influence purchasing decisions include perceived quality, product attributes, price, and previous consumer experience (Bisnis et al. , 2024). In the potato donut study, although purchasing decisions were positively influenced by all three main factors, the mediating role of purchasing decisions on satisfaction was not significant in most tests. (Samari et al. , 2023).

Studies have shown that purchasing decisions are significantly influenced by taste, price perception, and service quality (Ratnasari and Harti, 2016; Bisnis et al. , 2024) . In addition to rational aspects, emotional and social factors also play a role, as food fulfills not only physical needs but also social and cultural needs. (Kotler and Keller, 2016). Positive purchasing decisions increase the likelihood of satisfaction and repeat purchases (Preacher and Hayes, 2008).

Methodology

This study uses a quantitative approach with a cross- sectional survey design to analyze the influence of taste and perceived quality on purchasing decisions and their impact on consumer satisfaction with Donaly Potato Donuts. This approach was chosen because it allows researchers to statistically test the relationship between variables at a specific point in time. The population in this study were consumers who had purchased and consumed Donaly Potato Donuts in the last two months. The sampling technique used was purposive sampling, which is the deliberate selection of respondents based on certain criteria relevant to the research objectives. The number of respondents analyzed was 116 people, this number was considered sufficient for multiple linear regression analysis.

Data collection was conducted through a closed questionnaire distributed online using Google Forms. The research instrument consisted of 18 statement items measuring four main variables: Taste (CR), Perceived Quality (PK), Purchasing Decision (KP), and Consumer Satisfaction (KK). Each item was measured using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). The questionnaire collection period was carried out for one month from April 13 to May 13, 2025, by asking Donaly's donut buyers to fill out the questionnaire.

Before conducting the regression analysis, the data were first tested for validity and reliability. Validity was tested using the item-total correlation technique, while reliability was tested using Cronbach's Alpha. Next, classical assumption tests were conducted, including normality, multicollinearity, heteroscedasticity, and autocorrelation tests, to ensure that the data met the requirements for multiple linear regression analysis. Data analysis was performed using statistical software such as SPSS. The application used by the author was SPSS Version 25. A multiple linear regression model was used to test the simultaneous and partial effects of the independent variables (Taste and Perceived Quality) on the dependent variables (Purchase Decisions and Consumer Satisfaction). Hypothesis testing was carried out by examining the regression coefficient, t-test, F-test, and coefficient of determination (R^2). The mediating effect

of purchasing decisions was also tested using a multilevel regression approach. (Baron and Kenny, 1986).

With this approach, it is hoped that the research results will be able to provide an empirical picture of the contribution of taste and quality perception to purchasing decisions and consumer satisfaction, as well as provide strategic recommendations for the development of snack-based MSME products.

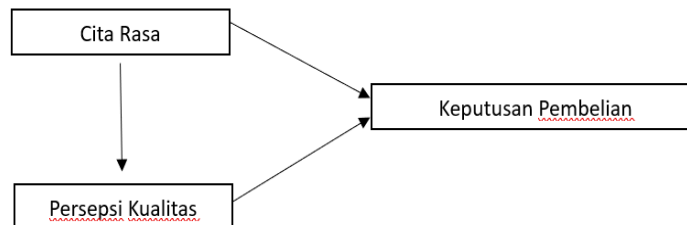


Figure 1. Conceptual Model

Hypothesis:

H1: There is a positive influence between taste and consumer purchasing decisions.

Donaly Potato Donuts.

H2: There is a positive influence between perceived quality and purchasing decisions.

Donaly Potato Donut consumers.

H3: There is a positive influence between taste and perceived quality on purchasing decisions.

Result

Table 1 illustrates the characteristics of the 116 respondents, detailing their gender, age, highest level of education, and profession. In terms of gender, the majority of respondents were women (82 respondents, 70.7%), while only 34 were men (29.3%). In terms of age, the majority of respondents were between 18 and 28 years old, totaling 102 (87.9%). The 28 to 38 age group accounted for 14 respondents (12.1%), while no respondents were under 18 or over 38.

Regarding their last education, the majority of respondents had a D4/S1 level education background, namely 59 people (50.9%). Followed by 45 people (38.8%) who had elementary/junior high school/high school education. A total of 9 people (7.8%) had D1/D2/D3 education, and only 3 people (2.6%) were pursuing a Master's or Doctoral degree. In terms of profession, the majority of respondents were students or college students, with a total of 46 people (39.7%). Private employees accounted for 29 people (25%), while 22 people (19%) worked as entrepreneurs. In addition, there were 12 people (10.3%) who worked in the state-owned enterprise sector, the National Police/TNI, or civil servants, and 7 people (6%) worked as freelancers. No respondents listed other professions. Overall, the respondents in this study were mostly young women with higher education at the D4/S1 level and were students or college students.

Table 1. Respondent Characteristics Data

Characteristics	Group	Number of people	Percentage (%)
Gender	Woman	82	70.7%
	Man	34	29.3%
	Total	116	100%
Age	< 18	0	0%
	18 – 28	102	87.9%
	28 – 38	14	12.1%
	>38	0	0%
	Total	116	100%
	Total	116	100%
Last education	Elementary/Middle/High School	45	38.8%
	D1/D2/D3	9	7.8%
	D4/S1	59	50.9%
	S2 and S3	3	2.6%
	Total	116	100%
Profession	Students	46	39.7
	Private sector employee	29	25%
	State-Owned Enterprises/Police/TNI/PNS	12	10.3%
	Businessman	22	19%
	Freelance	7	6%
	Other	0	0%
	Total	116	100%
	Total	116	100%

Source: Author's Data Processing (2025)

Validity testing is conducted to assess the extent to which the questionnaire items represent the construct or variable being measured. This study used the item-total correlation method. Validity criteria were determined based on the correlation significance value, with indicating significance at the 5% level and at the 1% level.

Based on the results displayed, all items for the Taste (CR) construct have positive and significant correlation values, although some of them are in the low to moderate range (e.g., CR2 = 0.221* and CR5 = 0.273**). This indicates that all items in the Taste construct can be declared valid and relevant to measure consumer perceptions of the taste aspect of Donaly Potato Donuts. In the Perceived Quality (PK) construct, five of the six items show significant and valid correlations (e.g., PK1 = 0.685** and PK2 = 0.415**). However, item PK3 has a very low and insignificant correlation value (0.121), so it is declared invalid. This indicates that PK3 does not contribute significantly to the overall Perceived Quality construct and should be considered for removal or revision for further measurements. Meanwhile, all items in the Purchasing Decision (KP) construct showed a significant positive correlation to the total construct score (e.g. KP1 = 0.662**, KP5 = 0.606**), which indicates that all items are valid and can be used to measure consumer purchasing decisions for the products studied.

Overall, the validity test results showed that of the 18 items tested, 17 were found to be valid, and only one item (PK3) failed to meet the validity criteria. These findings provide empirical support that most of the instruments in this study were able to measure the intended constructs accurately and reliably for further analysis.

Table 2. Validity test

Question Items	r value	Conclusion
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Taste Image (CR)		
CR 1 : This potato donut has a taste the delicious one	0.655**	Valid
CR 2 : The aroma of these potato donuts is mouthwatering appetite.	0.221*	Valid
CR 3 : The texture of this potato donut is just right hope I.	0.283**	Valid
CR 4 : These potato donuts are served with the right temperature.	0.528**	Valid
CR 5: Balance of sweetness in donuts This very fitting.	0.273**	Valid
CR 6 : The taste of this potato donut is unique and different from similar products	0.329**	Valid
Perceived Quality (PK)		
PK 1: Color and appearance of potato donuts this is interesting.	0.685**	Valid
PK 2: Portion and shape of this potato donut in accordance my expectations.	0.415**	Valid
PK 3: Potato donut maturity level this is according to standards.	0.121	Invalid
PK 4: The aroma and texture of these potato donuts indicates good quality.	0.396**	Valid
PK 5 : I believe that potato donuts This is made with hygiene standards the good one	0.393**	Valid
PK 6 : Overall, the quality of the donuts These potatoes lived up to expectations I.	0.372**	Valid
Purchasing Decision (KP)		
KP 1: I am interested in buying potato donuts This since the beginning.	0.662**	Valid
KP 2 : I want to try this product after seeing it.	0.253**	Valid
KP 3 : This product is easy to get and purchased.	0.231*	Valid
KP 4 : I want to repurchase this product in the future.	0.385**	Valid
KP 5 : I bought this potato donut Because want to try something new	0.606**	Valid
KP 6 : I am considering this product before deciding to k buy	0.245**	Valid

Source: Processed Results of SPSS Version 25 (2025)

Reliability testing aims to determine the extent to which a research instrument demonstrates internal consistency, namely how stable and accurate the items within a construct are in repeatedly measuring the same variable. One indicator commonly used to measure reliability is Cronbach's Alpha, where an α value ≥ 0.70 is considered adequate for social and

behavioral research. (Hair et al. , 2017) . Values between 0.70–0.90 indicate good to excellent reliability, while values above 0.90 may indicate redundancy between items.

Based on the analysis results, a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.806 was obtained from 21 analyzed items, covering three main constructs: Taste, Perceived Quality, and Purchase Decision. This value indicates that the research instrument has high and excellent reliability, meaning the items in the questionnaire are consistently able to measure the intended constructs. Thus, the data obtained from this instrument is reliable and suitable for use in further analysis, including linear regression or other inferential analyses.

These findings strengthen the overall validity of the instrument and indicate that despite one invalid item in the previous validity test (PK3), the overall contribution of the items remains adequate in establishing the internal consistency of the construct. Therefore, this instrument is considered reliable and suitable for use in scientific decision-making processes in the context of consumer behavior research on Donaly Potato Donuts.

Table 3. Reliability test results

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's	N	of
Alpha	Items	
.806	21	

Source: Processed Results of SPSS Version 25 (2025)

The normality test is an important statistical procedure in regression analysis, as one of the basic assumptions that must be met is that the residuals or error data are normal. In this study, the normality test was conducted using the normal probability plot (PP plot) method, which is a visual approach to assessing the extent to which the data distribution follows a normal distribution. The plot results show that the data points are spread close to or follow the diagonal line (the theoretical normal line). This pattern indicates that the residuals of the data do not deviate substantially from the normal distribution. In other words, there is no pattern of extreme deviations, such as significant curvature or systematic deviations from the diagonal line, which usually indicate a violation of the normality assumption. Therefore, it can be concluded that the data distribution in this study meets the assumption of normality, allowing further statistical analysis—particularly multiple linear regression—to be performed more reliably and validly. Meeting this assumption also increases the credibility of the hypothesis testing results by reducing the potential for bias due to non-normal data distribution.

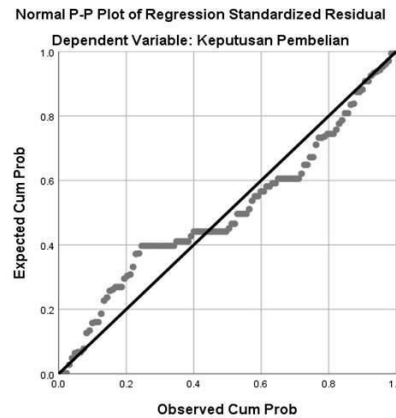


Figure 2. Results of Normality Test with Normal Probability Plot
(Source: Processed Results of SPSS Version 25 (2025))

The One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov (KS) test is a statistical method used to test whether the distribution of residual data in a regression model follows a normal distribution. This test is important to fulfill one of the classical assumptions in linear regression, namely the assumption of residual normality. If the residual data is normally distributed, the estimation of the regression coefficient will be unbiased and efficient. In the results displayed, the number of samples analyzed is 100 residual data. The residual mean value of 0.0000000 and the standard deviation of 0.91884416 indicate that the data has been well constructed and standardized. The KS statistic value is 0.100, with a significance value of Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) = 0.015, which is below the 0.05 significance level.

Statistically, a significance value less than 0.05 indicates that the data distribution deviates significantly from a normal distribution. Therefore, it can be concluded that based on this KS test, the residuals in the model are not completely normally distributed statistically. However, it is important to note that the KS test is very sensitive to large sample sizes. In many cases, small deviations from normality can produce significant results even though these deviations do not seriously impact the validity of the regression model. Therefore, the results of this test need to be supplemented with visual interpretation, such as the normal probability plot graph previously conducted, which shows the data distribution approaching a diagonal line.

Overall, although the KS test indicates a statistical discrepancy between the distribution and normality, the visual results from the PP plot still indicate a fairly normal distribution. Therefore, it can be said that the assumption of normality is still practically met, and the linear regression model can still be used with a good level of reliability.

Table 4. One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test results

Unstandardized Residual		
N	100	
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	.0000000	.0000000
	.91884416	1.67599529

Most Extreme Differences	.100	.118
	.100	.105
	-.073	-.118
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		.100
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.015 ^c

The collinearity test results presented in Table 5 indicate that there is no significant multicollinearity problem between the Taste and Perception of Quality variables in the regression model used. The tolerance value for these two variables is 0.737, which indicates that there is no very strong correlation between the two independent variables. This high tolerance value indicates that the two variables do not influence each other excessively, so there are no problems that can damage the stability of the regression model. In general, a low tolerance value (below 0.1) will indicate the potential for multicollinearity that can interfere with the interpretation of the regression coefficients.

In addition, the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values for Taste and Perceived Quality were 1.357, which is far below the threshold value usually used to detect multicollinearity problems, which is above 10. This low VIF value indicates that there is no strong relationship between the two independent variables, which means that the variance of the regression coefficient does not increase significantly due to multicollinearity. Thus, the results of this collinearity test indicate that the regression model used is stable and reliable, without distortion caused by multicollinearity between Taste and Perceived Quality.

Table 5 Results of the collinearity table

Model	Collinearity Statistics	
	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)		
Taste	.737	1,357
Perception of Quality	.737	1,357

Source: Processed Results of SPSS Version 25 (2025)

Based on the scatterplot shown, which shows Studentized Residuals against Standardized Predicted Values for the dependent variable Purchase Decision, the data distribution pattern shows that the residuals are randomly scattered around the zero horizontal line. This indicates that the regression model used meets the assumption of homoscedasticity, meaning that the error variance is constant across the range of predicted values. There is no visible pattern that leads to clustering or narrowing of the distribution, which would usually indicate heteroscedasticity or the presence of larger deviations in certain predicted values.

Furthermore, the points in this scatterplot do not exhibit any systematic patterns that could indicate other problems, such as autocorrelation or non-normality in the residual distribution. Thus, this regression model demonstrates that the basic assumptions for linear

regression analysis, particularly normality and homoscedasticity, are met. These results provide confidence that the regression model used can produce efficient and unbiased estimates and is reliable for further analysis.

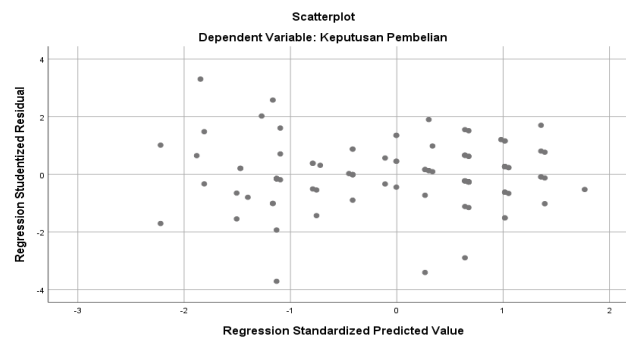


Figure 3. Scatterplot of Heteroscedasticity Test

Source: Processed Results of SPSS Version 25 (2025)

Discussion

The results of this study indicate that both taste and perceived quality significantly influence consumer purchasing decisions for Donaly Potato Donuts. Partially, all items that make up the Taste construct demonstrated good validity, indicating that aspects such as taste, texture, and aroma of donuts successfully shape consumer perceptions of product quality. This is in line with findings (Angga, Qomariah, and Izzuddin, 2020; Sianturi, Muliani, and Rukmini Sari, 2021). which states that taste is the main element in forming purchasing decisions for snack products.

Perceived quality, despite having one invalid item (PK3), also generally has a significant influence on purchasing decisions. This finding reaffirms the argument. Zeithaml research states that consumer perceptions of quality, including product appearance, packaging, and conformity to expectations, are important determinants of purchasing behavior (Bisnis et al. , 2018). However, indications of multicollinearity between taste and perceived quality indicate that these two variables are closely related and have the potential to influence each other in triggering purchasing decisions. Therefore, an effective marketing strategy should not separate the taste and visual quality aspects of a product but rather integrate them holistically. The reliability analysis yielded a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.806, indicating that this research instrument has high internal consistency and is suitable for use in scientific decision-making. Therefore, the data obtained can be trusted as a basis for generalizing the findings to a wider population.

In terms of classical assumption testing, the scatterplot and heteroscedasticity test results indicate that the regression model meets the homoscedasticity requirements. This means that the residual variance tends to be constant and does not show a systematic pattern, thus the regression parameter estimation is efficient. Normality tests using the normal probability plot and the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test show mixed results. Although the KS significance value (0.015) indicates a deviation from a statistically normal distribution, the PP plot visualization shows a residual distribution that is close to normal. This supports the view (Hair et al. , 2017).

that in social research practice, small deviations from normality can still be tolerated as long as the data distribution is not extreme.

Overall, this study successfully demonstrated that taste and perceived quality simultaneously significantly influence purchasing decisions, as hypothesized in H3. Therefore, the business strategy of MSMEs such as Donaly Potato Donuts needs to place greater emphasis on integrating sensory experiences and overall product quality to maintain and enhance consumer purchasing decisions. This study also enriches the literature on consumer behavior in the culinary sector, particularly for innovative local food-based products such as potato donuts.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the research conducted, it can be concluded that taste and perceived quality have a significant influence on consumer purchasing decisions for Donaly Potato Donuts. Partially, both taste and perceived quality show a strong impact in forming purchasing decisions. Taste, which includes aspects of taste, texture, and aroma of the product, is proven to play an important role in attracting consumer attention and satisfaction. This is in line with the findings of previous studies that show that taste is a major factor in snack purchasing decisions. On the other hand, perceived quality, even though one of the items is invalid, still makes a positive contribution to purchasing decisions, especially in terms of product visuals, packaging, and conformity to consumer expectations.

Furthermore, the validity and reliability test results indicate that the instrument used in this study is very good. A Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.806 indicates that the instrument has high internal consistency, so the data obtained can be trusted for further analysis. Furthermore, classic regression assumptions, such as normality, multicollinearity, and homoscedasticity, were met, indicating that the regression model used in this study can provide valid and reliable results. Although there are indications of moderate multicollinearity between the taste and perceived quality variables, this does not interfere with the stability of the model, so it still allows for precise testing of the relationships between the variables.

Overall, this study provides an important contribution to understanding consumer behavior in the snack food sector, particularly locally-based products such as Donaly Potato Donuts. Based on these findings, MSMEs are advised to focus more on consistently improving the quality of product taste and appearance, as these two factors have been shown to influence purchasing decisions and consumer satisfaction. By integrating a holistic marketing strategy, which includes sensory elements and perceived quality, it is expected to increase consumer loyalty and expand market share. This study also provides theoretical contributions to the development of consumer behavior literature in the innovative local snack food industry.

Practical Implications

Based on the findings of this study, Donaly Potato Donuts business owners are advised to focus on developing and improving product quality, particularly in terms of taste, texture, and aroma, which can enhance consumers' sensory experiences. An effective marketing strategy should integrate visual elements, such as product appearance and packaging, with taste quality to create a comprehensive experience for consumers. This will not only influence

purchasing decisions but also consumer satisfaction, potentially increasing loyalty and repeat purchases. Business owners are also advised to utilize digital platforms to introduce and promote their product quality, particularly among the dominant younger consumer segment, to expand market reach. Continuously improving product quality will also strengthen competitiveness in the increasingly competitive snack market.

Theoretical Contributions

Theoretically, this research can contribute to the development of literature on consumer behavior and local product marketing. Future researchers are advised to expand the model used by including other factors that may influence purchasing decisions, such as price, promotion, or brand trust. Further research can use a longitudinal approach to observe changes in consumer perceptions and behavior over time, as well as expand the scope of the region and respondent characteristics to make the results more generalizable. Furthermore, studies on the role of purchasing decisions as a mediating variable in the relationship between factors such as taste and perceived quality on consumer satisfaction can be further explored to gain a deeper understanding of the consumer decision-making process in the snack food sector.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest, either financial or personal, regarding the research, authorship, and publication of this article. This work was conducted independently as part of academic activities.

Author Contributions

Widiawati served as the lead author, responsible for conceptualization, data collection, and drafting the initial manuscript. Fadillah Nur Ialami contributed to data analysis and methodology development. Luthfi Ghani Faza assisted in literature review and research instrument preparation. Dewi Turgarini and Caria Ningsih acted as supervisors, providing comprehensive guidance, critical review, and substantial revisions to the intellectual content and final structure of the article. All authors have read and approved the final version of this manuscript. Funding.

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Strengthening Human Resource Capacity for Regenerative Tourism Development: Green Skills and Digital Literacy in Subang Regency

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Abstract

The transition toward regenerative tourism requires competent human resources (HR) capable of restoring ecological quality, enhancing community well-being, and transforming destination governance through innovation. In Subang Regency an area with strong potential in natural attractions, gastronomic products, and community-based tourism this transformation is constrained by limited green competencies and the uneven adoption of digital practices among tourism actors. This research aims to identify the capacity-building needs for strengthening local HR competencies to accelerate regenerative and digitally supported tourism development in Subang. Using a qualitative approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews with local tourism managers, community-based tourism leaders, small tourism enterprises, and government representatives. The findings reveal two critical competency gaps: (1) green skills, including waste management, energy efficiency, conservation practices, and ecological education for visitors; and (2) digital literacy, particularly in digital marketing, data-driven service personalization, and the integration of technology for operational sustainability. These two competencies are significantly linked to slow progress in regenerative tourism practices at the destination level. The study concludes that capacity building must be designed as an integrated framework consisting of individual skill enhancement, community/organizational collaboration systems, and policy-supported certification and training programs. It is recommended that higher education institutions collaborate with local tourism stakeholders to institutionalize competency-based training and certification that empower HR as active regenerative agents. Strengthening HR capacity is therefore the strategic foundation for achieving inclusive, resilient, and ecologically restorative tourism development in Subang.

Keywords: *Regenerative Tourism, Human Resource Capacity, Green Skills, Digital Literacy, Subang Regency.*

Introduction

Tourism development is undergoing a global paradigm shift from sustainability toward regeneration, emphasizing the ability of tourism activities not only to reduce harm but also to restore and enhance socio-ecological systems. Regenerative tourism promotes net-positive outcomes ecological restoration, community empowerment, and resilient destination governance (Hughes & Rogerson, 2022; Buxton et al., 2023). Unlike sustainable tourism, which focuses on maintaining ecological balance, regenerative tourism seeks to actively improve natural, social, and cultural conditions through participatory and place-based approaches (Walker & Salt, 2020). As destinations worldwide accelerate post-pandemic recovery, regenerative tourism is increasingly recognized as a strategic pathway to rebuild tourism systems that are more inclusive, resilient, and ecologically restorative (Bellato & Cheer, 2021).

In Indonesia, the adoption of regenerative tourism is still at an early stage, yet the concept aligns strongly with the country's broader agenda for green economic transformation. Regions with rich natural landscapes and community-based tourism (CBT) potential are particularly well-positioned to embark on regenerative initiatives. One such region is Subang Regency, located in West Java, which possesses abundant natural attractions hot springs, waterfalls, forest parks, agro-ecotourism landscapes alongside gastronomic products and active CBT groups. These assets provide a strong foundation for regenerative development through ecological restoration, circular resource management, and community centered innovation.

However, the transition toward regenerative tourism in Subang remains constrained by systemic human resource limitations. Numerous studies highlight that human resource capacity is a determining factor in the success of regenerative and sustainable tourism models (Gössling & Higham, 2021; Dredge, 2022). Destination transformation requires tourism actors to possess green competencies, such as waste management skills, ecosystem conservation practices, low-carbon operations, and the ability to deliver ecological education to visitors. Research shows that the lack of environmental stewardship skills among tourism practitioners often leads to fragmented or ineffective sustainability efforts (Nhem et al., 2020).

Although previous studies in Indonesia have examined sustainable tourism, CBT capacity building, and digital tourism readiness, there remains a notable lack of research explicitly integrating HR competencies within a regenerative tourism framework. Most existing policy initiatives prioritize infrastructure or promotional campaigns, whereas human resources arguably the core drivers of regenerative transformation are seldom placed at the center of strategy development. This gap indicates the urgency of designing integrated capacity-building programs that prepare local actors as active regenerative agents.

Responding to this need, the present study aims to identify the capacity-building requirements for enhancing HR competencies to support regenerative and digitally enabled tourism development in Subang Regency. Using a qualitative approach involving in-depth interviews with tourism managers, CBT leaders, small tourism enterprises, and government representatives, the research explores competency gaps, systemic barriers, and opportunities for strengthening HR readiness. The findings are expected to enrich the global discourse on regenerative tourism by emphasizing the role of human capital in destination transformation,

while also offering practical pathways for local governments, higher education institutions, and tourism stakeholders to institutionalize competency-based training and certification.

As regenerative tourism continues to evolve as a global imperative, strengthening human resource capacity emerges as the strategic foundation for achieving tourism development that is ecologically restorative, socially inclusive, and resilient particularly in emerging destinations such as Subang Regency.

Literature review

Regenerative Tourism: Concept and Principles

Regenerative tourism has emerged as an evolution of sustainable tourism, driven by the need for a transformative approach that not only mitigates negative impacts but also restores and revitalizes socio-ecological systems. Scholars describe regenerative tourism as a framework that aims to create net-positive effects, such as improving ecosystem health, strengthening community well-being, and enhancing destination resilience (Bellato & Cheer, 2021; Hughes & Rogerson, 2022). While sustainable tourism is grounded in maintaining ecological balance, regenerative tourism emphasizes restoration, renewal, and place-based stewardship (Buxton et al., 2023).

Key principles frequently cited in regenerative tourism literature include:

- Holistic and systems thinking, which views destinations as interconnected ecological, social, cultural, and economic systems (Walker & Salt, 2020).
- Community empowerment and participation, allowing residents to co-design tourism benefits and ecological outcomes (Cheer & Lew, 2022).
- Ecological restoration and conservation, including habitat restoration, biodiversity enhancement, and circular resource use (Ateljevic, 2020).
- Collaborative governance, emphasizing multi-stakeholder partnerships between government, communities, academia, and private enterprise (Dredge, 2022).
- Cultural regeneration, which protects and revitalizes intangible heritage and local identity.

These principles signal that regenerative tourism is not merely a certification or marketing label but a long-term transformation process requiring institutional change, knowledge development, and capacity building.

Human Resources and Competencies in Tourism Transformation

Human resources (HR) have a pivotal role in determining the success of tourism transitions. Literature emphasizes that regenerative models require a shift from conventional operational tasks toward more complex competencies involving environmental stewardship, community facilitation, and innovation (Gössling & Higham, 2021). Tourism employees and community actors must develop capacities aligned with ecological integrity, cross-sector collaboration, and adaptive governance.

Several studies highlight that HR competencies in sustainable and regenerative tourism fall into three broad categories:

(1) Environmental Competencies (Green Skills)

Green skills refer to the knowledge, attitudes, and practical capabilities needed to support effective environmental management. They include:

1. waste reduction and circular economy practices,
2. energy and water efficiency,
3. biodiversity protection,
4. climate change adaptation in tourism operations,
5. environmental interpretation and visitor education.

Nhem et al. (2020) argue that green skills among community-based tourism practitioners are essential for operationalizing sustainability principles at the local level. Without these skills, programs such as waste management, conservation projects, or low-carbon practices often remain symbolic or inconsistent.

(2) Social and Collaborative Competencies

Regenerative tourism requires actors capable of fostering community involvement, empowering local groups, and mediating multi-stakeholder collaboration. Cheer and Lew (2022) highlight that tourism transformation relies heavily on interpersonal competencies, cultural sensitivity, and leadership that builds shared responsibility.

(3) Innovation and Digital Competencies

Digital literacy is increasingly recognized as a key enabler of tourism resilience and transformation. Sigala (2020) notes that digital capabilities allow tourism actors to access broader markets, implement real-time resource monitoring, enable data-driven decision-making, and facilitate sustainability communication. Digital competencies also accelerate regenerative practices by supporting transparency, knowledge sharing, and community networks.

These competency domains show that HR in regenerative tourism must be multi-skilled, integrating ecological, technological, and social dimensions.

The Role of Digital Literacy in Regenerative Tourism

Digital transformation is reshaping global tourism, particularly through mobile technologies, social media, data analytics, and smart destination systems. UNWTO (2022) emphasizes that digital readiness helps destinations become more competitive, resilient, and sustainable.

Within regenerative tourism, digital literacy contributes to transformation through several mechanisms:

1. Environmental monitoring: using digital tools to track waste, water use, biodiversity, or carbon emissions.
2. Visitor education: employing digital storytelling and interactive media to promote ecological values.
3. Operational sustainability: optimizing energy, transport, and resource flows through smart systems.

4. Marketing and global visibility: using social media and e-WOM to showcase regenerative practices.
5. Community knowledge sharing: enabling CBT groups to document and communicate local conservation initiatives.

However, studies across developing countries show that digital capability gaps are common in rural destinations (Alonso & Liu, 2022). These gaps lead to unequal adoption of technology and hinder the scalability of sustainability and regeneration programs.

Capacity Building for Sustainable and Regenerative Destinations

Capacity building in tourism refers to the development of knowledge, skills, institutional structures, and collaborative networks that support effective destination management. According to Dredge (2022), capacity building is essential for regenerative tourism because the model requires shifts not only in technical competencies but also in mindsets, values, and governance culture.

International literature identifies several effective capacity-building approaches:

1. Competency-based training frameworks, which align skills development with sustainability and regeneration goals (UNDP, 2021).
2. Community-based learning systems, where local actors engage in participatory workshops, experiential learning, and peer-to-peer education.
3. Cross-sector collaboration, integrating governments, universities, NGOs, and private stakeholders.
4. Certification and accreditation programs, such as green hospitality certification or regenerative guiding standards.
5. Digital capacity-building initiatives, particularly for SMEs and tourism villages.

Empirical studies show that destinations that invest in long-term, structured capacity building tend to achieve stronger environmental outcomes, improved community participation, and more resilient tourism systems (Goodwin, 2020).

Research Gap and Theoretical Positioning

Although sustainable tourism literature is well-established, research combining regenerative tourism and HR competency frameworks remains relatively scarce, especially in developing countries. Most studies examine environmental programs, community participation, or digital transformation independently, but few integrate these dimensions into a holistic model of regenerative capacity building.

Specifically, the literature lacks:

1. research on HR competency gaps in the context of regenerative tourism in emerging destinations,
2. studies on how green skills and digital literacy interact to shape regenerative outcomes,
3. applied frameworks for designing integrated capacity-building strategies at the destination level,

4. empirical analyses of regenerative readiness in Indonesian tourism villages, districts, or regional contexts.

This study addresses the gap by examining HR competencies in Subang Regency an area with high ecological potential but limited adoption of regenerative practices and presenting an integrated capacity-building framework for destination transformation.

Methodology

This study employs a qualitative descriptive design to explore how government policies in Subang Regency operationalize the principles of regenerative tourism. A qualitative approach is appropriate because regenerative tourism involves complex socio-ecological systems, multi-stakeholder dynamics, and context-specific governance processes that cannot be fully captured through quantitative measurement (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The study focuses on interpreting policy documents, institutional actions, and stakeholder perspectives to understand the extent to which regenerative principles such as ecological restoration, community empowerment, and circular economy are embedded within local tourism governance.

The research was conducted in Subang Regency, West Java Province, focusing on key tourism development areas such as Ciater, Tangkuban Parahu area buffers, and village-based tourism clusters (*desa wisata*). Subang was selected due to:

- (1) its active development agenda toward sustainable and regenerative tourism,
- (2) the presence of provincial and district-level strategic policies, and
- (3) ongoing ecosystem restoration initiatives within watershed and agricultural zones that intersect with tourism activities.

Primary qualitative data were obtained through:

Semi-structured interviews with:

1. Officials of the Dinas Pariwisata, Kepemudaan dan Olahraga (Disparpora) Subang
2. Leaders of Pokdarwis, Bumdes, environmental NGOs, and community groups
3. Tourism business owners (homestay, guides, farm-tour operators)
4. Interviews explored perceptions of policy effectiveness, implementation challenges, institutional collaboration, and regenerative impacts.

Field observations, including visits to:

1. Lembur Pakuan
2. Ciater tourism corridor
3. Ecotourism and community-based tourism sites
4. Observations focused on landscape conditions, community engagement, waste management practices, interpretation efforts, and ecosystem rehabilitation initiatives.

Secondary data were collected through regional and provincial policy documents:

1. PERDA No. 3/2022 on Tourism
2. PERDA No. 4/2006 on Environmental Management
3. Keputusan Bupati Subang No. 340/2022 on tourism development guidelines

4. Strategic planning documents (RPJMD, Renstra Disparpora)
5. Academic articles, reports, and global regenerative tourism frameworks (e.g., Global Destination Sustainability Movement, 2022).
6. Document analysis was used to identify alignment between policy frameworks and regenerative tourism principles.

Data were collected in three stages:

1. Preliminary review of tourism and environmental policies to establish thematic categories.
2. Stakeholder interviews, guided by a protocol focusing on governance, participation, environmental stewardship, and socio-economic regeneration.
3. Triangulation through field observations and additional secondary documents to enrich data and validate themes.
4. All interviews were conducted face-to-face and recorded with participant consent. Notes were taken during site observations.

Data were analyzed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2019), consisting of:

1. Familiarization with transcripts and documents
2. Open coding
3. Development of thematic categories

Interpretation of patterns related to regenerative tourism pillars:

1. Ecological restoration
2. Community well-being
3. Circular economy and resource reuse
4. Governance and multi-stakeholder collaboration
5. NVivo 12 software assisted in organizing codes and identifying inter-theme relationships.

To ensure data trustworthiness, the study applied the criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985):

1. Triangulation across interviews, policy documents, and observations
2. Member checking with key informants
3. Thick description to support transferability
4. Audit trail documenting analytical decisions

All participants provided informed consent. Data confidentiality and anonymity were maintained throughout the study. Ethical procedures followed guidelines from the Indonesian academic research ethics framework

Result

Policy Orientation Toward Regenerative Tourism in Subang Regency From Sustainability to Regeneration

The analysis reveals that Subang Regency's tourism governance shows a gradual shift from conventional sustainability focused on minimizing negative impacts toward a regenerative orientation emphasizing ecosystem renewal and community revitalization. This

aligns with the global shift in tourism governance, where destinations are increasingly encouraged to “leave places better than they were before tourism occurs” (Hanna et al., 2022).

Key documents such as PERDA No. 3/2022 on Tourism incorporate principles related to community empowerment, environmental stewardship, and integrated stakeholder collaboration. Although the regulation does not explicitly use the term regenerative tourism, several clauses emphasize resource restoration, inclusive participation, and cultural preservation central pillars of regenerative practices.

Integration of Environmental Policy into Tourism Development

The synergy between PERDA No. 4/2006 on Environmental Management and the tourism regulatory framework indicates strong potential for applying ecological regeneration principles. Clauses on watershed protection, pollution control, and land-use zoning directly influence tourism activities in key areas such as Ciater, Tangkuban Parahu buffer zones, and agricultural landscapes.

This is consistent with research showing that regenerative destinations rely on integrated land-use management and ecosystem restoration as foundational pillars (Bellato et al., 2023).

Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration as a Catalyst for Regeneration

Institutional Collaboration Between Provincial and District Governments

Field data show significant involvement of the Government of West Java Province, especially in providing facilitation, training, and alignment with the West Java Sustainable Tourism Roadmap. This collaboration is crucial because regenerative tourism requires multi-layered governance and cross-institutional synergy (Sheldon, 2021).

The Role of Community Groups: Pokdarwis, Bumdes, Youth Groups, and PKK

Local communities particularly Pokdarwis, Bumdes, Karang Taruna, and PKK play a central role in operationalizing regeneration principles.

Their contributions include:

1. Organizing ecotourism activities (trekking, forest interpretation, farm tours)
2. Engaging in landscape maintenance and river clean-ups
3. Promoting local cultural performances
4. Mobilizing youth participation in destination stewardship

These findings support earlier studies showing that community participation is a critical determinant of regenerative tourism success because it enhances local ownership and socio-ecological resilience (Anderson, 2020).

The Role of Community Groups: Pokdarwis, Bumdes, Youth Groups, and PKK

An interesting emergent finding is the strong influence of eWOM from content creators, local influencers, and even former West Java governors who often promote Subang's attractions. The Instagram and TikTok account @pokdarwis_lemburpakuan also amplify destination visibility.

This outcome aligns with studies demonstrating that digital storytelling and eWOM can motivate regenerative behaviors among tourists by shaping expectations, encouraging responsible travel, and promoting community initiatives (Ketter & Avraham, 2021).

Regenerative Practices in Local Destinations

Landscape Restoration and Environmental Stewardship

In several Subang tourism areas such as Lembur Pakuan and parts of Ciater communities engage in:

1. Tree planting and slope stabilization
2. River rejuvenation programs
3. Waste segregation and zero-waste campaigns

These practices resonate with regenerative tourism principles emphasizing actions that restore ecological functions (Bellato et al., 2023).

However, challenges persist, including:

1. Limited funding for long-term ecosystem restoration
2. Inconsistent waste management among visitors
3. Infrastructure issues such as narrow and damaged access roads

Landscape Restoration and Environmental Stewardship

Local cultural festivals such as CFD (Car Free Day) events, Nawang Mulan, and other community-led activities are not merely attractions but social regeneration mechanisms that strengthen identity, heritage, and inter-community cohesion.

Regenerative tourism frameworks emphasize that social and cultural renewal is as important as ecological restoration (Sheldon, 2021). Subang's approach aligns with this perspective by placing culture and community well-being at the center of development.

Barriers to Implementing Regenerative Tourism Community Capacity Gaps

Infrastructure Limitations Community Capacity Gaps

Several tourism sites face accessibility challenges due to:

1. Narrow, unmarked, or damaged roads
2. Limited public transportation options
3. These issues reduce visitor comfort and hinder the implementation of regenerative programs requiring frequent mobility and monitoring.

Although collaboration exists, overlaps in authority between environmental agencies, tourism offices, and village administrations sometimes slow decision-making. Research suggests that governance fragmentation is a common obstacle in regenerative transitions (Hanna et al., 2022), particularly in emerging destinations.

Community Capacity Gaps Synthesizing Findings: Toward a Regenerative Governance Framework for Subang

Despite strong enthusiasm, some Pokdarwis groups still lack:

1. Technical skills in ecotourism management

2. Knowledge of regenerative indicators
3. Training in digital marketing and visitor management
4. Capacity-building is therefore essential to ensure consistency and long-term success.

Synthesizing Findings: Toward a Regenerative Governance Framework for Subang

Based on data analysis, a regenerative tourism governance model for Subang should emphasize:

1. Policy Integration
2. Aligning tourism and environmental regulations with explicit regenerative principles.
3. Ecological Restoration as Core Mandate
4. Prioritizing watersheds, agricultural landscapes, geothermal zones, and forest buffers.
5. Community-led Stewardship
6. Strengthening Pokdarwis, Bumdes, youth groups, and women's organizations.
7. Collaborative Multi-Level Governance

Discussion

The findings of this study underscore the central role of human resource (HR) capacity in enabling the transition toward regenerative tourism in Subang Regency. The identification of green skills and digital literacy as critical competency gaps confirms that regenerative tourism is not solely a matter of destination planning or environmental policy, but fundamentally a people-centered transformation process. This supports the growing body of literature that positions regenerative tourism as a paradigm requiring proactive human intervention to restore ecosystems, strengthen social capital, and reconfigure governance structures rather than merely minimizing negative impacts.

The lack of green competencies among tourism actors particularly in waste management, energy efficiency, conservation practices, and ecological interpretation suggests that sustainability initiatives in Subang remain largely procedural and symbolic. Without adequate ecological literacy and practical green skills, tourism activities risk reproducing extractive practices that contradict regenerative principles. This finding aligns with regenerative tourism scholarship emphasizing that environmental restoration depends on local actors' ability to translate ecological values into daily operational practices and visitor engagement.

Similarly, limited digital literacy constrains the effectiveness of regenerative tourism implementation. Digital competencies such as data-driven marketing, service personalization, and technology-assisted sustainability management are increasingly recognized as enablers of adaptive and resilient destinations. In Subang, uneven adoption of digital tools not only weakens destination competitiveness but also limits opportunities to monitor visitor behavior, manage carrying capacity, and communicate regenerative values to tourists. This reinforces the argument that digital transformation and regenerative tourism should be treated as interdependent processes rather than separate development agendas.

The study further highlights the need for an integrated capacity-building framework that operates across individual, organizational, and policy levels. Skill enhancement at the individual level must be complemented by collaborative systems at the community and

organizational levels to ensure knowledge sharing and collective action. At the policy level, government-supported training, certification, and competency standards are crucial to institutionalizing regenerative practices. The recommended collaboration between higher education institutions and local tourism stakeholders reflects the necessity of bridging academic knowledge, professional training, and practical implementation.

Overall, this discussion suggests that strengthening HR capacity is not an auxiliary component but a strategic foundation for regenerative tourism development in Subang. By investing in green and digital competencies through coordinated policy and institutional support, Subang Regency can foster a tourism system that is inclusive, resilient, and capable of delivering long-term ecological and social regeneration.

Conclusion

This study examined the readiness, challenges, and opportunities for developing regenerative tourism in Subang Regency through an analysis of policy frameworks, stakeholder collaboration, community practices, and destination-level constraints. The findings indicate that Subang is currently undergoing a transition from conventional sustainable tourism toward a more regenerative orientation one that emphasizes ecological restoration, community empowerment, and systemic transformation.

First, at the policy level, Subang possesses regulatory instruments particularly PERDA No. 3/2022 on Tourism and PERDA No. 4/2006 on Environmental Management that align with the foundational principles of regenerative development. Although not explicitly framed as “regenerative tourism,” these policies incorporate key principles such as environmental stewardship, inclusive governance, and cultural preservation that support a regenerative shift.

Second, stakeholder collaboration emerges as a significant strength. Provincial district coordination, combined with community institutions such as Pokdarwis, Bumdes, Karang Taruna, and PKK, provides a socio-institutional foundation that is central to regenerative practice. These groups actively contribute to ecological maintenance, cultural revitalization, and community cohesion aligning with global literature highlighting the importance of community-led stewardship in regenerative tourism.

Third, Subang shows increasing momentum in digital-based promotion and eWOM, which enhances destination visibility and encourages responsible tourist behavior. Social media narratives produced by content creators and community groups serve as informal channels of regenerative storytelling.

Despite these strengths, several barriers hinder the full realization of regenerative tourism. Infrastructure limitations, fragmented institutional coordination, and limited community capacity particularly in environmental management and digital literacy create gaps between policy intentions and on-ground implementation. Capacity-building needs remain significant and immediate.

Overall, the study concludes that Subang Regency has strong potential to become a leading regenerative tourism destination in West Java. Achieving this requires structured

human resource development, integrated governance, and improved ecological management systems supported by digital innovation.

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Analysis of First-Time Experience on the Repurchase Intention of Walking Tours among Generation Z in Palembang City

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Abstract

This study analyzes how first-time experience influences the repurchase intention of walking tour services among Generation Z in Palembang City. In the context of urban tourism, walking tours are increasingly popular because they offer direct, authentic, and interactive encounters with local culture and history. However, the sustainability of demand strongly depends on the quality of the initial experience perceived by tourists. This research employs a quantitative approach by distributing questionnaires to Generation Z respondents who have participated in walking tours in Palembang. The analyzed variables include service quality perception, experiential value, emotional engagement, and initial satisfaction, which are then linked to repurchase intention. The results indicate that the first-time experience serves as a significant predictor of tourist loyalty. Elements such as route uniqueness, guide friendliness, engaging cultural storytelling, and physical comfort during the tour are found to be key factors in shaping positive impressions. These findings emphasize that walking tour organizers must prioritize the design of high-quality initial experiences, as the first encounter not only affects immediate satisfaction but also creates an emotional anchor that encourages Generation Z tourists to repurchase the service.

Keywords: *First-Time Experience, Repurchase Intention, Walking Tour, Generation Z, Palembang*

Introduction

The first experience in the context of tourism plays an important role in shaping consumer perceptions and behaviors towards tourist destinations or services. Positive early experiences can increase satisfaction, loyalty, and intention to revisit or recommend to others. On the contrary, negative experiences can hinder the interest to return or even cause a bad perception of the destination (Liu et al., 2016). In a highly competitive tourism industry, creating a memorable first experience is a crucial strategy to retain and attract tourists.

Generation Z, who was born between the mid-1990s to the early 2010s, is a demographic group that grew up in the digital age and has unique characteristics in their travel behavior. They are known as a generation that seeks authentic, personal, and meaningful experiences in every activity, including tourism activities. According to Haddouche and Salomone (2018), Generation Z shows a preference for unique experiences and is oriented towards ethical values and sustainability. They also tend to use technology and social media in planning and sharing their travel experiences (Popşa, 2024). One of the forms of tourism that is in accordance with the preferences of Generation Z is a walking tour, which is a walking tour that allows tourists to explore the destination directly and deeply. Walking tour offers flexibility and the opportunity to interact directly with the surrounding environment, which is in accordance with the wishes of Generation Z for a more authentic and meaningful experience. According to Haddouche and Salomone (2018), this form of tourism allows tourists to experience the local culture directly and increase their involvement with the local community. Although there are various studies that discuss the relationship between customer experience and repurchase intention, there are still limitations in the study that specifically examines the effect of the first experience in the context of walking tours among Generation Z, especially in Indonesia. Research by Haddouche and Salomone (2018) emphasizes the importance of understanding the preferences and behaviors of Generation Z in the context of tourism, but not many have focused on the first experience and its impact on repurchase intentions. Therefore, this research aims to explore how the first experience affects the intention to repurchase walking tours in Generation Z, with the hope of contributing to the development of a more effective and customer experience-oriented marketing strategy. In recent years, walking tours have gained increasing attention as an alternative form of urban tourism, especially among young travelers. This type of tourism activity offers a more flexible, interactive, and immersive way to explore destinations, allowing participants to directly experience local culture, history, and everyday life. Compared to conventional tours, walking tours provide closer interaction between tourists, guides, and the surrounding environment, which can create a more personal and memorable travel experience.

For first-time participants, the initial walking tour experience becomes a critical moment that shapes their overall impression of the service. Elements such as guide interaction, route comfort, storytelling quality, atmosphere, and group dynamics contribute to how tourists perceive the experience as enjoyable or meaningful. A positive first encounter can encourage tourists to develop favorable feelings toward the walking tour provider, while an unsatisfactory experience may reduce their interest in participating again in the future. Generation Z represents a significant segment of walking tour participants due to their strong interest in experiential activities and their tendency to seek unique and shareable experiences. This

generation is highly active in documenting and sharing travel experiences through social media and personal networks. As a result, their first experience not only influences their personal intention to repurchase but also affects their willingness to recommend the activity to others. This makes first-time experience an important factor in shaping both repeat participation and informal promotion through word of mouth. In the context of Palembang City, walking tours have become an emerging tourism activity that highlights local heritage, cultural narratives, and urban identity. However, the sustainability of walking tour services depends on the ability of providers to deliver positive first experiences that meet the expectations of Generation Z participants. Understanding how first-time experiences influence repurchase intention is therefore essential for improving service quality and ensuring the long-term development of walking tour tourism in the city. This study focuses on examining the relationship between first-time experience and repurchase intention among Generation Z participants in walking tours in Palembang City. By emphasizing the role of the initial experience, this research aims to provide practical insights for walking tour organizers in designing experiences that encourage repeat participation and positive recommendations

Research Gap

Based on the development of consumer behavior theory and the latest experience-based tourism :

1. The first research gap lies in the way the first experience is positioned in the formation of repurchase intentions. The updated experiential marketing theory by Schmitt (2020) and experiential value theory by Holbrook (2021) assert that consumer experience is multidimensional and works through cognitive-affective processes before influencing behavior. Furthermore, Oliver (2014) and Kim et al. (2021) emphasized that the repurchase intention is formed through internal evaluation such as satisfaction, emotion, and attachment, not solely as a result of direct experience. However, many recent empirical studies still test first-time experiences and direct and linear repurchase intentions, without adequately linking them to the psychological mechanisms described in these theories. This shows that there is a theoretical gap between the development of the concept of modern consumer experience and its application in tourism research, especially in experience-based tourism activities such as walking tours.

The second research gap is related to the application of generation theory and experience theory in the context of Generation Z. According to Gentina (2020) and Barhate and Dirani (2022), Generation Z has unique characteristics in interpreting experience, which is strongly emphasizing authenticity, emotional involvement, and integration of physical and digital experiences. The theory of memorable tourism experience developed by Kim et al. (2021) also emphasizes that the travel experience of the younger generation is subjective and contextual, greatly influenced by social interaction and local narrative. However, most of the research that examines the travel experience still uses a general theoretical framework without adjusting to the characteristics of Generation Z, and is rarely applied to the context of community tourism such as walking tours. As a result, there is a theoretical gap in explaining how the first

experience is interpreted specifically by Generation Z and how the experience shapes the intention of repurchase in the context of community-based tourism and local interaction.

Literature review

Repurchase Intention

Regenerative tourism has emerged as an evolution of sustainable tourism, driven by the need for a transformative approach that not only mitigates negative impacts but also restores and revitalizes socio-ecological systems. Scholars describe regenerative tourism as a framework that aims to create net-positive effects, such as improving ecosystem health, strengthening community well-being, and enhancing destination resilience (Bellato & Cheer, 2021; Hughes & Rogerson, 2022). While sustainable tourism is grounded in maintaining ecological balance, regenerative tourism emphasizes restoration, renewal, and place-based stewardship (Buxton et al., 2023).

Repurchase intention is one of the important indicators in consumer behavior that describes a person's tendency to buy products again or use services from the same source in the future. Repurchase intention is defined as the consumer's intention to make a repurchase based on previous experience, which is greatly influenced by customer satisfaction, perceived value and loyalty to the brand or service provider (Hellier et al., 2003). Not only affected by satisfaction, repurchase intentions can also be influenced by the perception of service quality and brand image built from previous experience. In other words, the higher the positive perception of the service provided, the greater the possibility of consumers making repurchases (Zeng et al., 2009).

In some contexts, the intention to buy back is not always rational and completely emotional, this behavior can also be automatic or habitual. Repurchase intentions can arise without emotional involvement or deep evaluation, especially when the decision has become a habit or triggered by repeated needs. It means, even though consumers are not completely satisfied, they can make a new purchase due to convenience factors, limited choices or routines (Wibowo et al., 2013).

Furthermore, several studies identify various determinant factors of the repurchase intention, among others:

1). First Experience (First Experience) - has a long-term influence because it becomes the basis for the formation of perceptions and expectations for services or products in the future (Srivastava & Kaul, 2016).

2). Customer Satisfaction (Customer Satisfaction) - becomes the main factor that mediates the relationship between previous experiences and repetitive behavior (Oliver, 1999).

Several experts have conducted a study on repurchase intentions by grouping them into different dimensions, the following are the dimensions of repurchase intentions according to Keller (2012)

1. Behavioral Loyalty: Intention to buy back
2. Attitudinal Loyalty: A positive attitude towards the brand
3. Advocacy: The tendency to advise others

Overall, the repurchase intention is the result of the interaction between cognitive aspects (quality assessment and satisfaction), affective (emotions and beliefs), and behavior (habits and past experiences). Therefore, a deep understanding of the dynamics of repurchase intentions is important in the context of sustainable marketing strategies, including in the service sector such as walking tours, where direct experience plays a central role in shaping consumer perceptions and decisions

First Experience

A pleasant first experience can increase the value felt by tourists, which in turn affects the satisfaction and intention to make a repeat visit. A memorable experience can increase the satisfaction and loyalty of tourists (Kim et al., 2021). Customer experience has a significant positive impact on repurchase intentions in the hospitality sector (Abrian and Adrian, 2021). Customer satisfaction as a mediator can strengthen the influence of experience on repurchase intentions (Intani, 2024).

In the context of tourism, a memorable first experience can form a positive perception of the destination, which then increases the intention to visit again. A pleasant and memorable tourist experience can increase the satisfaction and loyalty of tourists (Kim et al., 2012).

Overall, the literature shows that the positive first experience plays an important role in shaping the repurchase intention. These experiences not only affect customer satisfaction but also form perceived perceptions and values, all of which contribute to the intention to make repurchases in the future.

Walking Tour

Walking tour is a form of experience-based tourism activity that emphasizes the exploration of a destination on foot, allowing tourists to feel the local nuances more directly and deeply. This activity provides space for more intimate interaction between tourists and the surrounding physical, cultural, and social environment (Dihingia, Gjerde, & Vale, 2022). Through a slow and participatory approach, walking tours become an effective way to present an authentic experience, especially in the context of tourism in historical cities or areas with high cultural values. The practice of walking in tourism is not only physical, but also a cognitive and emotional activity that deepens the meaning of the visit through multisensory involvement (Rabbiosi, 2021).

As part of the slow tourism trend, walking tours are considered to have a positive contribution to the sustainability of the destination. It was found that walking tourism does not require large infrastructure, thus minimizing environmental impact while opening up local empowerment opportunities (Annisa, 2023). By involving local guides and directing tourists to MSMEs or certain cultural points, walking tours are able to create a more even flow of economic benefits. As in the Chinese region, it also shows that walking tourism contributes significantly to the satisfaction of tourists and the intention to revisit, especially if accompanied by a strong cultural narrative and social experience during the tour (Qiu et al., 2021).

Furthermore, walking tours are also considered effective in building emotional connections between tourists and destinations, which then affects their perception of the quality of the tourist experience. Walking tour guides play an important role in conveying information as well as building a narrative that strengthens the tourist's attachment to the place visited (Bryon, 2012). The uniqueness of this activity makes it a popular choice especially for young and urban tourists, such as Generation Z, who tend to seek authentic experiences and connect personally with the surrounding environment. Therefore, the understanding of walking tour is not only as a form of physical activity, but also as a medium for the formation of emotional and social experiences, becomes very relevant in the development of experience-oriented tourism strategies

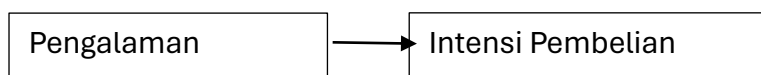
Generation Z

Generation Z is a demographic group that was generally born between 1995 and 2012, and is known as the digital generation or digital natives because since birth they have been exposed to information technology, the internet, and social media (Dimock, 2019; McCrindle, 2014; Barhate & Dirani, 2022). This generation grew up in a very dynamic and global environment, with quick access to information and high multitasking ability (Santosa, 2021). Their characteristics include adaptability to technology, preference for instant communication, and the tendency to rely on digital resources in decision making, including in the context of consumption and tourism.

In addition, Generation Z tends to have high expectations for service speed, authenticity of experience, and social responsibility from service providers or products that they consume (Gentina, 2020). In the context of tourist behavior, they are more interested in unique and personal experiences, and often rely on social media and online reviews in choosing destinations or activities such as walking tours. This makes them an important target market in the experience-based tourism industry. Therefore, understanding the consumption behavior and repurchase decisions of Generation Z is crucial, especially in the development of experience-based tourism marketing strategies.

Conceptual Framework

This research focuses on two variables, by making First Experience as an independent variable (X) and Repurchase Intention as a dependent variable (Y). The following is the conceptual framework of this research:



The hypotheses proposed in this study are as follows:

- Ha : The first experience has a positive influence on the intention of repetition.
- Ho : The first experience has no effect on the repurchase intention.

Methodology

Types, Objects and Subjects of Reasearch

This study employs a qualitative descriptive design to explore how government policies in Subang Regency operationalize the principles of regenerative tourism. A qualitative approach is appropriate because regenerative tourism involves complex socio-ecological systems, multi-stakeholder dynamics, and context-specific governance processes that cannot be fully captured through quantitative measurement (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The study focuses on interpreting policy documents, institutional actions, and stakeholder perspectives to understand the extent to which regenerative principles such as ecological restoration, community empowerment, and circular economy are embedded within local tourism governance.

This study used a quantitative approach, a systematic and objective method for examining relationships between variables through numerical data. This approach is commonly used in the social sciences and management because it can produce generalizable conclusions through statistical analysis (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016; Creswell, 2014). The purpose of this study was to examine the influence of first-time experience on repurchase intentions of walking tours among Generation Z.

Operational Variables

To measure the variables in this study, operational definitions are required that include the dimensions, indicators, and statement items for each variable. The independent variable in this study is First Experience, which reflects tourists' initial impressions of the walking tour they participated in and can influence subsequent behavior. The dependent variable is Repurchase Intention, which indicates tourists' desire or intention to return to a walking tour with the same service provider. Both variables are operationalized based on theory and findings from several previous studies to ensure systematic measurement and appropriateness to the empirical context of the study. The following table presents the operationalization of each variable:

This research object focuses on analyzing the causal relationship between Social Media (X1), Climbing Motivation (X2), and Tourist Experience (Y) in a specific context: climbing activities on Mount Seminung. This object was chosen because Mount Seminung offers a unique blend of natural beauty and digital relevance, featuring panoramic views of Lake Ranau (such as the sunrise from the peak or certain camping spots). This has made Mount Seminung a highly active destination on social media, with a high volume of user-generated content (photos and videos from hikers) and a need to understand the driving factors behind tourist experiences in adventure tourism destinations.

Variabel X: Schmitt (1999); Kim et al. (2012)		First-Time Experience
Dimensi	Indikator	Instrumen Pernyataan
Affectiv e Experience	Enjoyment during the walking tour	I felt happy while participating in my first walking tour

	Emotional satisfaction	I felt emotionally satisfied with my first walking tour experience.
Cognitive Experience	Knowledge gained	My first walking tour provided me with new knowledge about the destination.
	Understanding of local culture	After joining the walking tour, I have a better understanding of the local culture.
Behavioral Experience	Desire to try again	My first walking tour experience encouraged me to participate in a similar activity in the future.
	Activities that stimulate interest	The activities offered during my first walking tour were interesting and engaging
Sensory Experience	Pleasant visual environment	I enjoyed the visual atmosphere and scenery during the walking tour.
	Engaging guide and surrounding sounds	The guide's narration and surrounding ambiance enhanced my overall walking tour experience.
Variabel Y: Repurchase Intention Keller (2012)		
Dimensi on	Indicator	Statement Instrumen
Behavioral Loyalty	Intention to repurchase	I intend to participate in the walking tour again
	Participation frequency	I would like to participate more frequently in walking tours organized
Attitudinal Loyalty	Positive attitude toward the brand	I have a positive impression as a walking tour provider
	Satisfaction with the experience	I am satisfied with my experience
Advocacy	Recommendation to others	I would recommend this walking tour to my friend or family
	Sharing positive experience	I would like to share my positive experience from this walking tour on social media or through direct communication

Unit of Analysis, Population, Sample

This research was conducted in Palembang, focusing on participants from the tourism service provider community/organization actively managing walking tours in the area. The study population included all tourists who had participated in a Teman Jalan trip in the past two years.

The sampling method used was purposive sampling, which selects the sample based on specific criteria relevant to the research objectives (Hair et al., 2017). The inclusion criteria for this study were respondents from Generation Z (born 1997–2012) and those with experience participating in a Teman Jalan walking tour in Palembang.

Data collection was conducted through an online questionnaire based on a 5-point Likert scale, designed to measure respondents' level of agreement with various statements representing research variables, such as first-time experience and repurchase intention.

Data Analysis Techniques

This research was conducted in Palembang, focusing on participants from the tourism service provider "Teman Jalan"—a community/organization actively managing walking tours in the region. The study population included all tourists who had participated in a trip with Teman Jalan in the past year. To analyze the effect of first experience (X) on repurchase intention (Y), this study used simple linear regression analysis with the help of Microsoft Excel software. Simple linear regression analysis was chosen because this method allows for quantitative and objective testing of the direct linear relationship between one independent variable and one dependent variable (Ghozali, 2016; Sugiyono, 2019).

The regression model used is formulated as the equation:

$$Y = a + bX + e$$

Where:

Y = Repurchase Intention

X = First Experience

Analysis Results

Simple linier Regression Analysis Result

In testing the effect of the First Experience on the Repurchase Intention on the use of walking tour services in Palembang, a simple linear regression analysis test was carried out. This analysis is done using Microsoft Excel. The data analysis carried out resulted in the following tests:

1) Determination Coefficient (R Square)

The R Square value that is in the range of 0.3 to 0.6 is classified as moderate and still acceptable, it is considered that the phenomenon of human behavior is influenced by many external factors (Hair et.al., 2017). The following is the result of the R square test which shows a result of 0.335 or 33.5%. This can be interpreted that 35% variation of the Re-Pursal Intention (Y) can be explained by the First Experience variable (X). While the other 66.5% is led by

other variables that are not included in this model, it can be in the form of promotion, price, risk perception, or other external factors.

<i>Regression Statistics</i>	
R	Multiple 0,579126
R Square	0,335387
Adjusted R Square	0,314618
Standard Error	3,465555
Observations	34

Table 1. Hasil Uji RSquare

Model Significance Test (F Test)

A regression model can be considered suitable for use in predictive analysis if the F-value is <0.05 (Gujarati and Porter, 2009). The ANOVA table from this analysis shows a calculated F-value of 16.14832 with a significance of 0.0000332, which is less than the 5% significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$). Thus, it can be concluded that the overall regression model is significant, meaning there is a statistically significant influence between First Experience and Repurchase Intention.

ANOVA						
	<i>f</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Significance F</i>
Regression	1	19	3,9424	3,9424	16,14832	0,000332
Residual	2	38	4,3223	,01007		
Total	3	57				
al	3	8,2647				

Table 2 Uji Signifikansi Model (Uji F)

Partial Test (t-Test)

The regression coefficient for the First Experience variable (X) is 0.5195, meaning that every one-unit increase in the first experience score will increase repurchase intention by 0.5195 units, assuming other variables are held constant.

		<i>S</i>			<i>L</i>	<i>U</i>	<i>L</i>	<i>U</i>
	<i>Co</i>	<i>tandar</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>ower</i>	<i>pper</i>	<i>ower</i>	<i>pper</i>
	<i>efficients</i>	<i>d Error</i>	<i>Stat</i>	<i>-value</i>	<i>95%</i>	<i>95%</i>	<i>95,0%</i>	<i>95,0%</i>
			1	0		1		1
Int	7,5	4	,63845	,11112	-	6,8976	-	6,8976
ercept	32845	,59752	8	3	1,832	9	1,832	9
X		0	4	0	0	0	0	0
Variable	0,5	,12927	,01849	,00033	,25617	,78283	,25617	,78283
1	19502	8	7	2	2	3	2	3

Table 3 Hasil Uji Parsial (Uji t)

The values obtained were:

- t-value = 4.018497

- p-value = 0.000332

Because the p-value <0.05 and the t-value > t-table (± 2.04 for $df = 32$), it can be concluded that: H_0 is rejected and H_a is accepted, which means that First Experience has a positive and significant effect on Repurchase Intention

Discussion

The results of this research show that the first experience has a positive and significant effect on the intention to repurchase walking tours in Generation Z in Palembang City. This finding confirms that the initial experience felt by tourists has a strategic role in shaping behavioral intentions in the future, especially in the context of experience-based tourism such as walking tours. A positive regression coefficient value indicates that the better the first experience experienced by tourists, the higher their tendency to return to the same walking tour service. This is in line with the view of Srivastava and Kaul (2016) who stated that early experience serves as the main foundation in the formation of long-term consumer loyalty. Theoretically, the results of this research support the concept of customer experience put forward by Schmitt (1999), which emphasizes that consumer experience is multidimensional, including affective, cognitive, sensory, and behavioral aspects. In the context of Teman Jalan walking tour, the first positive experience is not only formed from the emotional satisfaction of the tourist, but also from the new knowledge gained, active involvement during the activity, as well as sensory stimulation through the atmosphere and direct interaction with the surrounding environment. The combination of these aspects creates a memorable experience, which according to Kim et al. (2012) is a key factor in encouraging the intention to revisit and loyalty of tourists.

This finding is also consistent with the repurchase intention theory put forward by Hellier et al. (2003), which states that the repurchase intention is influenced by the evaluation of previous experience. In this study, Generation Z as a respondent showed that a pleasant first experience was able to form a positive attitude (attitudinal loyalty), the intention to buy back (behavioral loyalty), and the tendency to recommend to others (advocacy). This strengthens

Keller's (2012) view that loyalty is not only reflected from repurchase behavior, but also from the attitude and willingness of consumers to become brand advocates or service providers.

From the characteristic perspective of Generation Z, the results of this study are relevant to the findings of Haddouche and Salomone (2018) and Gentina (2020) which states that Generation Z tends to seek authentic, participatory, and meaningful experiences. Walking tour as a form of slow tourism provides space for high emotional and social involvement, so the first experience becomes very decisive. When the initial experience is able to meet Generation Z's expectations—such as warm interaction with the guide, interesting local narratives, and a comfortable atmosphere—then the chances of creating a repurchase intention become greater.

However, the determination coefficient value (R^2) of 33.5% shows that the first experience is not the only factor that affects the repurchase intention. There are still other factors that have the potential to contribute, such as price, promotion, risk perception, destination image, and social media influence, which are not included in this research model. This finding is in line with Hair et al. (2017) which states that consumer behavior, especially in the service and tourism sectors, is influenced by various complex factors that interact with each other. Overall, this discussion emphasizes that the first experience has a crucial role in shaping the intention to repurchase walking tours in Generation Z. A well-managed early experience is able to create a lasting positive impression and encourage loyal behavior in the future. Therefore, strengthening the quality of the first experience needs to be the main focus for walking tour service providers in designing marketing strategies and managing sustainable tourism experiences.

Conclusion

This research aims to analyze the impact of the first experience on the intention to repurchase walking tour services in Generation Z in Palembang City with a case study of Teman Jalan tour service provider. Based on the results of simple linear regression analysis, it can be concluded that the first experience has a positive and significant influence on the repurchase intention. This finding shows that the initial experience felt by tourists plays an important role in shaping their intention to return to using walking tour services in the future. The research results confirm that the better the quality of the first experience—which is reflected from emotional, cognitive, sensory, and behavioral aspects—the higher the tendency of Generation Z to show a positive attitude, the intention to buy again, and the desire to recommend services to others. This is in line with the theory of customer experience and consumer loyalty which states that early experience is the main foundation in the formation of repeat purchase behavior, especially in the experience-based tourism service sector.

However, the value of the coefficient of determination shows that the first experience has not fully explained the intention to buy back, so there are other factors outside this research model that also have the potential to influence the traveler's decision. Therefore, further research is recommended to include additional variables such as customer satisfaction, price perception, destination image, guide quality, and the influence of social media to obtain a more comprehensive understanding. Practically, the results of this research can be the basis for walking tour managers to further focus the service management strategy on creating a positive,

authentic, and memorable first experience to increase tourist loyalty, especially from the Generation Z segment.

Conflict of Interest

The author states that there is no conflict of interest, both financially and non-financially, that affects the research process, data analysis, and the writing of this article. This research was conducted independently and objectively in accordance with academic rules.

Author Contributions

Putu Paramita contributes as the main author in all stages of research, including concept formulation and research design, data collection, data analysis and interpretation, as well as writing and revision of article manuscripts. The entire content of the article has been read and approved by the author to be published.

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