

SELECTIVE DIMENSIONS OF MEMORABLE TOURISM EXPERIENCE AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON REVISIT INTENTION

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ABSTRACT: This study explores the influence of Memorable Tourism Experience (MTE) dimensions on tourists' revisit intention in West Sumatra, Indonesia. While MTE is widely acknowledged in tourism literature, limited studies have empirically disentangled which subdimensions—such as hedonism, novelty, local culture, refreshment, meaningfulness, involvement, and knowledge—are truly consequential in the regional tourism context. Employing an explanatory, cross-sectional design with a purposive sample of 143 respondents, data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares (PLS). The results reveal that only hedonism, local culture, and meaningfulness significantly affect revisit intention. Novelty, refreshment, involvement, and knowledge showed no measurable impact. These findings challenge assumptions that all MTE elements equally drive loyalty, highlighting a more selective emotional-cognitive mechanism in tourist behavior. Practically, local tourism authorities should prioritize emotionally resonant and culturally grounded experiences to strengthen destination appeal and policy alignment with national tourism development goals.

Keywords: Memorable Tourism Experience (MTE); Revisit Intention; Tourist Behavior; Experience Economy; Cultural Tourism

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INTRODUCTION

Tourism remains a crucial pillar of Indonesia's national economy, contributing 3.75% to GDP prior to the pandemic and employing over 12 million individuals across the archipelago. In West Sumatra, tourism holds vast potential due to its rich landscape, cultural heritage, and culinary uniqueness. According to BPS Sumatera Barat (2024), the province recorded over 8.2 million tourist visits in 2023; however, revisit rates and average length of stay have remained stagnant. This reflects a critical shortcoming: tourist destinations in West Sumatra have not yet optimized service experiences to generate lasting impressions. In an era where global tourism trends increasingly prioritize emotional, personalized, and experience-based travel, local destinations must evolve from merely offering attractions to crafting what scholars term *Memorable Tourism Experiences* (MTE). If left unaddressed, the region risks losing its competitive edge to more adaptive tourism regions, especially as reliance on extractive sectors like oil and gas continues to decline.

Scholarly attention to MTE has grown in response to such challenges. Kim and Ritchie (2013) defined MTE as a multidimensional construct encompassing seven distinct but interrelated elements: hedonism, novelty, local culture, refreshment, meaningfulness, involvement, and knowledge. These dimensions represent the emotional and cognitive imprints left on tourists, influencing their post-visit attitudes and behaviors, especially revisit intention and word-of-mouth promotion. Prior research by Kim, Ritchie, and McCormick (2012) confirmed that emotionally rich experiences significantly impact tourists' likelihood of returning and re-engaging with similar activities. In particular, hedonism, or the sense of pleasure and enjoyment (Kim et al., 2010), has been shown to play a central role in forming positive travel memories. Coudounaris and Stapit (2017) further emphasize that the pursuit of excitement and emotional gratification is a key driver of tourist loyalty and return behavior.

Each of the seven MTE dimensions contributes uniquely to the visitor's memory architecture. Hedonism relates to feelings of personal pleasure and joy during travel (Kim et al., 2010; Chandralal & Valencia, 2015), while novelty refers to unique, once-in-a-lifetime experiences that are distinct from past travels (Kim et al., 2012). Chandralal and Valenzuela (2015) note that novel experiences—whether culinary, cultural, or logistical—sharpen the memorability of travel. Local culture, another vital component, involves immersion in local customs, traditions, and languages (Tung & Ritchie, 2011), and is significantly shaped by the friendliness of local communities (Kim et al., 2012; Kim & Ritchie, 2013). Tourism programs rich in cultural authenticity foster deeper emotional attachment and more favorable destination evaluations (Chandralal & Valenzuela, 2015). Refreshment, as defined by Kim (2009), refers to the psychological benefit of escape and relaxation, fulfilling one's need for solitude or emotional rejuvenation (Kim & Ritchie, 2013). Meaningfulness captures experiences that lead to personal insight or a sense of purpose during travel (Kim et al., 2012), while involvement concerns a tourist's level of engagement with local activities, which can enhance memory retention (Kim, 2012; Chandralal & Valencia, 2015). Lastly, knowledge reflects the learning and skill development obtained through travel, which Kim and Ritchie (2013) argue contributes to a more enriching experience.

Despite the established theoretical foundation of MTE, few empirical studies have disaggregated which specific subdimensions significantly influence revisit intention, especially within the context of regional destinations like West Sumatra. While the seven dimensions are broadly accepted, their relative effects on tourist loyalty remain underexplored in empirical settings. This study seeks to address this critical gap by examining how each MTE subvariable—hedonism, novelty, local culture, refreshment, meaningfulness, involvement, and knowledge—predicts revisit intention among tourists visiting West Sumatra. By applying a quantitative explanatory approach and Partial Least Squares (PLS) analysis, this research aims to sharpen the conceptual clarity of the MTE framework and inform local tourism stakeholders about which experiential elements are most strategically impactful. In doing so, this study not only reinforces the practical value of experience-based tourism but also contributes to the refinement of MTE as a predictive construct in destination loyalty research.

THEORETICAL REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

Revisit intention has been widely recognized in tourism literature as a key behavioral indicator of destination loyalty. Cole and Scott (2004) define it as a tourist's desire to return to the same place, facility, or location after a prior visit. This is echoed by Chang et al. (2014), who describe revisit intention as a deliberate desire to experience the same destination for a second time, and by Han and Kim (2010), who frame it as an individual's sustained motivation to engage in repeat visits. Revisit intention is also closely tied to advocacy behavior; repeat tourists often engage in positive word-of-mouth, promoting destinations to others (Carranza et al., 2018). As noted by Wu et al. (2014), service quality, staff performance, promotional efforts, and the continuous renewal of attractions can shape tourists' likelihood to revisit. Liao et al. (2021) similarly define revisit intention as a tourist's willingness to return to the same destination following a positive travel experience.

While numerous studies have investigated revisit intention using comparable constructs, West Sumatra offers a distinct empirical context that necessitates renewed scholarly attention. The region's tourism landscape is uniquely diversified—spanning beaches, mountains, lakes, valleys, caves, and rivers—forming a destination composite unlike any other in Indonesia. These natural and cultural characteristics are not mere background features; they have the potential to produce differentiated experiential outcomes that influence revisit intention in unique ways. Thus, understanding tourist behavior in West Sumatra offers a rich opportunity to reassess the existing revisit intention framework within a context of high ecological and experiential variety.

Recent studies have emphasized the theoretical significance of *Memorable Tourism Experience* (MTE) in shaping revisit intention. Rasoolimanesh et al. (2021) empirically demonstrated that MTE significantly affects tourists' willingness to return. Aydin and Omuris (2020) extended this understanding by examining the mediating role of MTE between meaning in life and subjective well-being, underlining its psychological relevance. Meanwhile, Hosany et al. (2021) argued for a more nuanced view of MTE that integrates both positive and negative emotional dimensions, urging future research to engage with MTE not only from the visitor's perspective but also from that of service providers.

Building on this body of work, Kim et al. (2010) argued that memorable tourism experiences directly influence revisit behavior, particularly when shaped by hedonic elements such as enjoyment and excitement. This aligns with findings by Coudounaris and Stapit (2017), who identify hedonism as a critical driver in tourists' decision to return. In light of these insights, the present study proposes a comprehensive framework (see Figure 1) to investigate the influence of MTE dimensions on revisit intention, specifically within the diverse tourism environment of West Sumatra. By situating the MTE construct in this underexplored locale, this study aims to contribute new empirical evidence and sharpen theoretical understanding of the antecedents of tourist loyalty.

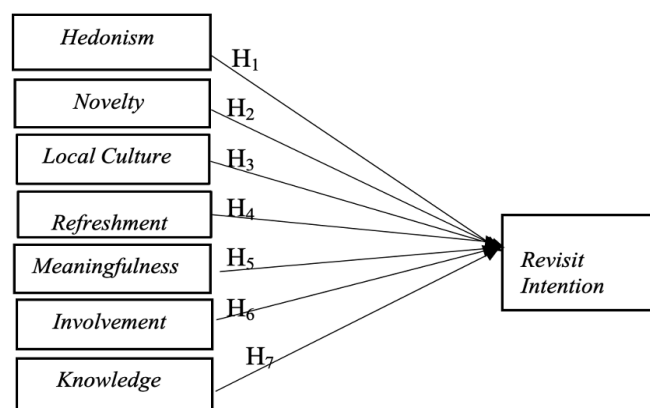


Figure 1. Research Conceptualization

Among the various dimensions of the *Memorable Tourism Experience* (MTE), hedonism is often considered a foundational emotional driver of tourist behavior. Hedonism refers to the pleasurable feelings—such as enjoyment, excitement, and delight—that a tourist derives from their travel experiences (Kim et al., 2010). When tourists associate their visits with emotional highs, the experience becomes psychologically encoded as positive and memorable.

Coudounaris and Sthapit (2017) argue that hedonic experiences are not only desirable but essential in influencing behavioral outcomes such as destination loyalty and revisit intention. This is echoed by Huong et al. (2021), who found that hedonism plays a statistically significant role in enhancing MTE and, consequently, increasing the likelihood of a return visit. Furthermore, Chandralal and Valenzuela (2013) emphasize that emotional affect—rooted in hedonic pleasure—must be deliberately designed into the tourism experience to drive repeat visitation. the following hypothesis is proposed.

H1: Hedonism as a dimension of Memorable Tourism Experience significantly influences revisit intention.

Another critical component of MTE is novelty, defined as the psychological perception of newness and the departure from routine or past experiences (Kim et al., 2010). Tourists are often motivated by the desire to explore unfamiliar environments and accumulate unique experiences, which they perceive as rewarding and stimulating. Novelty-seeking behavior often manifests as curiosity, thrill, and a sense of adventure, all of which enhance the emotional salience of the tourism experience. According to Huong et al. (2021), novelty is not only a dominant motivator but also the highest-ranked dimension influencing revisit intention. When a destination offers distinct and refreshing experiences, tourists are more likely to revisit in pursuit of deeper or varied forms of novelty. This notion aligns with the broader psychological literature suggesting that novelty enhances memory retention, emotional satisfaction, and long-term behavioral commitment, as in the hypothesis.

H2: Novelty as a dimension of Memorable Tourism Experience significantly influences revisit intention.

Local culture is a powerful experiential element that shapes how tourists construct meaning from their visits. Interacting with local customs, traditions, language, and ways of life fosters a sense of authenticity and deepens cultural understanding (Kim et al., 2012). According to Kim (2014), cultural immersion is not just a peripheral experience—it is often a central motivation for travel and a critical marker of a memorable experience. Coudounaris and Sthapit (2017) further contend that tourists who feel connected to local culture are more likely to develop a psychological bond with the destination, leading to revisit intention. The influence of local culture also extends to symbolic consumption, where the experience of a place becomes tied to identity formation and social meaning. Thus, incorporating rich cultural narratives into tourism experiences can significantly strengthen destination loyalty.

H3: Local culture as a dimension of Memorable Tourism Experience significantly influences revisit intention.

The dimension of refreshment refers to the psychological restoration tourists experience when escaping daily routines, stress, or mental fatigue (Kim et al., 2010; Kim, 2014). Refreshment is one of the original motivations for leisure and recreation travel, often sought by individuals needing to recharge emotionally and cognitively. Zhang et al. (2017) provide empirical evidence that destinations which offer relaxation, solitude, and emotional recovery significantly increase the probability of return visits. Coudounaris and Sthapit (2017) also assert that the refreshment value of tourism—such as tranquility, natural beauty, or therapeutic experiences—has a strong influence on revisit intention. Particularly in post-pandemic tourism recovery, where psychological well-being is prioritized, destinations that effectively deliver emotional refreshment are more likely to sustain repeat visitors.

H4: Refreshment as a dimension of Memorable Tourism Experience significantly influences revisit intention.

The meaningfulness of a tourism experience contributes to visitors' sense of purpose, identity exploration, and personal growth (Kim, 2013). When tourism transcends entertainment and fosters self-reflection or learning, it becomes deeply encoded in the traveler's memory. According to Tsiotsou and Goldsmith (2012), meaningfulness not only enhances the memorability of the experience but also contributes to long-term satisfaction and loyalty. Tung and Ritchie (2011) emphasize that many travelers seek out experiences that align with their personal values, beliefs, and aspirations—making meaningful travel a form of existential engagement. However,

findings from Huong et al. (2021) complicate this assumption by suggesting that meaningfulness does not always translate directly into revisit intention, especially when tourists prioritize novelty or escapism over introspection. This indicates that the relationship may be context-dependent or moderated by destination type. Nevertheless, the theoretical basis for a positive association remains strong.

H5: Meaningfulness as a dimension of Memorable Tourism Experience significantly influences revisit intention.

Involvement captures the depth of a tourist's engagement with destination activities and the extent to which they are emotionally or cognitively absorbed in the experience (Kim et al., 2010). The more involved tourists are in the activities, rituals, or interactions at the destination, the more vividly they recall those experiences, leading to stronger behavioral intentions. Rather et al. (2021) highlight that involvement is a key driver of travel decision-making, especially for tourists seeking participatory or immersive experiences. Huong et al. (2021) also confirm that involvement significantly shapes revisit intention by increasing personal investment and memory strength. From a service design perspective, encouraging active participation through hands-on activities, storytelling, or guided exploration can reinforce the visitor's emotional bond with the destination.

H6: Involvement as a dimension of Memorable Tourism Experience significantly influences revisit intention.

Finally, knowledge refers to the cognitive gains tourists accumulate during their visit, including historical, cultural, or environmental learning (Kim et al., 2012). As Coudounaris and Sthapit (2017) suggest, meaningful learning opportunities—such as guided tours, interaction with locals, or educational exhibits—can transform a casual visit into a meaningful experience. Knowledge enhances the memorability of tourism by engaging higher-order cognitive processing and contributes to the perceived value of the trip. Tung and Ritchie (2011) argue that when tourists gain culturally or personally significant knowledge, they are more likely to attribute value to the experience and consider returning to deepen their understanding. Thus, the educational dimension of tourism is not ancillary but instrumental in fostering revisit behavior.

H7: Knowledge as a dimension of Memorable Tourism Experience significantly influences revisit intention.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

This study adopts an explanatory quantitative research design, aimed at uncovering and explaining the relationships between the dimensions of Memorable Tourism Experience (MTE) and revisit intention among domestic tourists. The time horizon employed is cross-sectional, with data collected at a single point in time. An online, self-administered questionnaire served as the primary instrument for gathering responses, allowing for efficient outreach and timely data acquisition. Explanatory studies are particularly suited for identifying causality and predicting behavioral patterns, which aligns with the objective of this research.

Sampling Strategy and Data Collection

The target population comprised domestic tourists who had visited at least one tourist destination in West Sumatra Province. The purposive sampling technique was employed (Sekaran, 2011), ensuring that only participants meeting specific inclusion criteria were selected. These criteria were: (1) having visited a West Sumatran tourist destination at least once, (2) being aged 18 years or older, and (3) currently domiciled outside the province of West Sumatra. A total of 143 valid responses were collected through a closed-ended questionnaire distributed via social media platforms (WhatsApp, Instagram, and Facebook) using a Google Form link. The sample size is considered adequate for structural equation modeling (SEM), as it meets the minimum threshold recommended by Hair et al. (2006), particularly when using PLS-based analysis.

Measurement and Instrumentation

The research instrument measured the seven subdimensions of MTE—hedonism, novelty, local culture, refreshment, meaningfulness, involvement, and knowledge—alongside revisit intention. All items were adapted from validated scales (Kim et al., 2010; Kim & Ritchie, 2013), and responses were recorded on a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). Reflective indicators were used for latent constructs, consistent with the original conceptualization of MTE. The measurement model was assessed for convergent validity, discriminant validity, and internal consistency reliability following the criteria established by Chin (1998) and Fornell & Larcker (1981) in Ghozali (2006).

Convergent validity was evaluated by examining the loading factors between indicators and their respective constructs. Loadings above 0.70 were considered strong, although values between 0.50–0.60 were accepted for newly developed instruments (Chin, 1998 in Ghozali, 2006). Discriminant validity was established by ensuring that the square root of Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each construct exceeded its correlations with other constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981 in Ghozali, 2006). Additionally, composite reliability and Cronbach's Alpha were used to assess internal consistency, with values above 0.70 deemed satisfactory (Ghozali, 2006).

Data Analysis and Model Estimation

Data analysis was conducted using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) via the SmartPLS software, which provides a robust alternative to covariance-based SEM, particularly when working with smaller sample sizes and non-normal data (Ghozali, 2006). PLS is preferred for its predictive orientation, capacity to model latent variables with both reflective and formative indicators, and its relaxed assumptions regarding data distribution.

The PLS algorithm estimates model parameters in three stages: (1) computation of weights to generate latent variable scores, (2) estimation of the inner model (structural paths between constructs) and outer model (relationships between constructs and indicators), and (3) calculation of means and location parameters (Ghozali, 2006). The evaluation of the measurement model focused on assessing reliability and validity, while the structural model (inner model) was assessed using the R-square (R^2) value, Stone-Geisser's Q-square (Q^2) for predictive relevance, and t-statistics for path significance.

To test the proposed hypotheses, bootstrapping procedures were conducted to obtain t-values and path coefficients. The significance of path estimates was determined using standard thresholds: for a two-tailed test, a t-value > 1.96 indicates significance at the 5% level, while a t-value > 2.57 indicates significance at the 1% level (Hair et al., 2006; Hartono & Abdillah, 2009). The R-square value was also used as an indicator of model fit, reflecting the proportion of variance in the dependent variable explained by the independent variables (Ghozali, 2008).

RESULTS

The demographic composition of respondents reveals a youthful, female-dominated segment that is both digitally literate and socially embedded. With 59.44% of the sample identifying as female and nearly half (44.76%) aged 17–25, the findings echo broader shifts in Indonesian domestic tourism, wherein Gen Z travelers increasingly shape travel discourse through digital platforms. The overwhelming majority were unmarried, held undergraduate degrees, and reported monthly incomes under IDR 1,000,000—a profile indicative not of economic limitation, but of experience prioritization over luxury. That 43.36% of these visitors had returned to West Sumatra, Indonesia, more than six times suggests that their engagement is not incidental but sustained, hinting at a form of destination attachment rooted in affective, rather than purely transactional, tourism behavior. Here, we find a generation not merely consuming places but returning to them—guided not by novelty alone, but by emotional resonance, familial influence, and digital storytelling. All employed scales for research purposes are presented in Appendix 1.

To rigorously assess the hypothesized relationships within the proposed model, this study employs Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM)—a method well-suited for predictive modeling and theory development, particularly when latent constructs are modeled

with complex measurement structures. In line with established SEM-PLS procedures (Hair et al., 2014), the analysis unfolds in two sequential phases: the measurement model (outer model) assessment, which evaluates the reliability and validity of the constructs, followed by the structural model (inner model) assessment, which tests the causal paths between latent variables.

Convergent validity—the degree to which indicators reflect their underlying construct—is evaluated via outer loading values, where a threshold of > 0.70 is typically required to confirm indicator adequacy. Indicators failing to meet this threshold are subject to iterative removal, ensuring only robust reflective measures are retained. Additionally, Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values are examined to confirm the extent to which each construct captures the variance of its indicators, with values exceeding 0.50 deemed acceptable (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Discriminant validity is assessed using the cross-loading matrix and Fornell-Larcker criterion, ensuring that each construct demonstrates empirical distinctiveness from others in the model. Table 1 summarizes the outer model measurement for this study's validity, and reliability.

Table 3. Outer Mode

Constructs	Cronbach's alpha	rho_a	rho_c	AVE
HEDONISM	0.798	0.798	0.882	0.714
INVL	0.857	0.863	0.933	0.874
KNWLD	0.803	0.81	0.91	0.835
LC CLTR	0.798	0.816	0.88	0.710
MNPLL	0.887	0.888	0.93	0.817
NVL	0.864	0.865	0.908	0.711
RFRESHMENT	0.847	0.863	0.896	0.683
Revisit Interest	0.927	0.929	0.94	0.664

Source: Data processing from SmartPLS 4.0 (2025)

The reliability and convergent validity diagnostics confirm that the measurement model meets the foundational psychometric criteria required for reflective constructs in SEM-PLS. Each latent construct demonstrates satisfactory internal consistency, and the AVE scores confirm that the observed indicators capture substantial shared variance. These findings lend credibility to the structural relationships modeled in the next phase of analysis. With confidence in the robustness of the outer model, the study proceeds to evaluate the inner model, wherein the hypothesized causal paths between the dimensions of Memorable Tourism Experience and revisit intention are tested. This evaluation includes an assessment of R^2 values, predictive relevance (Q^2), and path coefficient significance, which together provide insight into the explanatory power and predictive strength of the proposed theoretical framework. The graphical presentation is in Figure 2.

To assess the structural model and test the proposed hypotheses, this study utilizes three key statistical indicators: original sample values, t-statistics, and p-values. The original sample estimate indicates the direction of the relationship between constructs—where a positive coefficient denotes a direct relationship and a negative coefficient implies an inverse association. The t-statistic serves as the primary indicator of path significance. In line with the one-tailed hypothesis test at the 5% significance level, a path is considered statistically significant if its t-value exceeds 1.65 (Hair et al., 2006). To generate these estimates, the study employs the bootstrapping resampling procedure, which allows for robust estimation of standard errors and significance testing without requiring assumptions of normality. The resulting p-values further confirm whether the observed path relationships are statistically meaningful, thereby enabling a rigorous evaluation of the hypothesized relationships within the model.

Figure 2 presents the results of the bootstrapped structural model, offering a concise visualization of the hypothesized relationships between the dimensions of Memorable Tourism Experience (MTE) and revisit intention. As shown, the majority of path coefficients are positive and statistically significant at the 5% level ($t > 1.65$; $p < 0.05$), indicating robust empirical support for the theoretical model. Notably, hedonism, local culture, and meaningfulness emerge as the strongest predictors of revisit intention, while novelty, refreshment, involvement, and knowledge exhibit weaker or non-significant effects—suggesting a hierarchy of experiential salience in

shaping post-visit behavior. The directional strength and statistical precision of each path underscore the differentiated impact of emotional, cultural, and cognitive dimensions within the MTE construct. This pattern affirms that not all memorable elements are equally consequential in driving tourist loyalty.

DISCUSSION

This study examined the influence of seven dimensions of *Memorable Tourism Experience* (MTE) on revisit intention among domestic tourists in West Sumatra. The findings reveal that three hypotheses were supported—H1 (hedonism), H3 (local culture), and H5 (meaningfulness)—while H2 (novelty), H4 (refreshment), H6 (involvement), and H7 (knowledge) were not supported. These results offer both theoretical clarification and practical direction in the context of experience-driven destination marketing.

The acceptance of H1 reinforces longstanding arguments within experiential consumption theory that hedonic value—pleasure, excitement, emotional gratification—is a principal driver of revisit behavior. When travel experiences generate positive emotional states, they become psychologically encoded and easier to recall, creating a compelling pull for return. This aligns with the affective component of Pine and Gilmore's experience economy model, and echoes tourism scholarship that prioritizes emotion over cognition in predicting loyalty. For practitioners, this underscores the need to embed joy and delight deliberately throughout the visitor journey—through aesthetics, activities, and storytelling that produce memorable sensory impressions.

H3, concerning local culture, also received empirical support. This finding affirms that authenticity, cultural immersion, and personal contact with local life significantly shape the memorability of a destination. Echoing Tung and Ritchie (2011) and Kim (2014), this result suggests that tourists do not merely seek visual engagement with culture, but emotional and participatory resonance. Accordingly, West Sumatra's destination managers must move beyond surface-level cultural displays and curate deeper, more humanized experiences—via local hosts, traditional ceremonies, or narrative-based interpretation that invites active cultural co-creation.

The acceptance of H5, related to meaningfulness, further expands the understanding of what makes an experience revisit-able. In line with Tsiotsou and Goldsmith (2012), the data suggest that when a trip is perceived as personally significant—whether through self-reflection, identity discovery, or purposeful engagement—it creates emotional depth that persists beyond the immediate visit. For tourism operators, this insight prompts a shift toward more transformational programming, where travel is positioned not only as leisure but also as a journey of meaning, personal growth, or contribution.

Conversely, H2, H4, H6, and H7 were rejected, indicating that novelty, refreshment, involvement, and knowledge do not significantly predict revisit intention in this context. These findings are theoretically provocative, especially given the prominence of novelty and involvement in prior MTE literature (e.g., Kim et al., 2010; Huong et al., 2021). The absence of novelty's influence may indicate that repeat visitors no longer prioritize uniqueness, or that familiarity has become a source of comfort rather than boredom. Similarly, refreshment may function as a baseline motivation—important for initial visits but insufficient to trigger loyalty in isolation.

The rejection of involvement and knowledge challenges cognition-focused assumptions within MTE theory. These results suggest that active participation and informational gains, while valuable, are not inherently sufficient to create lasting behavioral impact unless paired with affective engagement. This lends further support to recent theoretical shifts toward emotionally anchored experiences, where feelings, rather than facts, drive memory and return behavior. Tourism managers would do well to recognize that while workshops, exhibits, and educational components may enrich a trip, they must be emotionally integrated to convert learning into loyalty.

The results of this study provide several actionable insights for destination marketers and tourism planners in West Sumatra and comparable regions. First, emotional design must become a central strategy—hedonic pleasure, cultural authenticity, and personal significance are the three experiential levers most likely to cultivate revisit intention. Investments should be made not only in physical infrastructure but in sensory, emotional, and narrative experiences that leave an imprint on the tourist's memory.

Second, local culture should be transformed from passive content to active engagement. Collaborations with community members, artisans, and local storytellers can transform everyday practices into curated experiences that deepen tourist immersion and connection. Third, the findings caution against over-relying on novelty, involvement, or learning as standalone value propositions. These elements must be emotionally infused and experientially designed to contribute to memorability and loyalty.

CONCLUSION AND FURTHER STUDY

This study provides empirical clarity on which dimensions of the Memorable Tourism Experience (MTE) construct meaningfully drive revisit intention within the context of domestic tourism to West Sumatra. The findings affirm that hedonism, local culture, and meaningfulness significantly enhance tourists' likelihood to return, underscoring the importance of emotionally pleasurable, culturally immersive, and personally meaningful experiences. These dimensions resonate most with tourists' memories and influence their behavioral loyalty. Conversely, the rejection of novelty, refreshment, involvement, and knowledge suggests that cognitive stimulation and even experiential diversity are insufficient, in isolation, to trigger repeat visits. Tourists may enjoy new or educational activities, but unless these are affectively encoded or personally meaningful, they do not foster loyalty. In essence, it is not novelty for novelty's sake that drives return, but emotional salience and identity alignment that matter most in shaping destination commitment.

Despite offering strong insights, this study is not without limitations. The scope is geographically bound to a single province and limited to domestic tourists, which may restrict generalizability across international or culturally distinct visitor segments. Moreover, the cross-sectional design cannot fully capture how experiences evolve or solidify into loyalty over time. Future research would benefit from longitudinal approaches that trace memory retention and behavioral patterns across repeat visits, or from comparative multi-region studies to uncover contextual moderators. Practically, destination managers should prioritize emotional experience design—not merely informational or activity-based programming. Interventions that amplify hedonic enjoyment, elevate cultural authenticity, and foster moments of personal meaning are more likely to produce the kind of psychological imprints that drive return. Additionally, efforts should be made to reimagine and emotionally reframe underperforming dimensions—such as novelty or knowledge—so they can contribute more meaningfully to the tourism experience. A cross-stakeholder collaboration involving local communities, hospitality providers, and policymakers is essential to curate integrated, high-impact tourism offerings that resonate, remain, and result in return.

ETHICAL DISCLOSURE

This study ensures the protection of participants' rights, privacy, and confidentiality. All participants involved in the research voluntarily provided consent about the objectives of the study.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest in this paper construction, and presentation.

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Appendix 1. Frequency Distribution of Variables Memorable Tourism Experience

Statement	Alternative answer					Avg.
	1	2	3	4	5	
<i>Hedonism</i>						
I enjoy new experiences when visiting tourist destinations in West Sumatera	1	3	7	33	99	4.58
I got involved in the tourism activities	1	3	28	60	51	4.1
I really enjoy the tourist experience that West Sumatera has to offer	0	3	7	47	86	4.51
It's very fun when I travel to destinations in West Sumatera	2	2	3	42	94	4.57
<i>Novelty</i>						
I feel that visiting tourist destinations in West Sumatera is a memorable experience	0	2	7	50	84	4.51
I think that the destinations in West Sumatera are unique tourist destinations	1	3	11	50	78	4.41
I think that tourist destinations in West Sumatera are very different from my previous travel experiences	2	2	26	55	58	4.15
I felt something new when I was in a tourist destination in West Sumatera	1	3	18	66	55	4.2
<i>Local Culture</i>						
I have a good impression of the local people in West Sumatera	1	5	14	60	63	4.25
I had the opportunity to get to know the local culture closely in West Sumatera	1	0	20	59	63	4.28
I think the people of West Sumatera are friendly	1	5	20	50	67	4.24
<i>Refreshment</i>						
I feel free from my daily routine when traveling in West Sumatera	1	4	14	56	68	4.3
I really enjoy the sense of freedom when traveling in West Sumatera	1	4	16	58	64	4.26

The experience of traveling in tourist destinations in West Sumatera is very refreshing	0	2	5	53	83	4.52
Visiting tourist destinations in West Sumatera can refresh my mind	0	2	7	63	71	4.42
<i>Meaningfulness</i>						
I did something meaningful while visiting tourist destinations in West Sumatera	0	4	17	61	61	4.25
I did something important during my travel experience in West Sumatera	0	4	22	62	55	4.17
I learned something about myself from the travel experience in West Sumatera	1	2	24	64	52	4.15
<i>Involvement</i>						
I visit a destination I really want to visit	0	2	12	58	71	4.38
I enjoy tourism activities while in West Sumatera according to what I want	0	3	11	59	70	4.37
I participate in tourism activities that I am interested in	2	2	24	65	50	4.11
<i>Knowledge</i>						
I gained knowledge about tourist destinations in West Sumatera	0	3	12	70	58	4.28
<i>Revisit Intention</i>						
I learned a new culture in West Sumatera	1	3	20	60	59	4.21
I will revisit tourist destinations in West Sumatera	1	1	12	41	88	4.5
Revisiting this destination is beneficial for me	1	0	15	55	72	4.38
I will recommend this tourist destination positively to others	2	2	3	43	93	4.56
I want to stay longer in this tourist destination	1	1	15	47	79	4.41
I am willing to return to this tourist destination in the future	1	1	9	48	84	4.49
I am willing to promote this tourist destination to family and friends	1	2	9	55	76	4.42
I have a good impression of tourist destinations in West Sumatra	1	2	6	56	78	4.45
I feel loyal to make West Sumatra the choice of tourist destinations that I will visit again	0	1	17	57	68	4.34

Source: Primary data processing, 2025