

THE INFLUENCE OF TOURIST EXPERIENCE ON REVISIT INTENTION: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF SATISFACTION AMONG GENERATION Z IN LABUAN BAJO

By

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Abstract: *This study examines the significant influence of tourist experiences on revisit intentions and satisfaction, with a focus on Labuan Bajo, Indonesia, and Generation Z tourists. Based on data from 386 respondents, the study employs Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) using Partial Least Squares (PLS) to analyze the direct and indirect effects. The findings reveal that a positive tourist experience directly influences both revisit intentions and satisfaction, with satisfaction mediating the relationship between experience and revisit intentions. The results align with previous research, emphasizing that when expectations are met or exceeded, tourists are more likely to return and recommend the destination. For Labuan Bajo, catering to Generation Z's preferences for authentic, shareable experiences can enhance satisfaction and ensure the destination's long-term sustainability. The SEM-PLS analysis provides valuable insights for destination managers seeking to improve tourist experiences and increase repeat visits*

PENDAHULUAN

Labuan Bajo, as one of Indonesia's premier tourist destinations, has experienced significant growth in the number of visitors, both domestic and international. Located at the western tip of Flores Island, Labuan Bajo is renowned for its breathtaking natural beauty, including Komodo National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The area's diverse ecosystems and rich local culture make Labuan Bajo a magnet for tourists seeking unique and authentic experiences. However, one of the key challenges in managing this destination is ensuring that the experiences offered meet tourists' expectations and encourage them to return. Labuan Bajo faces significant challenges related to infrastructure, facilities, and service quality excellence (Dwipayanti et al., 2022). However, as Labuan Bajo continues to be developed as one of Indonesia's five super-priority destinations, designated by the government, these challenges have progressively improved over time. Based on the annual performance reports for 2022 and 2023, as discussed by the Labuan Bajo Flores Authority (BPOLBF), significant progress has been made in addressing key challenges related to infrastructure, facilities, and service quality. The authority's strategic initiatives have focused on mitigating these issues through sustainable development and collaborative efforts, contributing to the transformation of Labuan Bajo into a premier tourism destination aligned with the government's designation as one of the five super-priority destinations. This

progress in addressing infrastructure, facilities, and service quality challenges lays a strong foundation for enhancing positive tourist experiences, which are a crucial factor in driving tourist satisfaction and revisit intention (Atmari & Putri, 2021; Sitepu et al., 2020; Yuan, 2024).

Positive tourist experiences are a crucial factor influencing tourist satisfaction. Previous studies indicate that a good tourist experience can enhance satisfaction, which in turn contributes to revisit intention (Ratih & Noer, 2024; Wiskulski, 2024). In the tourism context, experiences encompass interactions with the environment, services provided by service providers, and the quality of available attractions. Other studies have also emphasized the importance of experience in influencing tourists' revisit intention (Libre et al., 2022; Torabi et al., 2022). Therefore, understanding how the tourist experience in Labuan Bajo can enhance visitor satisfaction is essential, particularly in the context of Generation Z, who have characteristics and preferences distinct from previous generations (Deloitte, 2023; Femenia-serra & Gretzel, 2020).

Generation Z, born between 1997 and 2010, is a demographic group increasingly dominating the tourism sector. They are known as savvy consumers with extensive access to information through digital technology. This implies that they have higher expectations for more authentic, interactive, and personal travel experiences (Deloitte, 2023). Other research highlights that well-managed experiences can lead to higher satisfaction levels. This study thus focuses on how the tourist experiences of Generation Z in Labuan Bajo influence their satisfaction and, consequently, their intention to revisit.

Mediation theory suggests that satisfying experiences lead to higher revisit intention among tourists (Yuan, 2024).

In the context of Generation Z, previous studies reveal that their unique characteristics and behaviors significantly influence how they interact with tourist destinations (Rahimi & Stylos, 2022). Generation Z, comprising individuals born between 1997 and 2012, is highly connected to technology and social media. They tend to seek authentic experiences and real social interactions, but they are also influenced by what they see online (Ramgade & Kumar, 2021). Consequently, the travel experiences of Generation Z can differ significantly from previous generations, as they are more likely to evaluate their satisfaction based on digital experiences before, during, and after their visits (Nguyen et al., 2022).

Although many studies have explored tourist experiences and satisfaction in general, there is a lack of research specifically focusing on Generation Z as the primary subject. This study aims to fill that gap by exploring the travel experiences of Generation Z in Labuan Bajo and how these experiences influence their satisfaction and revisit intention. By understanding this generation's characteristics and expectations, the study aims to provide deeper insights into the dynamics of tourist experiences relevant to Generation Z.

Considering the latest developments in literature and methodology, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of the relationships between tourist experiences, satisfaction, and revisit intention, while offering recommendations for destination managers to design more effective strategies for attracting and retaining Generation Z tourists.

This research is expected to make a meaningful contribution to the development of tourism studies while providing relevant recommendations for destination managers and stakeholders in Labuan Bajo. By gaining a deeper understanding of the dynamics between

tourist experiences, satisfaction, and revisit intention, more effective management strategies can be formulated to enhance Labuan Bajo's appeal as a sustainable and high-quality tourist destination.

RESEARCH METHOD

The problem-solving approach in this study adopts a quantitative explanatory method (Sugeng, 2020) aimed at explaining the relationship between tourist experience, tourist satisfaction, and revisit intention in Labuan Bajo. In this context, This study employs a sample size of 384 respondents, determined using the Lemeshow formula, which is specifically designed for cases where the population size is unknown. Given the focus on Generation Z Instagram users who have visited Labuan Bajo, the sampling method needs to ensure the inclusion of individuals meeting these criteria.

The most appropriate sampling method for this study is purposive sampling, a non-probability sampling technique that involves selecting respondents based on specific characteristics or criteria relevant to the research objectives. In this case, the criteria include:

1. Active Instagram users who belong to Generation Z (born between 1997 and 2012).
2. Individuals who have visited Labuan Bajo within the last two years.
3. Users who can provide valuable insights into their tourist experience, satisfaction, and revisit intentions.

The study's focus on Instagram users provides valuable insights into how this particular segment of Generation Z interacts with and responds to tourism branding efforts. However, it is acknowledged that Generation Z individuals who use other platforms, such as TikTok or YouTube, or those not active on social media, may exhibit different behaviors or preferences. Purposive sampling was utilized to select respondents who align closely with the research objectives, ensuring relevance to the study's focus. However, to mitigate the potential for bias, researchers must carefully define inclusion criteria and validate the sample's characteristics against the broader Generation Z population (Sugiyono, 2017). This method is particularly effective for online populations like Instagram users, where access to specific subgroups can be achieved through targeted recruitment strategies, such as direct messages, social media groups, or influencer collaborations. Online survey methods can reduce the risk of non-respondent bias by employing strategies such as personalized invitations, follow-up reminders, and incentives to encourage participation. Additionally, ensuring that the survey is mobile-friendly and quick to complete increases accessibility and response rates. The data collection was conducted over a period of three months, specifically in October, November, and December 2024.

Once data collection is completed, the analysis will be conducted using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with a Partial Least Squares (PLS) approach. SEM-PLS was selected for its flexibility in analyzing complex models with multiple variables and its ability to accommodate non-normal data distributions other than any specific method analysis (Hair et al., 2016; Haryono, 2016). Despite having a sufficient sample size for CB-SEM, the choice of SEM-PLS is more rational given the study's objectives and data characteristics. SEM-PLS is particularly advantageous for exploring complex models with formative constructs, which are central to this study, as it does not rely on the strict assumptions required by CB-SEM. Furthermore, SEM-PLS focuses on maximizing predictive accuracy and provides flexibility in

handling non-normal data distributions, which aligns with the exploratory nature of this research. While CB-SEM is better suited for confirmatory analysis, the emphasis of this study on uncovering predictive relationships and testing theoretical extensions makes SEM-PLS the more appropriate method (Hair et al., 2016). This approach ensures robust insights into the relationships within the model, enhancing the practical relevance of the findings.

SEM-PLS will enable the identification of direct, indirect, and mediated effects between the variables, providing deeper insights into the relationships among tourist experience, tourist satisfaction, and revisit intention with using SMARTPLS 4.0 as a tool for data analyze in this research.

This comprehensive analytical approach ensures that the findings are both accurate and actionable, offering valuable insights for stakeholders in tourism destination management.

Therefore, this study aims to identify and analyze the relationships between these three variables and the role of tourist satisfaction as a mediator in the context of an increasingly competitive tourism destination. The research hypotheses are:

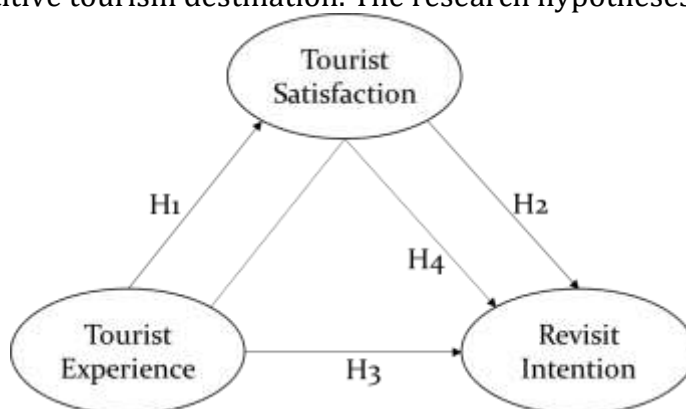


Figure 1. Hypotheses Conceptual Framework

- **H1:** Tourist experience has positively direct influences tourist satisfaction.
- **H2:** Tourist satisfaction has positively direct influences revisit intention.
- **H3:** Tourist experience has positively direct influences revisit intention.
- **H4:** Tourist satisfaction mediates the indirect relationship between tourist experience and revisit intention.

Table 1. Variable, Dimension and Measurement Scale

Variable	Dimension	Measurement Scale
Tourist Experience	TE1= Education TE2= Aesthetics TE3= Entertainment TE4= Escapism	Likert Scale 1-5 1= Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3= Neutral 4= Agree 5= Strongly Agree
Tourist Satisfaction	TS1= Nature TS2= Culture TS3= Overall Services	
Revisit Intention	RI1= Willingly to Revisit the Destination RI2= Willingly to	

Recommend to others

The table provides a detailed framework for understanding the variables, dimensions, and measurement scales used in this study, which focuses on Tourist Experience, Tourist Satisfaction, and Revisit Intention. The Tourist Experience variable is divided into four dimensions: Education, which captures the learning opportunities provided by the destination; Aesthetics, which refers to the visual appeal and beauty of the environment; Entertainment, which measures the enjoyment derived from activities at the destination; and Escapism, which assesses the ability of the destination to provide a sense of escape from daily life (Chang et al., 2014; Lan-Lan Chang & Kenneth F. Backman, 2016; Rather, 2018).

The Tourist Satisfaction variable includes three dimensions: Nature, which evaluates satisfaction with the natural environment; Culture, which measures the appeal of local cultural aspects; and Overall Services, which reflects satisfaction with the services provided at the destination (Lestari et al., 2019; Stumpf et al., 2020). Lastly, the Revisit Intention variable is measured through two dimensions: Willingness to Revisit the Destination, which assesses the likelihood of a return visit, and Willingness to Recommend to Others, which measures the propensity to recommend the destination to others (Gaffar et al., 2022; Imad & Chan, 2021).

All dimensions are measured using a 5-point Likert scale, where 1 indicates "Strongly Disagree" and 5 indicates "Strongly Agree," providing a standardized method to capture responses. The results of this study are not universally generalizable to all tourist destinations, especially those with significantly different characteristics from Labuan Bajo. However, for destinations that share similarities, such as a focus on eco-tourism, unique natural attractions, or targeting Generation Z travelers, the findings may provide valuable insights. It is particularly relevant for destinations aiming to enhance tourist experiences and satisfaction to encourage future visits. Nonetheless, applying these insights requires careful adaptation to the specific context of each destination

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

In this study, data was collected from 384 respondents who have visited Labuan Bajo. The majority of respondents were female, with **223** women (58%) and **161** men (42%). Regarding occupation, the highest percentage of respondents were employed in the private sector, with **192** respondents (50%) working in private companies. This was followed by **107** students (28%) who participated in the survey. As for age distribution all respondent were from Generation Z, aged between 17 and 27 years.

Next, this study analyzes the data using Smart PLS 4.0, starting with the outer model, which includes evaluating the outer loading, discriminant validity, and construct reliability. Following this, hypothesis testing is conducted to examine both direct and indirect relationships between the variables. The analysis aims to ensure that the measurement model is valid and reliable before proceeding to assess the hypothesized relationships within the structural model.

3.1. Outer Model

Table 2 Outer Loading Matrix

	Revisit Intention	Tourist Experience	Tourist satisfaction
RI ₁	0.933		
RI ₂	0.884		
TE ₁		0.967	
TE ₂		0.915	
TE ₃		0.961	
TE ₄		0.935	
TS ₁			0.903
TS ₂			0.913
TS ₃			0.861

The Table presented is part of the **Outer Loadings Matrix** from a Structural Equation Modeling-Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) analysis. It illustrates the relationships between the observed indicators (manifest variables) and their corresponding latent variables (constructs). For the construct **Revisit Intention**, the indicators RI1 and RI2 have high loading values of 0.933 and 0.884, respectively, demonstrating their strong contribution to measuring this variable. Similarly, for the **Tourist Experience** construct, the indicators TE1 (0.967), TE2 (0.915), TE3 (0.961), and TE4 (0.935) exhibit exceptionally high loadings, indicating their reliability and validity in representing the tourist experience. Lastly, the construct **Tourist Satisfaction** shows robust indicator loadings, with TS1 (0.903), TS2 (0.913), and TS3 (0.861) all exceeding the threshold of 0.7, affirming the reliability of these indicators. Overall, these high loading values suggest that the selected indicators are well-suited to measure their respective constructs, ensuring strong convergent validity in the model.

Table 3. Reliability Construct

	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability (rho_a)	Composite Reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Revisit Intention	0.792	0.829	0.904	0.825
Tourist Experience	0.960	0.961	0.971	0.892
Tourist Satisfaction	0.872	0.872	0.921	0.792

Table 3 demonstrates the reliability assessment for the constructs Revisit Intention, Tourist Experience, and Tourist Satisfaction, using metrics such as Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability (rho_a and rho_c), and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). The **Cronbach's Alpha** values for all constructs—Revisit Intention (0.792), Tourist Experience (0.960), and Tourist Satisfaction (0.872)—are above the acceptable threshold of 0.7, indicating strong internal consistency among the indicators. Similarly, the **Composite Reliability (rho_a and rho_c)** values are also high, with rho_c values of 0.904 for Revisit Intention, 0.971 for Tourist Experience, and 0.921 for Tourist Satisfaction, confirming the constructs' reliability. Lastly, the **Average Variance Extracted (AVE)** values are all above 0.5, with Revisit Intention at 0.825, Tourist Experience at 0.892, and Tourist Satisfaction at

0.792, reflecting strong convergent validity. These results confirm that the constructs are both reliable and valid for further analysis.

Table 4. Discriminant validity

	Revisit Intention	Tourist Experience	Tourist Satisfaction
Revisit Intention			
Tourist Experience	0.790		
Tourist Satisfaction	0.805	0.767	

Table 4 illustrates the discriminant validity for the constructs of Revisit Intention, Tourist Experience, and Tourist Satisfaction. Discriminant validity is confirmed when the correlation between each pair of constructs is lower than the square root of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each construct. In this case, the square root of the AVE for Revisit Intention is approximately 0.908, for Tourist Experience is approximately 0.945, and for Tourist Satisfaction is approximately 0.891. The correlations between the constructs are as follows: Revisit Intention and Tourist Experience (0.790), Revisit Intention and Tourist Satisfaction (0.805), and Tourist Experience and Tourist Satisfaction (0.767). Since all correlation values are lower than the respective square roots of AVE, the discriminant validity of the constructs is confirmed, indicating that they are distinct and do not excessively overlap with each other.

Path Coefficients and Indirect Effect

Table 5. Hypotheses Direct Effect

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
Tourist Experience -> Revisit Intention	0.915	0.913	0.020	44.747	0.000
Tourist Experience -. Tourist Satisfaction	0.885	0.884	0.046	19.188	0.000
Tourist Experience -> Revisit Intention	0.274	0.303	0.102	2.689	0.007

Table 5 presents the results of the direct effect hypotheses. The table includes the Original Sample (O), Sample Mean (M), Standard Deviation (STDEV), T Statistics ($|O/STDEV|$), and P Values for each hypothesis.

- Tourist Experience -> Revisit Intention:** The original sample estimate (O) is 0.915, with a sample mean (M) of 0.913 and a standard deviation (STDEV) of 0.020. The T statistics ($|O/STDEV|$) is 44.747, which is much higher than the threshold of 1.96, indicating a significant effect. The P value is 0.000, which is below the 0.05 threshold, confirming that the relationship between Tourist Experience and Revisit Intention is statistically significant.
- Tourist Experience -> Tourist Satisfaction:** The original sample estimate (O) is 0.885, with a sample mean (M) of 0.884 and a standard deviation (STDEV) of 0.046.

The T statistics ($|O/STDEV|$) is 19.188, which is also well above the 1.96 threshold, indicating a significant effect. The P value is 0.000, confirming that the relationship between Tourist Experience and Tourist Satisfaction is statistically significant.

3. **Tourist Experience -> Revisit Intention** : The original sample estimate (O) is 0.274, with a sample mean (M) of 0.303 and a standard deviation (STDEV) of 0.102. The T statistics ($|O/STDEV|$) is 2.689, which exceeds the 1.96 threshold, indicating a significant effect. The P value is 0.007, which is below the 0.05 threshold, confirming that the relationship between Tourist Experience and Revisit Intention is significant.

In summary, all three hypotheses show statistically significant direct effects, as indicated by the high T statistics and low P values

Table 6. Hypotheses Indirect Effect

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T statistics ($ O/STDEV $)	P Values
Tourist Experience -> Tourist Satisfaction -> Revisit Intention	0.242	0.270	0.099	2.438	0.015

Table 6 presents the results of the indirect effect hypothesis. The table includes the Original Sample (O), Sample Mean (M), Standard Deviation (STDEV), T Statistics ($|O/STDEV|$), and P Values for the hypothesis.

1. **Tourist Experience -> Tourist Satisfaction -> Revisit Intention**: The original sample estimate (O) is 0.242, with a sample mean (M) of 0.270 and a standard deviation (STDEV) of 0.099. The T statistics ($|O/STDEV|$) is 2.438, which exceeds the threshold of 1.96, indicating a significant indirect effect. The P value is 0.015, which is below the 0.05 threshold, confirming that the indirect effect of Tourist Experience on Revisit Intention, mediated by Tourist Satisfaction, is statistically significant.

In conclusion, the hypothesis shows a statistically significant indirect effect, as evidenced by the T statistics exceeding 1.96 and the P value being below 0.05.

Tourist experiences have been shown to significantly influence both the intention to revisit and the satisfaction of tourists, both directly and indirectly. This highlights the importance of providing positive experiences to tourists as a means of increasing the likelihood that they will return to a destination they have previously visited. In this context, the impact of tourist experiences on revisit intentions and satisfaction can be further analyzed through both their direct and indirect effects.

Direct Effects

1. Tourist Experience on Revisit Intention

A pleasant and satisfying tourist experience directly enhances a tourist's intention to revisit the same destination. When tourists are satisfied with their experiences, such as adequate facilities, friendly services, and unique or memorable encounters, they are more likely to plan a return visit in the future. Research conducted by Atmari & Putri (2021) and Kadi et al (2021) demonstrated that a satisfying experience plays a crucial role in increasing the likelihood of a tourist returning to a destination. Tourists who feel that the destination meets or even exceeds their expectations are more

inclined to share positive experiences with others, which not only increases the chances of repeat visits but also improves the destination's image. This finding aligns with the research by Ismadi (2024) which revealed that a positive tourism experience directly correlates with the desire to revisit the destination.

2. Tourist Experience on Tourist Satisfaction

A good tourist experience is closely linked to a high level of tourist satisfaction. Satisfaction occurs when the experience aligns with the expectations set before the visit, including service quality, facilities, and emotional engagement during the trip. Shafaruddin & Madhavan (2024) research also found that enjoyable tourist experiences significantly contribute to tourist satisfaction. In this regard, satisfaction functions as an important factor that not only influences tourists' perceptions of a destination but also plays a key role in building loyalty. The higher the level of satisfaction, the greater the likelihood of tourists revisiting the destination and recommending it to others.

Indirect Effects

1. Tourist Experience through Tourist Satisfaction on Revisit Intention

The results of this study also indicate that tourist satisfaction acts as a mediator that strengthens the relationship between tourist experience and revisit intention. This suggests that although the tourist experience directly influences revisit intentions, tourist satisfaction serves as a linking factor that amplifies the positive impact of the experience on a tourist's intention to return. Research from several studies confirms that higher satisfaction functions as a factor that enhances tourists' intention to revisit (Ratih & Noer, 2024; Sugiyama et al., 2024; Yuan, 2024). When tourists are satisfied with their experiences, they are more likely not only to return to the same destination but also to spend more time and money there, as well as recommend it to others. Therefore, the satisfaction derived from a positive tourist experience not only influences tourists' decisions to return but also strengthens their loyalty to the destination.

CONCLUSION

Overall, the findings of this research conclusion emphasizes the importance of enhancing the quality of tourism experiences through innovation, improved facilities, and unique activities. To address the challenge of limited budgets and resources, practical steps can be implemented. Engaging local communities in co-creating experiences, such as cultural workshops or guided eco-tours, can reduce costs while offering authentic and unique attractions. Collaborating with local businesses, NGOs, and government agencies allows for resource sharing to improve infrastructure or organize events. Additionally, low-cost, high-impact activities such as nature walks, storytelling sessions, or scenic photo spots can provide memorable experiences without significant investment. Finally, securing sponsorships from private companies or applying for tourism development grants can generate additional funding. These strategies enable tourism destinations to improve visitor satisfaction and loyalty while working within resource constraints, ensuring sustainable development.

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