

Destination Image, Memorable Tourism Experience, and Tourist Satisfaction as Determinants of Revisit Intentions in Rammang-Rammang Tourism Village

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Abstract

This study explores how destination image, memorable tourism experience (MTE), and tourist satisfaction influence revisit intentions to Rammang-Rammang Tourism Village, South Sulawesi. A survey of 380 tourists was analyzed using PLS-SEM. Results reveal that destination image and MTE significantly affect revisit intention, while tourist satisfaction serves as both a direct predictor and partial mediator. These findings suggest that strong perceptions and meaningful experiences, when reinforced by satisfaction, enhance tourists' loyalty. The model shows moderate to strong explanatory power, with predictive relevance confirming its robustness. The study contributes to tourism behavior literature by demonstrating the mediating role of satisfaction between image, experience, and loyalty. For practice, it emphasizes the need for destination managers to align promotional images with authentic experiences, improve infrastructure and services, and design participatory community-based programs. Such strategies not only strengthen revisit intentions but also support sustainable tourism development in Rammang-Rammang.

INTRODUCTION

In an era of increasingly competitive and dynamic tourism, understanding visitor behavior particularly revisit intention is essential for destination managers to formulate effective strategies. Revisit intention is widely recognized as an important indicator of tourist loyalty and destination sustainability, as repeat visitors not only contribute more revenue but also reduce promotional costs (Yen et al., 2022). From a managerial perspective, revisit intention serves as a key benchmark in assessing the long-term performance of a tourism destination.

Revisit intention reflects tourists' evaluative judgments of their past experiences, encompassing both positive and negative aspects that influence their future travel decisions (Ahmed, 2023; Huang et al., 2023). Consequently, destination managers must develop marketing strategies and identify the main drivers that encourage tourists to return (Nejat & Lajim, 2022). Previous studies highlight multiple interrelated factors shaping revisit intentions, including destination image, tourist satisfaction, service quality, memorable tourism experience (MTE), e-WOM, and perceived value (Huong et al., 2022; Libre et al., 2022; Nguyen Viet et al., 2020; Sitepu & Rismawati, 2021).

Among these factors, destination image has been found to play a particularly significant role. A positive and strong image shapes tourists' perceptions of service quality and overall experience, which indirectly enhances satisfaction and, in turn, strengthens revisit (Agata & Pramesti, 2025; Pratiwi et al., 2024). Similarly, memorable tourism experience (MTE) is considered

a crucial driver of loyalty, as unique and emotionally engaging experiences create lasting positive memories that influence tourists' willingness to return (Huong et al., 2022; Kim et al., 2012; Zhong et al., 2017). These insights are particularly relevant for Rammang-Rammang Tourism Village, located within the Maros-Pangkep Karst area in South Sulawesi, which has been designated a UNESCO Global Geopark (Kemenparekraf/Baparekraf RI, 2023). Known as one of the most scenic karst landscapes worldwide, Rammang-Rammang offers iconic natural attractions such as limestone cliffs, ancient caves, the Pute River, and the traditional Berua village. Economically, tourism in this village generates over 1.3 billion rupiah annually, with most of the revenue directly benefitting the local community (Jadesta, 2023).

Visitor arrival data, however, shows fluctuating patterns between 2020–2024. After strong growth in 2021–2023, arrivals dropped by 8% in 2024, indicating potential challenges in maintaining consistent repeat visitation. Google Trends analysis also highlights fluctuating search interest for “Rammang-Rammang,” signaling variations in public awareness and market demand. While online reviews generally praise the destination's natural beauty and authentic local experiences, some tourists express dissatisfaction with poorly maintained facilities, sanitation issues, and inadequate visitor services. Negative reviews on platforms such as TripAdvisor reveal that these weaknesses can harm destination image and weaken revisit intentions.

In addition, several dimensions of MTE remain underdeveloped, particularly in relation to comfort, educational activities, and facility support. Although Rammang-Rammang achieves high ratings on TripAdvisor (4.5/5) and Google Reviews (4.7/5), critical feedback underscores the need to enhance visitor satisfaction holistically to ensure sustainable loyalty. Previous research also demonstrates mixed findings: while some studies confirm the direct effect of destination image on revisit intention, others suggest that its influence is mediated by satisfaction or strengthened by memorable experiences (Imanda & Anandya, 2020; Nazir et al., 2021).

Given these dynamics, this study aims to analyze the interplay between destination image, memorable tourism experience, and tourist satisfaction in shaping revisit intentions at Rammang-Rammang. By adopting a mixed-method approach and extending the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) to a nature-based and culturally embedded tourism context, this research provides both theoretical and practical contributions. Theoretically, it enriches the discourse on loyalty formation in sustainable rural destinations. Practically, it offers strategic insights for destination managers and local communities to strengthen destination image, design more engaging experiences, and improve service quality to ensure the long-term sustainability of Rammang-Rammang as a flagship nature-based tourism village within the Maros-Pangkep Geopark.

METHODS

This study was conducted in Rammang-Rammang Tourism Village, Maros Regency, South Sulawesi, from December 2024 to July 2025 using a sequential explanatory mixed-methods design. The first phase employed a quantitative survey to measure the effects of destination image and memorable tourism experience on revisit intention, with tourist satisfaction as a mediator. The population comprised domestic and international tourists who had visited Rammang-Rammang; samples were selected through accidental sampling. Following Hair et al., (2021) the minimum sample size was set at five times the number of indicators, yielding 380 respondents. The instrument was a five-point Likert questionnaire adapted from prior studies. Quantitative data were analyzed using PLS-SEM (SmartPLS), including evaluations of the outer model and inner model, hypothesis testing, and mediation testing.

The second phase used qualitative methods through in-depth interviews with nine purposively selected informants including the tourism awareness group (Pokdarwis), local tourism office representatives, academics, tourist, tourism industry actors, and tour guides to contextualize and enrich the quantitative findings. Qualitative data analysis followed a descriptive approach encompassing data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification (Sugiyono, 2019). By integrating these two phases, the study provides a comprehensive understanding of how destination image and memorable tourism experiences, reinforced by tourist satisfaction, shape revisit intentions in Rammang-Rammang Tourism Village.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Characteristics of Respondents

The study was conducted in Rammang-Rammang Tourism Village, Maros Regency, South Sulawesi, with a total of 380 respondents selected using accidental sampling. The demographic profile shows that the respondents were predominantly female tourists (53.4%), slightly higher than male tourists (46.6%), indicating that women play a stronger role in planning and deciding travel experiences. In terms of age, the majority of respondents were 18–30 years old (59.7%), followed by those aged 31–40 years (21.8%), 41–50 years (13.4%), and above 50 years (5%). This suggests that the destination is especially attractive to younger generations (Millennials and Gen Z) who seek unique, meaningful, and shareable travel experiences. Regarding occupation, most respondents were private-sector employees (37.1%), followed by students (21.3%), civil servants (14.2%), entrepreneurs (12.9%), and others (14.5%). This indicates that Rammang-Rammang mainly appeals to productive, working-age tourists who view travel as an opportunity for recreation, work–life balance, and cultural exploration.

Measurement Model (Outer Model)

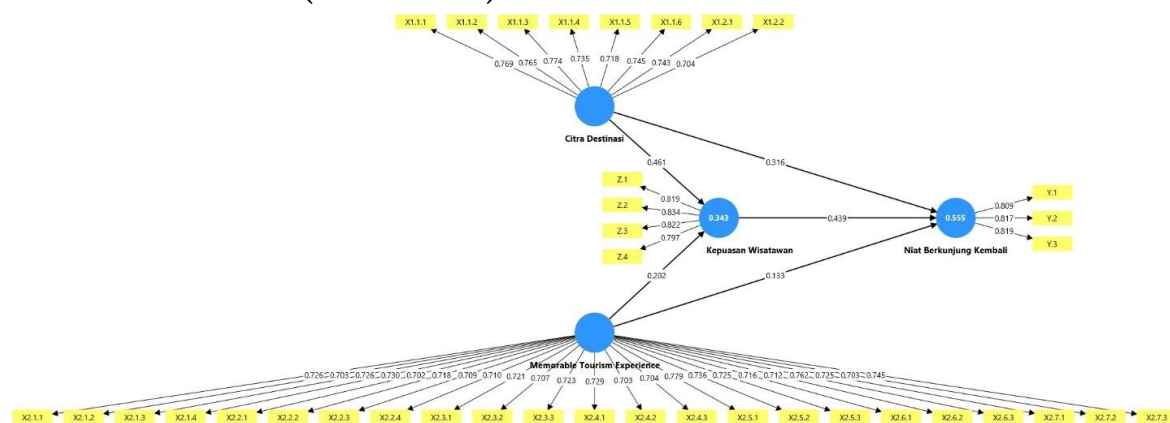


Figure 1 Outer Model

Source: Processed primary data (2025)

The structural model indicates a good explanatory power, with $R^2 = 0.555$ for Revisit Intention and $R^2 = 0.343$ for Tourist Satisfaction. Direct effects show that Destination Image $\rightarrow$ Revisit Intention ($\beta = 0.316$) and MTE $\rightarrow$ Revisit Intention ($\beta = 0.133$) are positive, while Tourist Satisfaction $\rightarrow$ Revisit Intention is the strongest predictor ($\beta = 0.439$). As antecedents of satisfaction, Destination Image $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction is substantial ($\beta = 0.461$) and MTE $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction is positive ($\beta = 0.202$), confirming a complementary mediation pathway in which image and memorable experiences heighten satisfaction, which then amplifies revisit intentions. Indicator loadings (≈ 0.70 – 0.83) are uniformly high, supporting the adequacy of the measurement model and the robustness of these structural relationships.

Convergent Validity

Convergent validity was assessed by examining the outer loading values of each indicator. Indicators are considered valid if their loading exceeds 0.70, while values between 0.50–0.60 are still acceptable in exploratory research (Ghozali, 2018). The results of the analysis are presented in the following table 1.

Table 1 Outer Loading Results

Variable	Indicators	Loading Range
Destination Image (X1)	X1.1.1 – X1.2.2	0.704 – 0.774
Memorable Tourism Experience (X2)	X2.1.1 – X2.7.3	0.702 – 0.779
Revisit Intention (Y)	Y1 – Y3	0.809 – 0.819
Tourist Satisfaction (Z)	Z1 – Z4	0.797 – 0.834

Source: Primary Data Processed (2025)

All outer loading values are above 0.70, confirming that each indicator adequately represents its construct. The strongest indicator for Destination Image is X1.1.3 (0.774), while for Memorable Tourism Experience it is X2.5.1 (0.779). The highest loading for Revisit Intention is Y3 (0.819), and for Tourist Satisfaction it is Z2 (0.834). Although some indicators, such as X1.2.2 (0.704) and X2.2.1 (0.702), are relatively lower, they still meet the required threshold. These findings demonstrate that the measurement model has achieved satisfactory convergent validity.

Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity was evaluated using the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) method. A model demonstrates good discriminant validity if the square root of each construct's AVE is greater than its correlations with other constructs (Ghozali, 2018). The results of the analysis are presented in the following table.

Table 2 Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

Variable	AVE
Destination Image (X1)	0.554
Memorable Tourism Experience (X2)	0.522
Revisit Intention (Y)	0.664
Tourist Satisfaction (Z)	0.669

Source: Primary Data Processed (2025)

All constructs show AVE values greater than the minimum threshold of 0.50, which indicates that each variable explains more than half of the variance of its indicators. The highest AVE is recorded by Tourist Satisfaction (0.669), followed by Revisit Intention (0.664), while Destination Image (0.554) and Memorable Tourism Experience (0.522) also meet the required level. These results confirm that all constructs in the model have established acceptable discriminant validity.

Reliability Test

Reliability testing was conducted to measure the internal consistency of the indicators in representing their latent constructs. Two criteria were used: Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability (CR). According to Ghozali (2018), both values should exceed 0.70 to confirm that the constructs are reliable. The results of the reliability test are presented in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Reliability Test

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability
Destination Image	0.885	0.909
Memorable Tourism Experience	0.958	0.962

Revisit Intention	0.748	0.856
Tourist Satisfaction	0.835	0.890

Source: Processed primary data (2025)

The findings show that all constructs exceeded the reliability threshold, with Cronbach's Alpha values ranging from 0.748 to 0.958 and Composite Reliability values between 0.856 and 0.962. The highest reliability was recorded for Memorable Tourism Experience (CR = 0.962), reflecting very strong consistency, while the lowest was for Revisit Intention (CR = 0.856), which still indicates a solid level of reliability. These results confirm that the measurement model demonstrates high internal consistency and is suitable for further structural testing.

Structural Model (Inner Model)

R-Square

R-Square testing was conducted to measure the explanatory power of the independent constructs on the dependent constructs in the structural model. According to Ghazali (2018), an R-Square value of 0.75, 0.50, and 0.25 can be classified as strong, moderate, and weak, respectively. The results of the R-Square test are shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4. R-Square Results

Construct	R-Square	Adjusted R-Square
Revisit Intention	0.555	0.552
Tourist Satisfaction	0.343	0.340

Source: Processed primary data (2025)

The findings indicate that Revisit Intention achieved an R-Square of 0.555, meaning that Destination Image and Memorable Tourism Experience explain 55.5% of the variance, while the remaining 44.5% is explained by other factors outside the model. This value falls within the moderate predictive category. Meanwhile, Tourist Satisfaction obtained an R-Square of 0.343, suggesting that it is moderately explained (34.3%) by Destination Image and Memorable Tourism Experience, with the rest influenced by variables not included in this model.

Predictive Relevance (Q²) and Goodness of Fit (GoF)

Predictive relevance (Q²) was tested to determine the predictive capability of the model for endogenous variables. A Q² value greater than zero indicates predictive relevance, while values of 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 are considered weak, moderate, and strong, respectively (Hair et al., 2018). Goodness of Fit (GoF) was also assessed to evaluate the overall quality of the measurement and structural models, with thresholds of 0.10 (small), 0.25 (medium), and 0.36 (large). The results are presented in Table 5 below.

Table 5. Predictive Relevance (Q²) and Goodness of Fit (GoF)

Test	Value	Threshold	Interpretation
Q ² Predictive Relevance	0.708	> 0.35	Strong predictive relevance
GoF	0.587	> 0.36	High model fit
SRMR	0.065	< 0.08	Good fit
NFI	0.872	> 0.80	Acceptable fit

Source: Processed primary data (2025)

The Q² value of 0.708 confirms that the model has strong predictive power, explaining over 70% of the variance in the observed data. The GoF index of 0.587 indicates that the model achieves a high level of overall fit, exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.36. Additional indices further support this conclusion: the SRMR value of 0.065 was below the 0.08 cutoff, reflecting minimal residual discrepancies, while the NFI score of 0.872 surpassed the 0.80

standard, demonstrating acceptable overall fit. Collectively, these findings affirm that the model not only explains the variance well but also demonstrates a robust fit to the data.

Mediation Effect Test

The mediation effect test was conducted to evaluate the role of Tourist Satisfaction as a mediator between Destination Image, Memorable Tourism Experience, and Revisit Intention. Both path coefficients and Upsilon (υ) values are summarized in a single table for clarity.

Table 6. Path Coefficients and Mediation Effect Results

Path	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect via Tourist Satisfaction	Upsilon (υ)	Category
Destination Image → Revisit Intention	0.316	0.139	0.0192	Low
Memorable Tourism Experience → Revisit Intention	0.133	0.089	0.0079	Low
Destination Image → Tourist Satisfaction	0.461	–	–	–
Memorable Tourism Experience → Tourist Satisfaction	0.202	–	–	–
Tourist Satisfaction → Revisit Intention	0.439	–	–	–

Source: Processed primary data (2025)

The results indicate that Destination Image (0.461) is the strongest predictor of Tourist Satisfaction, which in turn positively influences Revisit Intention (0.439). Both Destination Image (0.316) and Memorable Tourism Experience (0.133) also show direct positive effects on revisit intention. However, the mediation analysis reveals that Tourist Satisfaction contributes only low indirect effects, with Upsilon values of 0.0192 and 0.0079 respectively, confirming that the mediator plays a limited role. This suggests that the direct paths remain the primary drivers of revisit intention in the model.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing was conducted using the bootstrapping procedure in SEM-PLS, with results considered significant when the t-statistic > 1.65 (one-tailed) and $p < 0.05$. The results for both direct and indirect effects are presented in Table 7.

Table 7. Hypothesis Testing Results

Path	Original Sample	t-Statistics	p-Values	Result
Destination Image → Revisit Intention	0.316	5.514	0.000	Accepted
Memorable Tourism Experience → Revisit Intention	0.133	3.137	0.001	Accepted
Destination Image → Tourist Satisfaction	0.461	6.042	0.000	Accepted

Satisfaction				
Memorable Tourism Experience → Tourist Satisfaction	0.202	2.741	0.003	Accepted
Tourist Satisfaction → Revisit Intention	0.439	7.962	0.000	Accepted
Destination Image → Tourist Satisfaction → Revisit Intention	0.202	5.167	0.000	Accepted
Memorable Tourism Experience → Tourist Satisfaction → Revisit Intention	0.088	2.493	0.006	Accepted

Source: Processed primary data (2025)

The results confirm that all hypotheses (H1–H7) are accepted, showing that both Destination Image and Memorable Tourism Experience significantly influence Tourist Satisfaction and Revisit Intention, either directly or indirectly. Among the direct effects, Tourist Satisfaction → Revisit Intention (0.439) emerged as the strongest relationship, highlighting satisfaction as a key determinant of revisit behavior. Indirect effects (H6 and H7) are significant but relatively weaker, indicating that satisfaction plays a complementary though limited mediating role in strengthening the impact of Destination Image and Memorable Tourism Experience on revisit intention.

Common Method Bias (CMB) Test

To ensure that multicollinearity did not bias the results, the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) was examined for all predictor constructs. According to (Hair et al., (2021), a VIF value below 3 indicates that multicollinearity is not a serious issue. The results are shown in Table 8.

Table 8. Inner VIF Test Results

Path	VIF	Threshold	Interpretation
Destination Image → Revisit Intention	1.634	< 3	No multicollinearity
Destination Image → Tourist Satisfaction	1.311	< 3	No multicollinearity
Memorable Tourism Experience → Revisit Intention	1.373	< 3	No multicollinearity
Memorable Tourism Experience → Tourist Satisfaction	1.311	< 3	No multicollinearity
Tourist Satisfaction → Revisit Intention	1.523	< 3	No multicollinearity

Source: Processed primary data (2025)

The results confirm that all VIF values range between 1.311 and 1.634, well below the critical threshold of 3. This indicates that the model is free from multicollinearity problems, and each construct contributes uniquely to explaining the variance in Tourist Satisfaction and Revisit Intention. Therefore, the structural model can be considered robust and unbiased with respect to common method bias.

DISCUSSION

The Effect of Destination Image on Revisit Intention

The first hypothesis stating that Destination Image positively and significantly influences Revisit Intention at Rammang-Rammang is accepted. PLS bootstrapping shows a path coefficient of 0.316 with a t-statistic = 5.514 (> 1.65 , one-tailed) and p-value = 0.000 (< 0.05), confirming the effect. This suggests that when visitors perceive the destination as accessible, well-managed, and emotionally appealing, their propensity to return increases in a meaningful way.

This finding is consistent with prior research indicating that destination image both cognitive (e.g., facilities, cleanliness, access) and affective (e.g., calm, fascination, warmth) is a key antecedent of loyalty intentions (Ahmed, 2023; Nguyen Viet et al., 2020). In line with this literature, the present results imply that assurance cues (safety, organization, ease) and attachment cues (serenity, hospitality, authenticity) jointly form a mental representation that lowers perceived risk and raises the desirability of a repeat visit. Qualitative evidence reinforces the mechanism via improvements in access and on-site experience. As one tourism official observed,

“In the past, many visitors complained that the trip to Rammang-Rammang felt long and somewhat inconvenient because of the narrow and uneven road conditions. But now, after the government widened and paved the road, the journey from Makassar can be completed in only about 30 minutes. This shorter and smoother travel time makes visitors feel safer, less exhausted, and more willing to recommend or even revisit the destination,” (In-2, Tourism Office).

This interview highlights how concrete infrastructure upgrades such as better road quality directly shape the cognitive image of Rammang-Rammang, reducing psychological and logistical barriers to repeat travel. Managerially, strengthening both layers of image is recommended. On the cognitive side: complete safe wayfinding and lighting along trekking routes; expand clean, distributed sanitation; standardize waste handling; and ensure transparent, fair boat-service pricing. On the affective side: choreograph “signature moments” (river journeys, Kampung Berua walks), codify micro-hospitality (warm greetings, brief storytelling), and preserve the village’s tranquil cadence. Together, these moves fortify destination image as an asset that reliably converts first-time curiosity into repeat visitation and positive word-of-mouth.

The Effect of Memorable Tourism Experience on Revisit Intention

The second hypothesis stating that Memorable Tourism Experience (MTE) has a positive and significant effect on Revisit Intention at Rammang-Rammang is accepted. Results from PLS bootstrapping reveal a path coefficient of 0.133, with a t-statistic = 3.137 (> 1.65 , one-tailed) and a p-value = 0.001 (< 0.05), confirming that MTE significantly influences the likelihood of repeat visits. This outcome indicates that visitors who perceive their experiences as unique, engaging, and emotionally meaningful are more likely to revisit the destination in the future.

This result aligns with previous studies emphasizing that MTE serves as a critical antecedent of loyalty behaviors. Kim et al., (2012) highlighted that dimensions such as novelty, involvement, and local culture create long-lasting impressions that drive tourists to return. Likewise, Rasoolimanesh et al., (2021) and (Stavrianea & Kamenidou (2022) found that the deeper the emotional and participatory engagement at a destination, the stronger the revisit

intention. These studies confirm that experiences which extend beyond functional satisfaction toward creating memorable, affective bonds are essential in sustaining repeat visitation. Qualitative evidence supports this conclusion by showing how tourists' direct participation in local life fosters deeper emotional connections. As one community representative explained,

"Visitors are always impressed when they get to do more than just look around. For example, joining villagers in planting rice, trying bamboo crafts, or tasting traditional cuisine makes them feel truly immersed in our culture. Many guests tell us afterward that these moments are what they remember the most and what makes them want to return, because they feel that Rammang-Rammang is not only a place they visited, but also a place they lived for a while," (In-1, Pokdarwis).

This interview illustrates how authenticity and involvement contribute to a memorable experience that directly translates into loyalty behavior. From a managerial standpoint, enhancing MTE requires not only providing attractions but also designing immersive, interactive, and educational opportunities. Developing participatory workshops on local crafts, offering guided storytelling tours led by community members, and organizing seasonal events that highlight the natural and cultural uniqueness of the karst environment can enrich the visitor journey. In addition, incorporating mindful tourism elements such as riverside meditation, nature walks, and cultural performances can strengthen the dimensions of refreshment and meaningfulness. By systematically enhancing these experiential aspects, Rammang-Rammang can leverage MTE as a competitive advantage to encourage sustained revisit intentions and positive word-of-mouth promotion.

The Effect of Destination Image on Tourist Satisfaction

The third hypothesis stating that Destination Image (X1) positively and significantly affects Tourist Satisfaction (Z) at Rammang-Rammang is accepted. PLS bootstrapping shows a path coefficient of 0.461, with a t-statistic = 6.042 (> 1.65 , one-tailed) and a p-value = 0.000 (< 0.05). These results confirm that when visitors perceive the destination image as strong both cognitively (e.g., facilities, accessibility, safety) and affectively (e.g., beauty, tranquility, friendliness) their level of satisfaction increases accordingly.

This finding is consistent with prior research demonstrating that destination image is a key predictor of satisfaction (Stylidis, 2022; Wibisono & Arifiansyah, 2024). Cognitive evaluations of infrastructure, cleanliness, and accessibility combine with affective impressions such as emotional comfort, scenic beauty, and hospitality to shape the visitor's overall satisfaction. Marques et al., (2021) and Mariyanti et al., (2023) further argue that the alignment between pre-visit images and on-site experiences is crucial: when expectations are met or exceeded, tourists are more likely to report high satisfaction and develop longer-term loyalty. Qualitative evidence reinforces this mechanism through both physical improvements and emotional experiences. As one local guide noted,

"When tourists see the karst cliffs and sail down the Pute River, they are usually amazed, but what really makes them satisfied is the friendliness of our villagers. Many visitors tell me they come with certain expectations about the scenery, but leave saying the warmth of the people was what made their visit unforgettable," (In-8, Tour Guide).

This interview illustrates how affective image dimensions such as hospitality and emotional bonding work alongside cognitive aspects to elevate satisfaction. Managerially, this evidence highlights the importance of balancing infrastructure provision with community engagement. On the cognitive side, consistent road maintenance, clean facilities, and informative signage should be prioritized to meet functional expectations. On the affective side, empowering

local communities to engage in direct interactions through cultural performances, homestay hosting, and participatory storytelling ensures that emotional bonds are created. By strengthening both dimensions, Rammang-Rammang can foster satisfaction that extends beyond immediate utility, positioning the destination as not just a scenic site but also a deeply fulfilling and emotionally resonant experience.

The Effect of Memorable Tourism Experience on Tourist Satisfaction

The fourth hypothesis stating that Memorable Tourism Experience (MTE) positively and significantly affects Tourist Satisfaction (Z) at Rammang-Rammang is accepted. PLS bootstrapping shows a path coefficient of 0.202, with a t-statistic = 2.741 (> 1.65 , one-tailed) and a p-value = 0.003 (< 0.05). These results confirm that more memorable and emotionally engaging experiences significantly enhance tourists' satisfaction with the destination. This finding aligns with prior studies Rasoolimanesh et al., (2021), which emphasize that MTE dimensions such as novelty, involvement, local culture, refreshment, and meaningfulness are critical determinants of satisfaction. Memorable encounters create long-lasting emotional connections, allowing visitors to perceive their trip as more rewarding and unique compared to ordinary experiences. The presence of authenticity and participatory engagement further reinforces satisfaction, particularly when tourists feel they have connected with the local culture in a meaningful way. Qualitative evidence substantiates this mechanism. As one village tourism leader described,

"When tourists join our daily life planting rice, learning bamboo crafts, or simply enjoying traditional meals they don't just feel like visitors, they feel part of the community. That sense of belonging is what makes them satisfied and often surprised, because it's an experience they didn't expect to find here," (In-1, Pokdarwis).

This statement illustrates how experiential depth and cultural immersion generate affective satisfaction, transcending mere functional service delivery. Managerially, these insights highlight the strategic role of MTE in building satisfaction beyond infrastructure. Developing participatory programs such as cultural workshops, guided eco-trails, and storytelling sessions with villagers can strengthen dimensions of involvement and meaningfulness. At the same time, integrating wellness activities (e.g., riverside meditation, nature walks) can reinforce the refreshment dimension. By curating authentic, emotionally resonant experiences, Rammang-Rammang can transform visitor satisfaction into an enduring connection, thereby reinforcing both loyalty and sustainable community-based tourism.

The Effect of Tourist Satisfaction on Revisit Intention

The fifth hypothesis stating that Tourist Satisfaction (Z) positively and significantly influences Revisit Intention (Y) at Rammang-Rammang is accepted. PLS bootstrapping shows a path coefficient of 0.439, with a t-statistic = 7.962 (> 1.65 , one-tailed) and a p-value = 0.000 (< 0.05). These results confirm that satisfied tourists are substantially more likely to revisit the destination, underscoring satisfaction as a pivotal driver of loyalty and repeat visitation. This outcome is strongly supported in prior literature Rosli et al., (2023), which consistently identifies satisfaction as a direct antecedent of loyalty intentions. When tourists perceive that their experiences meet or exceed expectations, they are more inclined not only to return but also to recommend the destination to others. In Rammang-Rammang, satisfaction functions as a mediating psychological mechanism linking destination image and memorable experiences with behavioral outcomes, confirming that satisfaction is both affective and cognitive in nature. Qualitative interview further illustrates this link. As one local tourism guide explained,

"Most visitors leave with smiles because their expectations are exceeded. They come for the karst landscape, but they also talk about the kindness of the people, the clean river, and the peaceful feeling here. That mix of nature

and hospitality makes them want to come back again,” (In-8, Local Guide).

This narrative highlights how the convergence of natural beauty and human warmth translates satisfaction into behavioral loyalty through emotional attachment and positive word-of-mouth. Practically, this finding emphasizes the need for destination managers to sustain and enhance satisfaction by addressing both functional and emotional dimensions. Functionally, this requires consistent maintenance of basic facilities (toilets, health posts, signage) and transparent pricing systems (e.g., fair boat rentals). Emotionally, strategies should focus on reinforcing the authenticity of village life, fostering closer tourist–resident interaction, and creating surprise moments that surpass expectations. By maintaining a holistic approach, Rammang-Rammang can ensure high levels of tourist satisfaction, which in turn secures stronger revisit intention and contributes to sustainable destination competitiveness.

The Effect of Destination Image on Revisit Intention through Tourist Satisfaction

The sixth hypothesis stating that Destination Image (X1) positively and significantly influences Revisit Intention (Y) through the mediating role of Tourist Satisfaction (Z) is accepted. Results from PLS bootstrapping confirm an indirect path coefficient of 0.202, with a t-statistic = 5.167 (> 1.65 , one-tailed) and a p-value = 0.000 (< 0.05). This indicates that destination image not only has a direct effect on revisit intention but also exerts an indirect effect via satisfaction, thereby enhancing its overall impact on loyalty behavior.

This finding aligns with prior research emphasizing the mediating role of satisfaction in tourism behavior. According to Rosli et al., (2023), satisfaction functions as an affective bridge that transforms cognitive and affective evaluations of destination image into concrete behavioral intentions. Similarly, Utama & Giantari (2020) argue that when the projected image of a destination is met with congruent on-site experiences, satisfaction consolidates into emotional memory, which significantly increases revisit probability. Thus, satisfaction acts as a critical mechanism that validates and amplifies the influence of image on loyalty. Qualitative insights corroborate this process. As one tourism official remarked,

“We see that when visitors find the karst landscape as beautiful as they imagined, and the facilities are clean and safe, they leave satisfied. This satisfaction makes them not only remember Rammang-Rammang fondly but also plan to return again in the future,” (In-2, Tourism Office).

This interview illustrates how the convergence of positive image attributes (natural beauty, safety, cleanliness) and actual experiences produces satisfaction, which in turn reinforces revisit intentions. In practice, this highlights the importance for managers to ensure that promotional narratives and projected images of Rammang-Rammang are consistent with on-site realities. Tangible actions such as upgrading trekking facilities, improving waste management, and ensuring friendly, reliable services help align expectations with experiences, thereby elevating satisfaction. By achieving this alignment, Rammang-Rammang not only strengthens its positive image but also transforms it into long-term tourist loyalty mediated by satisfaction.

The Effect of Memorable Tourism Experience on Revisit Intention through Tourist Satisfaction

The seventh hypothesis stating that Memorable Tourism Experience (MTE, X2) positively and significantly affects Revisit Intention (Y) through the mediation of Tourist Satisfaction (Z) is accepted. Results from the PLS bootstrapping test indicate an indirect path coefficient of 0.088, with a t-statistic = 2.493 (> 1.65 , one-tailed) and a p-value = 0.006 (< 0.05). These values confirm that satisfaction significantly mediates the relationship, although the indirect effect is smaller compared to direct paths, suggesting that satisfaction functions as a

complementary mediator.

This result is consistent with prior studies highlighting satisfaction as a psychological channel through which memorable experiences influence future intentions. Hu & Xu (2021) emphasize that MTEs containing novelty, cultural immersion, and personal meaning create emotional bonds that translate into higher satisfaction, which then predicts revisit likelihood. Similarly, Pratiwi et al., (2024) demonstrate that satisfaction mediates the relationship between memorable experiences and loyalty, as emotionally charged encounters leave long-lasting impressions that shape tourist decisions. Qualitative evidence illustrates this mechanism. As one community representative explained,

“When visitors join local activities like planting rice or trying traditional food they don’t just enjoy the moment. They often tell us they feel satisfied because they lived the real life of our village, and that’s what makes them want to come back,” (In-1, Pokdarwis).

This perspective highlights that authentic involvement fosters satisfaction by turning memorable moments into personally meaningful experiences, which strengthens revisit intentions. For destination managers, these findings stress the importance of integrating immersive and participatory elements into tourism offerings. Beyond scenic beauty, structured programs such as cultural workshops, interactive eco-tours, or storytelling sessions can deepen emotional engagement. When tourists perceive these experiences as both memorable and satisfying, they are more likely to return. Thus, ensuring that MTEs are not only novel but also fulfilling enhances satisfaction, which acts as the critical link converting memorable impressions into loyalty behaviors.

CONCLUSION

Conclusion

This study provides empirical evidence that destination image, memorable tourism experience (MTE), and tourist satisfaction play significant roles in shaping revisit intentions to Rammang-Rammang Tourism Village. The findings confirm that both destination image and MTE exert direct positive effects on revisit intention, while tourist satisfaction also emerges as a strong determinant of loyalty. In addition, satisfaction partially mediates the relationships between image, MTE, and revisit intention, indicating that emotional fulfillment and cognitive evaluations interact to reinforce tourists’ behavioral commitments. The R^2 and predictive relevance (Q^2) values further demonstrate that the model has moderate to strong explanatory power, reflecting its robustness in capturing revisit behavior.

Overall, these results underline that Rammang-Rammang’s sustainable competitiveness depends not only on its scenic karst landscape but also on how these natural assets are perceived, experienced, and translated into tourist satisfaction. By aligning projected destination images with authentic on-site experiences and ensuring that visitors feel emotionally engaged, the village can foster long-term loyalty and strengthen its positioning as a distinctive tourism destination in South Sulawesi.

Suggestions and Recommendations

Revisit intention in Rammang-Rammang Tourism Village is shaped through the synergy of destination image, memorable tourism experiences, and tourist satisfaction. Strengthening the cognitive image requires consistent improvements in infrastructure and amenities, such as toilets, lighting, and health posts, while maintaining environmental cleanliness and accessibility. At the same time, the affective image rooted in the emotional bond created by karst landscapes, serene village settings, and the hospitality of the local community must be preserved to sustain long-term

loyalty. As highlighted in the field findings, these emotional connections often compensate for physical shortcomings, making authenticity, local interaction, and cultural immersion key levers for enhancing revisit intention.

Equally important, memorable tourism experiences should be continuously enriched through innovative, participatory activities that combine recreation, ecological education, and cultural storytelling. Providing tourists with opportunities to engage in local culture, such as traditional cooking, art performances, and ecological treks, not only deepens satisfaction but also transforms each visit into a unique and personal journey. Satisfaction then becomes both functional and emotional, forming the psychological foundation of loyalty. Therefore, the integrated strategy for Rammang-Rammang should focus on maintaining the authenticity of its natural setting, improving service consistency and community-based hospitality, and designing engaging activities that evolve over time. This holistic approach ensures that tourist expectations are met and exceeded, fostering stronger revisit intentions and positioning Rammang-Rammang as a sustainable, culture-nature-based sustainable tourism destination.

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