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Fascinating Stories: Examining Visitor Satisfaction as a Mediator Between Destination Fascination and Revisit Intention in Urban Forest park

Legio Ahmad Jatnika[1], Gusti Panca[2*]

[1] *Tourism Marketing Management Department, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Indonesia*
[2] *Tourism Department, Universitas Sahid, Indonesia*
[*] *Corresponding author. Email: Gusti_panca@usahid.ac.id*

ABSTRACT

This study examines the role of Destination Fascination in influencing Revisit Intention, with Tourist Satisfaction serving as a mediating variable, in the context of an Urban Forest Park. The research focuses on young urban visitors, who represent the dominant market segment of the destination. Using a quantitative approach with Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), the study analyzes the relationships among fascination, satisfaction, and revisit intention. The findings reveal that Destination Fascination significantly influences both Tourist Satisfaction and Revisit Intention. Fascination enhances visitors' emotional engagement with the destination, which subsequently strengthens their overall satisfaction. Tourist Satisfaction, in turn, positively affects Revisit Intention, confirming its role as a critical predictor of visitor loyalty. Furthermore, satisfaction partially mediates the relationship between fascination and revisit intention, indicating that fascination not only directly stimulates future visitation intention but also indirectly influences it through evaluative responses. The results highlight the importance of creating immersive and emotionally captivating experiences in urban nature-based tourism settings. For young visitors, fascination emerges as a key experiential driver that fosters satisfaction and encourages repeat visitation. This study contributes to tourism literature by emphasizing the dual pathway through which fascination shapes behavioral intention and offers practical implications for destination managers aiming to enhance visitor loyalty in urban forest environments.

Keywords: *Destination Fascination, Tourist Satisfaction, Revisit Intention, Urban Forest Park, Bandung*

1. INTRODUCTION

Revisit intention has become a central construct in contemporary marketing and tourism research, as it reflects tourists' future behavioral tendencies toward a destination. In the tourism industry, repeat visitation is particularly valuable because returning visitors tend to generate more stable revenue while reducing marketing costs compared to attracting new visitors. From a strategic perspective, understanding revisit intention is crucial for destination managers seeking long-term sustainability and competitive advantage [1], [2].

Although tourist satisfaction has frequently been identified as a primary predictor of revisit intention, it is not the sole determinant. Prior studies suggest that even highly satisfied visitors may choose not to return due to alternative destination options, low switching costs, or a desire to explore new places. In tourism contexts, novelty-seeking behavior is common; therefore, destinations must offer distinctive and emotionally engaging experiences that go beyond basic service quality in order to encourage repeat visits.

The concept of revisit intention originates from consumer behavior theory and refers to a tourist's willingness or plan to revisit the same destination in the future. It is closely linked to perceived experience quality, destination image, and emotional evaluation. Empirical research has identified various determinants of revisit intention, including service quality, memorable tourism experience, experiential value, customer experience, and perceived image. However, recent studies emphasize the importance of experiential and

emotional constructs that capture deeper psychological engagement with destinations [3], [4].

One emerging construct in this regard is destination fascination. Destination fascination describes the extent to which a destination captivates visitors through its attractiveness, uniqueness, richness, mystique, fitness, and friendliness [5]. Unlike traditional constructs that focus primarily on satisfaction or image, destination fascination emphasizes the emotional, cognitive, and experiential engagement that makes a place memorable and compelling. Research suggests that destinations capable of creating fascination are more likely to stimulate revisit intention and long-term loyalty [6].

Urban forest parks in Bandung represent an important segment of nature-based tourism within urban settings. As green open spaces that combine ecological, recreational, historical, and cultural elements, urban forest parks offer opportunities for relaxation, environmental education, and experiential tourism. However, preliminary findings indicate that revisit intention toward certain urban forest parks in Bandung remains relatively low. A significant proportion of visitors express limited willingness to revisit or recommend the destination to others. This condition suggests that although the destination possesses natural potential, it may not yet generate a sufficiently strong emotional or experiential attachment to encourage repeat visitation[7].

Considering the increasing competition among natural and recreational attractions in Bandung, urban forest parks must strengthen their experiential appeal to remain competitive. Enhancing destination fascination may serve as a strategic approach to improving revisit intention by creating deeper emotional engagement and memorable experiences. Despite its theoretical relevance, empirical studies examining the influence of destination fascination on revisit intention, particularly in the context of urban forest parks in Indonesia, remain limited.

Therefore, this study aims to examine the effect of destination fascination on revisit intention among visitors to an urban forest park in Bandung. By analyzing how the dimensions of fascination contribute to tourists' intention to revisit, this research seeks to provide both theoretical contributions to tourism marketing literature and practical implications for destination management in urban nature-based tourism settings.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Revisit Intention

Revisit intention is a key construct in tourism marketing and originates from consumer behavior theory. It refers to an individual's conscious plan or willingness to revisit a destination in the future. Within the consumer decision-making process, behavioral intention emerges in the post-purchase evaluation stage, where consumers assess their experiences and determine future behavioral responses [8].

In tourism contexts, revisit intention reflects loyalty behavior and is commonly operationalized through three indicators: likelihood to visit again, likelihood to recommend, and likelihood to choose the destination as a first option [9]. It represents not only repeated behavioral commitment but also positive advocacy through word-of-mouth communication. Although satisfaction is frequently regarded as the strongest predictor of revisit intention, empirical findings indicate that satisfaction alone does not always guarantee repeat visitation. Tourists may feel satisfied but still choose alternative destinations due to novelty-seeking tendencies or competitive attractions. Therefore, it is important to examine the experiential antecedents that shape satisfaction and ultimately influence revisit intention.

2.2 Tourist Satisfaction

Satisfaction is defined as the overall cognitive and affective evaluation formed after comparing expectations with actual performance [10].In tourism research, satisfaction reflects visitors' holistic assessment of their travel experience, including emotional responses, perceived value, and quality evaluation. Numerous studies confirm that satisfaction significantly influences revisit intention and destination loyalty [3], [11], [12]When tourists perceive that a destination meets or exceeds their expectations, they are more likely to develop positive memory, emotional attachment, and behavioral commitment. Beyond its direct effect on revisit intention, satisfaction also plays a mediating role. It serves as a psychological mechanism that translates experiential perceptions into behavioral outcomes. Thus, identifying factors that enhance satisfaction is crucial for strengthening revisit intention.

2.3 Destination Fascination

Destination fascination develops from the concept of *Perceived Destination Restorative Qualities* [5], which explains the role of destinations in facilitating psychological recovery and relaxation from daily fatigue. Within restorative environment theory, fascination is considered a key component because it represents a form of involuntary attention that naturally attracts individuals without requiring cognitive effort [13]. Environments that generate fascination are able to capture attention effortlessly, reduce mental fatigue, and create meaningful engagement [14]. Liu et al [14] further conceptualize destination fascination as the extent to which a destination provides tourists with freedom to explore, focus on personal interests, and construct individual meanings from their experiences. This definition integrates emotional engagement, attentional capture, and interpretative freedom.

According to Liu et al. [5] destination fascination consists of six dimensions: mystique, richness, attractiveness, uniqueness, fitness, and friendliness. Mystique relates to the ability of a destination to

stimulate curiosity and encourage exploration of stories or hidden meanings. Richness reflects the diversity and abundance of tourism resources. Attractiveness represents aesthetic and experiential appeal. Uniqueness refers to the perceived irreplaceability of the destination. Fitness captures the congruence between visitors' self-image and the destination experience. Friendliness reflects perceived warmth and hospitality in human interaction. Collectively, these dimensions explain how a destination creates emotional engagement and experiential depth, which may influence tourists' satisfaction and subsequent behavioral intentions

2.4 Conceptual Framework

Based on consumer behavior theory and restorative environment theory, this study proposes that destination fascination influences revisit intention both directly and indirectly through satisfaction. Destination fascination is expected to enhance tourists' overall satisfaction, which subsequently strengthens their intention to revisit and recommend the destination.

The conceptual relationship can be described as:

Destination Fascination (X) → Satisfaction (M) → Revisit Intention (Y)

Satisfaction functions as a mediating variable that explains how experiential engagement is transformed into behavioral commitment.

2.5 Hypotheses Development

Based on the theoretical foundation and prior empirical findings, the hypotheses are formulated as follows:

H1: Destination fascination has a significant effect on satisfaction.

H2: Satisfaction has a significant effect on revisit intention.

H3: Destination fascination has a significant effect on revisit intention.

H4: Satisfaction mediates the relationship between destination fascination and revisit intention.

3. METHOD

3.1 Research Design and Data Collection

This study employs a quantitative research design using a survey method to examine the structural relationship between destination fascination, satisfaction, and revisit intention. The research aims to test the mediating role of satisfaction in explaining how destination fascination influences revisit intention among visitors to an urban forest park in Bandung. A causal-explanatory approach is adopted to analyze the direct and indirect effects among variables within a structural model framework. The population of this study consists of visitors who have previously visited the selected urban forest park in Bandung. The sampling technique applied is non-probability sampling, specifically purposive sampling, where respondents must meet the following criteria:

(1) have visited the urban forest park at least once,

(2) are at least 17 years old, and

(3) are willing to complete the questionnaire.

A total of 110 valid questionnaires were collected and analyzed. This sample size meets the minimum requirement for Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), which is suitable for small to medium sample sizes and predictive research models [15]. Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire distributed directly to visitors. The instrument was designed using measurement scales adapted from established studies in tourism and destination marketing literature. All items were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The questionnaire consisted of three main sections: Destination Fascination (X), Satisfaction (M), and Revisit Intention (Y).

3.2 Measurement of Variables

Destination fascination refers to the extent to which visitors perceive the destination as emotionally and cognitively captivating. The construct was adapted from Liu et al. (2017) and measured as a multidimensional reflective construct capturing aspects such as mystique, richness, attractiveness, uniqueness, fitness, and friendliness. Satisfaction represents visitors' overall evaluation of their experience at the destination. Measurement items were adapted from tourism satisfaction literature (Baker & Crompton, 2000; Um et al., 2006) and reflect overall contentment and fulfillment. Revisit intention refers to the visitor's likelihood of returning to the destination in the future and recommending it to others. The construct was measured using indicators proposed by Ramukumba (2018), including likelihood to visit again, likelihood to recommend, and likelihood to choose as the first option.

3.3 Data Analysis Technique

Data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). PLS-SEM was chosen because it is suitable for predictive and exploratory research, accommodates complex mediation models, performs well with relatively small sample sizes, and does not require strict normality assumptions. The analysis was conducted in two main stages. First, the measurement model (outer model) was evaluated by assessing indicator reliability (outer loading ≥ 0.70), internal consistency reliability (Composite Reliability ≥ 0.70), convergent validity (Average Variance Extracted ≥ 0.50), and discriminant validity using the Fornell-Larcker criterion and cross-loadings.

Second, the structural model (inner model) was evaluated by examining path coefficients, T-statistics and p-values through bootstrapping, coefficient of determination (R^2), effect size (f^2), and predictive

relevance (Q^2). To test the mediating role of satisfaction, a bootstrapping procedure was applied to assess the significance of indirect effects. Mediation was determined by examining the significance of the indirect path (X → M → Y) and comparing it with the direct effect (X → Y). If the indirect effect is significant and the direct effect becomes insignificant after including the mediator, full mediation is indicated. If both direct and indirect effects remain significant, partial mediation is established.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The respondent profile of visitors to the Urban Forest Park shows that the majority were female (65 respondents) compared to male visitors (45 respondents), with a dominant age group under 25 years old (106 out of 110 respondents). This indicates that the primary market segment consists of young visitors who generally have greater flexibility, physical energy, and time for outdoor exploration. In terms of place of origin, most respondents came from Bandung (70.9%), reflecting the strong influence of geographical proximity and local familiarity with the destination. Regarding occupation and income level, the majority were students earning below IDR 500,000 per month, suggesting that the Urban Forest Park is perceived as an affordable and accessible destination for younger segments. Word of mouth, particularly from friends (55.5%), was the main source of information, while the official website contributed minimally, highlighting the stronger role of interpersonal communication compared to formal digital channels.

From the visitation experience perspective, most respondents visited with friends (74 respondents) and primarily aimed for leisure purposes (82 respondents), emphasizing the park's social and recreational function. The frequency of visits was relatively high, with many respondents having visited twice (33 respondents) or more than three times (30 respondents), indicating a tendency toward repeat visitation. The average expenditure ranged between IDR 50,001 and IDR 100,000 (56 respondents), confirming that the destination is relatively economical. Overall, the visitor profile reflects an urban nature-based destination that appeals strongly to young local visitors, is socially oriented, affordable, and demonstrates promising potential for visitor loyalty and revisit intention.

table 1. Outer Loading

	Tourist Satisfaction	Destination Fascination	Revisit Intention
M1	0.829		
M2	0.839		
M3	0.902		
X1.1		0.786	
X1.2		0.860	
X2.1		0.754	
X2.2		0.792	
X3.1		0.767	
X3.2		0.740	
X4.1		0.788	
X4.2		0.706	
X5.1		0.806	
X5.2		0.750	
X6.1		0.826	
X6.2		0.748	
Y1			0.868
Y2			0.909
Y3			0.888

Outer Based on Table 1, all indicators of the constructs Tourist Satisfaction, Destination Fascination, and Revisit Intention have outer loading values above 0.70 (ranging from 0.706 to 0.909), thereby meeting the criteria for convergent validity in PLS-SEM. Indicator M3 (0.902) and Y2 (0.909) show the strongest contribution in reflecting their respective constructs, while the indicators of Destination Fascination also demonstrate consistently high and stable loading values. This indicates that each indicator is capable of significantly explaining the variance of its latent construct, and therefore the measurement model as a whole can be considered adequate and reliable for further analysis in the structural model evaluation stage.

Table 2. Validity and Reliability Construct

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Tourist Satsfaction (M)	0.819	0.827	0.893	0.735
Destination Fascination (X)	0.940	0.941	0.948	0.605
Revisit Intention (Y)	0.867	0.868	0.919	0.790

Based on Table 2, all constructs demonstrate strong reliability and convergent validity. The Cronbach's alpha values for Tourist Satisfaction (0.819), Destination Fascination (0.940), and Revisit Intention (0.867) exceed the recommended threshold of 0.70, indicating satisfactory internal consistency. Similarly, the composite reliability values (rho_a and rho_c) for all constructs are above 0.70 and approach or exceed 0.90 in some cases, reflecting high measurement stability. Furthermore, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values range from 0.605 to 0.790, all above the minimum criterion of 0.50, confirming that each construct explains more than 50% of the variance in its indicators. Therefore, the measurement model can be considered both reliable and valid in terms of convergent validity.

Table 3. Direct Effect

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P values
X > Y	0.693	0.697	0.036	19.354	0.000
X > M	0.745	0.748	0.029	25.385	0.000
M > Y	0.846	0.845	0.038	22.461	0.000

Based on Table 3, all direct relationships in the structural model are positive and statistically significant. Destination Fascination (X) has a significant direct effect on Revisit Intention (Y) ($\beta = 0.693$, $t = 19.354$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that higher levels of fascination toward the destination increase tourists' intention to revisit. Destination Fascination also significantly influences Tourist Satisfaction (M) ($\beta = 0.745$, $t = 25.385$, $p < 0.001$), suggesting that fascination plays a substantial role in shaping visitors' evaluative responses. Furthermore, Tourist Satisfaction significantly affects Revisit Intention ($\beta = 0.846$, $t = 22.461$, $p < 0.001$), confirming that satisfied tourists are more likely to return.

Table 4. Indirect Effect

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P values
(X) -> (M) -> (Y)	0.630	0.632	0.036	17.464	0.000

Table 4 shows that the indirect effect of Destination Fascination on Revisit Intention through Tourist Satisfaction is also positive and significant ($\beta = 0.630$, $t = 17.464$, $p < 0.001$). This indicates that Tourist Satisfaction acts as a significant mediating variable in the relationship between Destination Fascination and Revisit Intention. Given that both the direct and indirect effects are significant, the mediation can be classified as partial mediation, meaning that Destination Fascination influences Revisit Intention both directly and indirectly through Tourist Satisfaction.

The findings reveal that the Urban Forest Park primarily attracts young visitors, particularly students, who seek affordable and socially engaging leisure experiences. The dominance of visitors under 25 years old suggests that the destination functions not only as a natural retreat but also as a social space where peer interaction becomes central to the overall experience. The strong influence of word of mouth further reinforces the idea that social endorsement plays a crucial role in shaping visitation decisions among younger segments. This profile indicates that emotional engagement, peer bonding, and accessibility are key drivers in positioning the park within the local tourism landscape.

From a measurement perspective, the constructs of Destination Fascination, Tourist Satisfaction, and Revisit Intention demonstrate conceptual clarity and consistency. Each construct is well represented by its indicators, suggesting that visitors are able to distinctly evaluate their sense of fascination, their satisfaction with the experience, and their intention to return. This supports the theoretical assumption that fascination represents an experiential response to environmental stimuli, satisfaction reflects post-visit evaluation, and revisit intention captures future-oriented behavioral commitment.

Substantively, the results confirm that destination fascination plays a pivotal role in shaping both evaluative and behavioral outcomes. When visitors perceive the destination as captivating, immersive, and emotionally engaging, they are more likely to experience higher levels of satisfaction. Fascination appears to function as the experiential trigger that transforms a simple visit into a memorable encounter. In an urban nature-based setting, this may stem from aesthetic appeal, environmental atmosphere, novelty, and opportunities for exploration, all of which contribute to a heightened psychological connection with the place.

Tourist satisfaction, in turn, strengthens revisit intention. When visitors feel that their expectations are fulfilled or exceeded, they develop a stronger commitment to return. This confirms the long-standing tourism theory that satisfaction acts as a bridge between experience and loyalty. However, fascination also directly influences revisit intention, indicating that emotional engagement can stimulate future behavioral intention even beyond evaluative judgment. In other words, visitors may desire to return not only because they are satisfied, but because they feel captivated and emotionally attached to the destination.

The mediating role of tourist satisfaction further enriches the understanding of this mechanism. Fascination enhances satisfaction, which subsequently encourages revisit intention. This suggests that emotional engagement and cognitive evaluation operate sequentially rather than independently. Fascination initiates the emotional spark, satisfaction consolidates the evaluative appraisal, and revisit intention emerges as the behavioral outcome. The coexistence of both direct and indirect influences implies that building fascination is strategically essential, as it generates both immediate evaluative responses and long-term loyalty intentions.

Overall, the study highlights that for young urban visitors, experiential appeal is central to destination sustainability. Urban Forest Park is not merely valued for its functional attributes but for its ability to create captivating experiences that foster satisfaction and encourage repeat visits. Therefore, destination managers should prioritize maintaining aesthetic quality, immersive environments, and socially engaging spaces, as these elements reinforce fascination and, ultimately, visitor loyalty.

5. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that Destination Fascination plays a central role in shaping visitors' behavioral

outcomes at the Urban Forest Park. The findings demonstrate that fascination not only enhances Tourist Satisfaction but also directly strengthens Revisit Intention. This indicates that emotionally engaging and captivating experiences are fundamental in encouraging visitors to return. Satisfaction further reinforces this relationship, acting as a mediating mechanism that transforms experiential impressions into future behavioral commitment.

The visitor profile, dominated by young local audiences, highlights the importance of social interaction, affordability, and experiential appeal in urban nature-based tourism. For this segment, the destination functions as both a recreational and social space, where emotional engagement significantly influences loyalty tendencies.

Overall, the study confirms that creating fascinating and satisfying experiences is essential for fostering repeat visitation. For destination managers, strengthening immersive elements, maintaining environmental quality, and facilitating socially meaningful experiences are strategic priorities to sustain long-term visitor loyalty in urban forest tourism settings.

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