

# Linking Tourists' Motivation to Behavior Intentions through Government Policies and Tourists' Satisfaction: Evidence from Ramelau Mountain as a Tourist Destination in Timor-Leste

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## ABSTRACT

This study utilizes structural equation modeling (SEM) with Smart-PLS 3.0 to investigate the complex interrelationships among tourist motivation, tourist satisfaction, government roles, and tourist behavior intention within tourism destinations. Analyzing data collected from a sample of tourists, the study finds that tourist motivation directly enhances perceptions of government roles positively and significantly impacts tourist's satisfaction. However, the direct influence of tourist's motivation on tourist behavior intention is not statistically significant. Indirectly, tourist's motivation affects tourist behavior intention through tourist's satisfaction and government roles as mediators, with tourist's satisfaction positively enhancing tourist behavior intention and government roles exerting a negative impact when perceived excessively. Theoretical implications underscore the role of mediating factors in shaping tourist behavior intentions, while practical implications emphasize strategies to improve tourist satisfaction and optimize government roles for sustainable destination management. Future research should explore additional mediators and conduct comparative and longitudinal studies across varied tourism contexts to strengthen the validity and generalizability of these findings.

**Keywords:** *Tourist Motivation, Government Roles, Tourist Satisfaction, Tourist Behavior Intention, Timor-Leste*

## 1. Introduction

Tourism is a crucial element in Timor-Leste's economic strategy, with the potential to unlock the country's abundant natural, cultural, and human-made assets (Hall, 2016). Despite this potential, the nation has yet to fully realize the economic benefits that tourism can offer (Shen et al., 2019). Timor-Leste's strategic development plan envisions a modern, diversified economy, with tourism playing a key role in this transformation (Government of Timor-Leste, 2011). However, achieving this vision requires a deep understanding of the complex relationship between tourist motivations, government policies, and their effects on tourist behavior and satisfaction.

Tourist motivations significantly influence their behavior and decisions during travel. Understanding these motivations is essential for creating effective tourism strategies and experiences (Pearce & Caltabiano, 2019). In Timor-Leste, there is a lack of research on how tourist motivations influence behavioral intentions, highlighting a gap in understanding the factors that drive tourist behavior. Addressing this gap is crucial for developing effective tourism strategies.

The alignment between tourist motivations and government policies is vital for sustainable tourism development. Policies that resonate with tourist motivations can enhance visitor experiences, increase destination appeal, and generate positive socio-economic impacts (Dredge et al., 2019). However, it remains unclear how well current government policies in Timor-Leste align with tourist motivations, pointing to the need for further empirical research in this area.

Tourist satisfaction is a key factor in destination competitiveness and visitor loyalty. Positive experiences lead to repeat visits and positive word-of-mouth, which are essential for the sustainability of a destination (Hudson et al., 2015). Investigating the relationship between tourist motivations and satisfaction can provide valuable insights into improving visitor experiences and enhancing destination competitiveness. In the context of Timor-Leste, understanding how tourist motivations affect satisfaction levels can guide the development of tourism strategies and policies.

Government policies play a significant role in shaping tourist behavior and experiences. Effective policies can regulate tourism activities, ensure visitor safety, and promote sustainable development. However, the effectiveness of government interventions in influencing tourist behavior in Timor-Leste needs to be empirically examined. This highlights the necessity for dedicated research to assess the impact of government policies on tourist behavior in the region. Satisfied tourists are more likely to revisit destinations and recommend them to others, which is critical for tourism management (Yoon & Uysal, 2005). Understanding the relationship between tourist satisfaction and behavioral intentions can inform strategies to enhance visitor experiences and destination management. The remaining of this research is the literature review, methodology, result and discussion, conclusion and the implications, and limitation of the study

## 2. Theoretical Background and Hypotheses Development

### 2.1 Tourism Destination

Tourist destinations embody experiential travel, offering a rich blend of cultures, landscapes, and unique attractions that captivate adventurers seeking enrichment and excitement (Pearce, 2012). They are more than geographical locations; they are dynamic narratives with historical depth and modern amenities, promising multifaceted journeys. Academic discourse has increasingly focused on these destinations due to their significant impact on global tourism. Researchers like Mahadzirah Mohamad, Ab Ghani, and Muhamad Nasir (2019), as well as Yoon and Uysal (2005), have examined the intricate dynamics between visitor perceptions, destination attributes, and travel behaviors.

The appeal of tourist destinations lies in their diverse experiences beyond mere sightseeing, including culinary adventures and outdoor activities that enrich travel. These destinations often become vibrant commercial hubs, offering goods and services that cater to travelers' tastes. A key feature of compelling tourist spots is their ability to inspire repeat visits, as positive experiences encourage travelers to return and recommend the destinations to others (Beerli & Martin, 2004). This organic spread of positive feedback enhances the destination's reputation and promotes sustainable tourism development. Understanding these factors can help stakeholders develop strategies to improve visitor satisfaction and ensure sustainable growth in tourism.

### 2.2. Tourist Motivation

Motivation, a foundational concept in psychology and behavioral sciences, propels individuals toward specific goals. It includes intrinsic drivers of human behavior, categorized into intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation comes from internal factors such as personal interests and passions, leading to spontaneous engagement in activities (Ryan & Deci, 2000). On the other hand, extrinsic motivation is driven by external incentives or rewards that reinforce internal drives. These motivational tendencies are shaped by the interplay of beliefs, perceptions, values, interests, and actions, creating a dynamic influence on behavior. Self-determination theory (SDT) suggests that intrinsic motivation flourishes when individuals experience autonomy, competence, and relatedness, while Achievement Goal Theory (AGT) highlights mastery and performance goals as key drivers of achievement-related behaviors.

Despite progress in understanding motivation, debates, and gaps remain, especially concerning the relative importance of intrinsic versus extrinsic motivation across various contexts. While intrinsic motivation encourages genuine engagement and satisfaction, extrinsic rewards are also crucial in shaping behavior. Cultural influences on motivational processes are another area requiring further exploration, as societal norms, beliefs, and values significantly impact motivational orientations. Researchers employ various methods to measure motivation, including self-report scales, behavioral observations, and physiological measures (Vallerand et al., 2019). However, capturing the dynamic nature of motivation

remains challenging, necessitating multidimensional and context-specific approaches.

Push motives, representing internal desires driving individuals to travel, have been widely studied. Crompton's 1979 research laid the groundwork for understanding the psychological need to escape routine, which has been expanded by scholars like Pearce and Lee (2005) and Lee et al. (2019). These studies highlight how tourism offers environments for relaxation, stress reduction, mental well-being, intellectual curiosity, and cultural exploration (Scott et al., 2019; Kim and Uysal, 2021; Wang et al., 2021; Uysal et al., 2020). Emotional stimulation in travel, initially explored by Iso-Ahola and Mannell in 1985, has been further investigated by Kim et al. (2017) and Li et al. (2021), showing how tourism experiences fulfill emotional needs. Novelty-seeking behaviors, discussed by Iso-Ahola (1982), are supported by recent studies by Kim et al. (2018) and Han et al. (2021). Pearce's 1982 insights into developing friendships through tourism are echoed in studies by Hu and Ritchie (2020). Ryan's 1991 research on social motivations for travel is expanded by Kim and Ritchie (2017) and Gretzel et al. (2019), providing a comprehensive understanding of the diverse motivations driving individuals to travel.

### 2.3. Government Role

Government policy is crucial in shaping the tourism sector, focusing on fostering growth and sustainability. According to Dredge and Jenkins (2007), such policies are instrumental in developing infrastructure, regulating tourism activities, and promoting destinations. Key concepts within government tourism policies include sustainable tourism, economic development, and cultural preservation (Dredge & Jenkins, 2007). Sustainable tourism aims to meet the needs of current tourists and host regions while ensuring future opportunities (UNWTO, 2019). Economic development strategies prioritize maximizing benefits such as employment and foreign exchange earnings (WTTC, 2020), while cultural preservation efforts aim to safeguard and promote cultural heritage, preventing its degradation from tourism activities. However, critics argue that economic priorities often overshadow sustainability and cultural preservation efforts.

The government's role in tourism policies can be divided into regulatory, promotional, and developmental dimensions. Regulatory policies include laws and standards governing tourism activities, such as zoning, environmental regulations, and safety measures, ensuring orderly development and minimizing negative impacts (Dredge & Jenkins, 2007). Promotional policies involve marketing and branding initiatives to attract tourists, often through partnerships with the private sector and international entities. Developmental policies focus on building and upgrading infrastructure, such as transportation networks, accommodations, and tourist attractions, which are essential for enhancing destination accessibility and quality. Despite this structured approach, policy integration and coherence challenges exist, with fragmented implementation across different government levels leading to inefficiencies and conflicting outcomes.

Assessing the effectiveness of government tourism policies requires various indicators, including metrics such as tourist arrivals, tourism revenue, employment in the sector, and infrastructure investment levels. Additionally, indicators assess environmental impacts, cultural heritage preservation, and satisfaction among tourists and residents (UNWTO, 2015). Comprehensive monitoring and evaluation frameworks, as emphasized by the UNWTO (2015), are indispensable for measuring policy impacts. While quantitative data provides insights into economic aspects and environmental assessments, there is a notable lack of standardized indicators for qualitative aspects, such as social and cultural impacts, which are equally crucial for sustainable tourism development (UNWTO, 2015). The government's role in tourism development is critical and can be measured through several key indicators supported by empirical studies. These include establishing robust systems, regulations, and infrastructure maintenance norms to ensure safe and accessible travel, as highlighted by the UNWTO (2019), and promoting innovation through policies that attract domestic and international tourists, fostering economic growth and diversification (OECD, 2018).

#### 2.4. Tourist Satisfaction

As an outcome stemming from psychological encounters, satisfaction holds significant importance across various sectors, including tourism. It is commonly understood as a comprehensive evaluation of attributes derived from both product and service offerings. In tourism, satisfaction manifests as a mental state intricately intertwined with individuals' interactions with their chosen destinations. Within this framework, tourists' satisfaction hinges entirely upon the perceptions derived from their experiences with destination attributes (Baker & Crompton, 2000). Assessing and contrasting perceptions of service performance against pre-established expectations is the foundation of customer (tourist) satisfaction. This involves a meticulous comparison between anticipated and actual experiences of consumption performance or service delivery. Accordingly, when the performance exceeds expectations, it results in customer (tourist) satisfaction; conversely, if expectations surpass the performance, it leads to customer dissatisfaction (Kim et al., 2010).

The pivotal role of tourist satisfaction in realizing marketing objectives cannot be overstated, as it profoundly impacts various aspects such as destination selection, consumption behaviors regarding goods and services, repeat visitation, and word-of-mouth promotion (Wang et al., 2017). As Mbama and Ezepue (2018) suggested, satisfaction levels reveal disparities between anticipated performance and actual experiences. Positive satisfaction ensues when the delivery of services surpasses expectations, whereas negative satisfaction arises when services fail to meet anticipated standards. This distinction underscores the intricate interplay among expectations, perceptions, and satisfaction levels within the tourism landscape, shedding light on the nuanced dynamics inherent in consumer decision-making processes.

#### 2.5. Tourism Behavior Intention

Tourist behavior intention is a multifaceted phenomenon influenced by a myriad of factors, as extensively discussed in the literature (Kim et al., 2017; Kim & Jogaratnam, 2018; Chen & Petrick, 2013). An integrative review of existing research highlights the complexity of tourist behavior, underscoring the significance of understanding its various dimensions and indicators for both academic and industry practices. The conceptual framework of tourist behavior intention includes a wide range of cognitive processes and psychological motivations that drive individuals to participate in tourism-related activities. This framework incorporates intrinsic factors such as personal interests, motivations, and attitudes, along with extrinsic factors like socio-cultural influences, economic constraints, and destination attributes (Kim et al., 2017; Chen & Petrick, 2013). The dynamic interplay between these elements shapes tourists' intentions, decisions, and actions throughout the travel process, from initial destination selection to post-trip reflections.

Key motivators for tourists include the pursuit of enriching and memorable experiences, from novelty-seeking to cultural immersion and personal growth (Chen & Petrick, 2013). Economic considerations also significantly impact tourist behavior, with budget constraints, cost-benefit analysis, and value perceptions influencing various travel decisions, including destination choice, accommodation, activities, and expenditure (Kim et al., 2017; Kim & Jogaratnam, 2018). Social factors, such as peer influences, social norms, and societal trends, play a crucial role in travel decisions and experiences (Kim et al., 2017).

In the current interconnected world, the desire for social recognition and validation, often amplified through social media, further shapes tourist behavior intentions. Additionally, growing awareness of environmental issues has heightened the emphasis on sustainability, reflected in tourists' preferences for eco-conscious travel choices and support for responsible tourism practices (Chen & Petrick, 2013; Kim & Jogaratnam, 2018). Understanding these psychological dimensions is essential for designing effective marketing strategies and personalized experiences that resonate with tourists' needs and desires (Gretzel et al., 2019). Recent research highlights the importance of emotional engagement and personalized experiences in enhancing tourist satisfaction and loyalty (Mariani & Baggio, 2022). Studies show that tourists' perceptions of safety and risk significantly influence their travel decisions, particularly in the context of global health concerns (Zhang et al., 2021). Despite extensive research, gaps and debates remain, especially regarding the relative importance of experiential versus economic motives and the need for comprehensive studies on sustainable tourism practices and destination management strategies (Chen & Petrick, 2013; Kim et al., 2017).

#### 2.6. Tourist Motivation and Behaviour Intention

Tourist motivation, encompassing intrinsic and extrinsic factors, is a crucial driver shaping tourists' behaviors and intentions, extensively documented in empirical studies (Kim et al., 2017; Chen & Petrick, 2013). Intrinsic motivation reflects internal desires such as the quest for self-expression, personal

growth, and the pursuit of achievement (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Kim & Uysal, 2021). In contrast, extrinsic motivation is rooted in external rewards or incentives, such as social recognition or material gain (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Lee et al., 2016). Numerous studies highlight that tourists' motivations significantly impact their leisure choices, social interactions, and eagerness to explore and understand their chosen destinations (Kim et al., 2017). Tourists may seek novel experiences, immerse themselves in diverse cultures, or attain spiritual enlightenment driven by intrinsic motivations (Meng & Choi, 2016; Kim et al., 2020). Conversely, extrinsic drivers such as the quest for social validation or the aspiration to impress others may influence their selection of destinations or activities (Lee & Pearce, 2015; Pan et al., 2022; Xiang et al., 2021).

Moreover, tourists' motivations significantly influence their attitudes and behaviors toward destinations. When tourists' motivations align with the values and offerings of a destination, they are more likely to exhibit positive behaviors such as active engagement, supporting local communities, and adhering to responsible tourism practices (Chen & Petrick, 2013; Kim & Magnuson, 2017). Conversely, motivations perceived as unfavorable or encountering perceived barriers may result in avoidance behaviors or resistance toward specific destinations (Lee & Pearce, 2015; Wang et al., 2021; Zhang et al., 2021). These insights underscore the importance of understanding tourists' motivations to enhance their experiences and promote sustainable tourism practices. Building upon this empirical foundation, it is reasonable to hypothesize that:

*H<sub>1</sub>: Tourist motivation exerts a positive and significant influence on tourist behavioral intention.*

## 2.7. Tourist Motivation and Government Role

Tourist motivation, encompassing both intrinsic and extrinsic factors, is influenced by internal desires and external incentives that shape the appeal of tourist destinations and facilities, ultimately attracting tourists to engage in tourism activities. The government plays a crucial role in ensuring that tourists can experience and appreciate a variety of environmental, natural, heritage, historical, cultural, and ethnological attractions at their chosen destinations, thereby enhancing satisfaction and encouraging repeat visits (Seebaluck et al., 2015). Empirical studies underscore the significant impact of tourists' motivations on their leisure choices, social interactions, and enthusiasm for exploring and learning about destinations (Kim et al., 2017). For example, tourists may be driven by intrinsic motivations to seek new experiences, immerse themselves in diverse cultures, or find spiritual fulfillment during their travels (Meng & Choi, 2016; Kim et al., 2020). Conversely, extrinsic motivations such as the desire for social recognition or the aspiration to impress others can influence their decisions regarding destinations and activities (Lee & Pearce, 2015; Pan et al., 2012; Xiang et al., 2021).

The government's role in tourism development is multifaceted, encompassing infrastructure development, preservation of cultural and natural heritage, and promotion of sustainable tourism practices. Effective governance aligns tourists' motivations with the offerings of destinations, fostering positive behaviors such as active engagement, support for local

communities, and responsible tourism practices (Chen & Petrick, 2013; Kim & Magnuson, 2017). Conversely, if tourists perceive the government's role negatively due to issues like inadequate infrastructure, poor preservation of attractions, or unsustainable practices, it can diminish satisfaction and deter return visits. Addressing these governance challenges is essential for ensuring positive tourist experiences and sustaining destination appeal (Lee & Pearce, 2015; Wang et al., 2021; Zhang et al., 2021). Based on the literature review, the following hypothesis can be proposed:

*H<sub>2</sub>: Tourist motivation has positive and significant influence on the Government role.*

## 2.8. Tourist Motivation and Tourist Satisfaction

Tourist satisfaction is a crucial indicator of a destination's success, providing valuable insights into how well tourists perceive and appreciate the amenities available (Assaker & Hallak, 2013). It significantly influences tourists' overall sentiments and intentions for future travel, particularly when their experiences meet or exceed expectations. Tourist motivation encompasses a wide range of internal and external factors that influence a tourist's decision to explore specific destinations (Kim et al., 2017). This complex concept includes motivations such as relaxation, adventure, cultural immersion, and social interactions (Dann, 1981). The interaction between tourist motivation and satisfaction is evident as motivations shape tourists' expectations, which in turn influence their satisfaction levels upon completing their journeys.

Satisfaction tends to increase when tourists' motivations align well with what a destination offers. For instance, a tourist motivated by cultural exploration visiting a culturally rich destination is likely to experience heightened satisfaction if the destination meets their expectations (Lee & Kim, 2016). Conversely, a mismatch between motivations and destination offerings can lead to dissatisfaction, such as when a tourist seeking adventure finds a destination primarily offering relaxation-oriented activities (Gao & Kerstetter, 2018). The debate continues over whether motivation directly drives satisfaction or if other factors are more influential. Gnoth (1997) argues that motivation impacts satisfaction by shaping tourists' expectations, and when these are met, satisfaction ensues, supported by Pearce and Lee (2005). However, Yoon and Uysal (2005) suggest that while motivation initiates travel decisions, the quality of on-site experiences and services at the destination plays a more significant role in determining satisfaction levels. Empirical evidence indicates that actual experiences at the destination often outweigh initial motivations in shaping satisfaction (Correia et al., 2013). Recent studies underscore the importance of destination management organizations prioritizing the enhancement of the overall travel experience to ensure services and facilities meet or exceed tourists' expectations, thereby fostering higher satisfaction (Agyeiwaah et al., 2019; Prayag & Lee, 2019). Given the intricate relationship between tourist motivation and satisfaction, further exploration into the nuanced impacts of these variables is necessary. Drawing upon recent literature, we propose the following hypothesis:

*H<sub>3</sub>: Tourist motivation positively and significantly influences tourist satisfaction.*

## 2.9. Government Role and Tourist Behavioral Intention

Government intervention significantly influences tourist behavior by establishing regulatory frameworks that address infrastructure development, pricing policies, security measures, and support for tourism activities. These regulations are vital in creating an environment that fosters positive tourist experiences and shapes their behavioral intentions. Enhancements in infrastructure, such as transportation, accommodation, and amenities, play a crucial role in shaping tourists' perceptions and satisfaction levels (Lai & Hitchcock, 2015). Improved infrastructure not only increases accessibility but also boosts the overall attractiveness of destinations, thereby positively influencing tourist behavior.

Governments' efforts to ensure reliable telecommunications and electricity further enhance convenience and safety for tourists, significantly impacting their decisions regarding destination choices and travel behaviors (Kim et al., 2018). Transparent pricing policies and strong security measures introduced by governments reassure tourists and influence their travel intentions (Mansfeld & Pizam, 2006). These measures build trust and foster favorable perceptions of destinations. Additionally, active government support for tourism activities and the preservation of natural and cultural attractions attract tourists and sustain their interest in specific destinations (Gössling et al., 2020). Initiatives that promote environmental conservation, diverse tourism products, cultural heritage sites, and essential facilities significantly boost tourist satisfaction and shape their behavioral intentions (Hou & Wu, 2021). Empirical evidence consistently supports the positive impact of government intervention on tourist behavior by creating favorable conditions that align with travelers' preferences and enhance their overall experiences.

*H<sub>4</sub>: Government intervention positively and significantly influences tourist behavior intention.*

## 2.10. Tourist Satisfaction and Behavioral Intention

Tourist satisfaction is a pivotal factor in shaping tourists' behavioral intentions, particularly regarding their likelihood to revisit destinations. This strong connection between satisfaction and behavioral intentions forms a crucial foundation for predicting tourist behavior. Recent empirical research, including studies by Han et al. (2021), Wu et al. (2020), and Zhang and Yi Man Li (2021), consistently confirms that high levels of tourist satisfaction significantly enhance the propensity for return visits and positive word-of-mouth referrals across diverse tourism contexts.

Han et al. (2021) discovered a robust positive correlation between tourist satisfaction and the intention to revisit cultural heritage destinations, underscoring the importance of managing visitor experiences to boost satisfaction. Similarly, Wu et al. (2020) identified a significant positive relationship between satisfaction with natural environments and intentions to revisit nature-based tourism destinations, highlighting the necessity of preserving natural resources and providing exceptional experiences. Additionally, Zhang and Yi Man Li (2021)

demonstrated that satisfaction with sustainable tourism initiatives positively influences tourists' intentions to support such practices, suggesting that satisfaction-driven strategies can foster sustainable tourism development. Collectively, these studies highlight how tourist satisfaction shapes behavioral intentions and guides efforts toward sustainable tourism practices.

*H<sub>5</sub>: Tourist Satisfaction Positively and Significantly Influences Tourist Behavioral Intention*

## 2.11. Tourist Motivation, Government Role and Tourist Behavior Intention

The relationship between tourism motivation, government role, and tourist behavior intention is complex and multifaceted. Tourists travel for various reasons, including leisure, cultural experiences, adventure, and personal connections, such as historical familial ties (Crompton, 1979; McKercher, 2002). These motivations lead tourists to seek destinations that align with their expectations and desires. Governments play a pivotal role in shaping the tourism experience by facilitating tourism through infrastructure development, supportive policies, and promotional activities. This facilitation creates an environment that enhances tourist satisfaction by ensuring safety, providing quality services, preserving cultural and natural resources, and developing tourist attractions (Dwyer & Kim, 2003).

Tourist satisfaction, encompassing feelings of contentment and discontentment regarding the tourist products and services consumed, is a crucial determinant of their overall travel experience (Yoon & Uysal, 2005). Satisfaction arises when the quality of consumed products and services meets or exceeds tourists' expectations, significantly influencing their intentions to revisit and recommend the destination to others (Baker & Crompton, 2000). When tourists' experiences align with their expectations and result in high satisfaction, it increases the likelihood of future visits and positive word-of-mouth promotion (Correia et al., 2013). Therefore, government facilitation mediates the relationship between tourism motivation and behavior intention by providing the necessary conditions to transform motivations into positive travel experiences and satisfaction. Without adequate government support, even highly motivated tourists may experience dissatisfaction, leading to harmful behavior intentions (Dwyer & Kim, 2003). Thus, it can be hypothesized that:

*H<sub>6</sub>: The government role positively and significantly mediates the relationship between tourism motivation and tourist behavior intention.*

## 2.12. Tourist Motivation, Satisfaction and Behavior Intention

The role of tourist satisfaction as a mediator between tourist motivation and behavior intention is pivotal in understanding how travelers' initial desires translate into tangible outcomes. Tourists are motivated by various factors, including leisure, cultural exploration, adventure, and familial connections, which heavily influence their choice of destinations (Crompton, 1979; McKercher, 2002).



These motivations steer tourists towards destinations that promise to fulfill these specific desires. When tourists' motivations are met with satisfactory experiences, it validates their initial reasons for travel and generates a sense of fulfillment. Satisfaction with the tourism products and services consumed enhances the overall experience, reinforcing positive perceptions of the destination. Such satisfaction often surpasses expectations, fostering a stronger intention among tourists to revisit the destination and recommend it to others. Recent research underscores that high levels of satisfaction directly correlate with repeat visits and positive word-of-mouth, affirming its crucial role in shaping behavior (Baker & Crompton, 2000; Correia et al., 2013).

*Tourist satisfaction* is a critical mechanism that transforms initial motivations into concrete behavioral intentions. Without this satisfaction, even highly motivated tourists may refrain from returning or endorsing the destination, as their expectations would not have been met. This underscores the importance of delivering high-quality tourism experiences tailored to meet diverse tourist motivations. Based on these insights, it can be hypothesized that:

*H<sub>7</sub>: Tourist Satisfaction positively and significantly mediates the relationship between Tourist Motivation and Tourist Behavior Intention.*

### 3. Research Methods

In this study, tourists' perceptions of Mount Ramelau as a tourism destination were investigated using robust analytical methods to validate reliability and test hypotheses effectively. The research was conducted over four months, from December 2021 to March 2022, focusing on weekends to capture variations in tourist behavior and visitation patterns.

#### 3.1. Population and Sample

The study examines tourists who have visited Mount Ramelau, a prominent tourism site in Timor-Leste. Given the lack of specific population data, determining a suitable sample size was essential for ensuring the statistical validity and representativeness of the study's results. Using a margin of error of 5% and a confidence level of 95%, the sample size was calculated based on an undefined population formula from Krejcie and Morgan (1970), yielding a sample size of 385 respondents. This sample size was selected to enable reliable generalization of the findings to the broader population of tourists visiting Mount Ramelau. The methodology employed accidental sampling, where participants were chosen based on their availability and willingness to participate during the study period. This approach was adopted due to logistical constraints and the variability in tourist arrivals at Mount Ramelau during the study period. Although accidental sampling does not ensure every population member an equal chance of inclusion, it allowed for a diverse range of tourists with recent experiences at the destination to share their perspectives.

#### 3.2. Measurement

The government's role can be measured through several key indicators supported by empirical studies. Firstly,

governments establish robust systems, regulations, and road maintenance norms to ensure safe and accessible travel for tourists to destinations, a factor highlighted by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO, 2019) in promoting sustainable tourism practices. Secondly, effective implementation of regulations is essential to ensure that tourism activities contribute positively to the socio-economic development of local communities, as evidenced by studies supported by the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP, 2020). Thirdly, enhancing facilities such as telecommunications infrastructure significantly improves tourist accessibility to destinations, thereby enhancing the overall tourism experience, as observed in research by the International Trade Centre (ITC, 2019). Lastly, governments that promote innovation through policies and create conducive environments within the tourism industry attract domestic and international tourists, fostering economic growth and diversification, as indicated by empirical studies referenced by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2018).

#### 3.3. Push Motivation

Travelers are often motivated by a desire to break away from routine, as identified by Crompton (1979) and explored further by Lee and Pearce (2015) and Lee et al. (2019), who emphasize the psychological benefits. Recent studies by Kim and Jang (2021) highlight the mental health benefits of such escapes. Seeking physical relaxation is another critical motive, with Mansfeld and Pizam (2006) exploring tranquility discussing tourism markets catering to relaxation needs with spa services and serene landscapes. Kim and Lee (2020) and Shin et al. (2021) highlight the trend of wellness tourism. Stress relief and mental well-being are crucial motivators, supported by Lazarus and Folkman (1984), Scott et al. (2019), Kim and Uysal (2021), and Lee and Kim (2023). Additionally, discovering new destinations and cultures is a vital push factor, as emphasized by Pearce (1982), Wang et al. (2021), and Uysal et al. (2020).

Pull motives attract travelers to specific destinations through unique attractions, engaging activities, scenic beauty, and cultural heritage. Favorable weather, climate conditions, perceived safety, and ease of access are significant factors. High accommodation, dining, and service standards enhance the travel experience, while the historical and cultural significance appeals to those interested in learning and exploring. Emotional stimulation is highlighted by Iso-Ahola and Mannell (1985), Kim et al. (2017), Li et al. (2021), and Zhao and Chen (2022). Novelty-seeking behaviors, discussed by Iso-Ahola (1982), Kim et al. (2018), Han et al. (2021), and Park and Lee (2023), drive individuals to pursue unique experiences. Developing friendships through travel is explored by Pearce (1982), and Hu and Ritchie (2020). Social motivations for travel, highlighted by Ryan (1991), Kim and Ritchie (2017), and Gretzel et al. (2019), are influenced by social networks and peer influences, with Zhang et al. (2021) examining the impact of social media on travel decisions and social connections.

Tourist satisfaction will be measured to gauge the pleasure or dissatisfaction of their tourism experiences. Indicators such as TS1, TS2, TS3, TS4, TS5, and TS6 will be employed, drawn from studies by Wang & Hsu (2010) and Viana et al. (2021).

Tourist behavioral intention will be assessed across three dimensions: intention to visit, intention to revisit, and intention to recommend (Zeithaml et al., 1996; Papadimitriou et al., 2001; Lee et al., 1996; Remigia, 2021). These indicators are adapted from studies including in Wang & Hsu (2010).

**3.4. Data Collection**

The study was conducted in Municipio Ainaro, focusing on tourists' perceptions of Mount Ramelau, a key tourism destination in Timor-Leste. Quantitative data was gathered using a structured questionnaire designed to capture insights from theoretical frameworks and empirical research related to tourist behavior and perceptions. This approach was in line with the study's objective to utilize rigorous quantitative methods, specifically hypothesis testing, to thoroughly analyze the data.

The questionnaire employed a 15-point Likert scale format, adapted from validated instruments in existing literature (Wang & Hsu, 2010; Chan, 2022; Ragab et al., 2019; Viana et al., 2021). This adaptation ensured that the questionnaire items were suitable for the cultural and contextual specifics of Mount Ramelau. Participants rated statements based on their understanding and evaluation, providing a comprehensive view of their perceptions of the tourism experience at Mount Ramelau. This methodological approach allowed for systematic data collection and enhanced the reliability and validity of the findings by using and adapting validated instruments to fit the study area's cultural and linguistic context. Consequently, the study aimed to offer robust insights into tourists' perceptions, enriching the understanding of the factors influencing their experiences at Mount Ramelau.

**3.5. Data Analysis**

The study employed multivariate structural equation modeling (SEM) with Partial Least Squares (PLS) 3.0 for data analysis, which was chosen for its robustness in handling non-normal data distributions and effectively analyzing both reflective and formative indicators (Hair et al., 2017). This methodological approach was particularly advantageous for the study's smaller sample size, ensuring rigorous statistical analysis of the collected data. The questionnaire design

integrated theoretical frameworks and empirical insights to comprehensively address the research objectives, specifically tailored to capture local contextual nuances.

To ensure the validity of the findings, rigorous testing protocols were applied despite necessary adaptations (Richter et al., 2016; Hair et al., 2019). Reliability assessments utilized Cronbach's Alpha (CA) and Composite Reliability (CR), with indicators deemed reliable if CA > 0.7 and CR > 0.7 (or > 0.6 for exploratory research) by established criteria (Sarstedt et al., 2014). Validity checks included Convergent Validity, requiring indicator loadings > 0.7 and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) > 0.5 to ensure constructs accurately measured intended concepts (Sarstedt et al., 2014). Discriminant Validity was verified using the Fornell-Larcker criterion and Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT), where HTMT values < 0.85 indicated distinctiveness among constructs (Sarstedt et al., 2014).

The research culminated in hypothesis testing, involving the calculation of path coefficients to assess relationships between variables. T-tests with associated P-values were conducted via Bootstrapping in Smart PLS 3.0 to validate the statistical significance of these relationships (Sarstedt et al., 2014). This rigorous analytical framework aimed to provide comprehensive insights into tourists' perceptions and behaviors at Mount Ramelau, thereby significantly contributing to advancing knowledge in tourism research.

**4. Results**

**4.1. Validity and Reliability Test**

The reliability of the measurement instrument used in this analysis was assessed through Cronbach's Alpha (CA) and composite reliability (CR) values, as depicted in Table I. The CA values ranged from 0.802 to 0.934 across the items, while the CR values ranged from 0.871 to 0.940. All items in the model surpassed the minimum threshold of 0.7, demonstrating strong reliability (Saldanha et al., 2020). These reliable items were utilized to gauge the variables within the model and to investigate the interrelationships between them.

Table I. CA, CR, AVE Values, R<sup>2</sup> and R<sup>2</sup> Adjusted

Item	CA	CR	AVE	R <sup>2</sup>	R <sup>2</sup> Adjusted
<b>Government Roles (GR)</b>	0,934	0,953	0,834	0,526	0,524
<b>Tourist Motivation (TM1)</b>	0,880	0,903	0,510	0,190	0,187
<b>Tourist Motivation (TM2)</b>	0,923	0,940	0,694	0,917	0,917
<b>Tourists Behaviour Intention (TBI)</b>	0,802	0,871	0,628	0,162	0,153
<b>Tourists Satisfaction (TS)</b>	0,825	0,873	0,537	0,623	0,671

Convergent validity. The results of the convergent validity analysis are depicted in Figure 1. This figure shows that all outer loading (OL) values exceed 0.7, except for item TM16, which has an OL value slightly below 0.6 (Figure 1). Therefore, following the recommendation of Hair et al. (2017), this item was eliminated from the model. Convergent validity is further

confirmed by examining the average variance extracted (AVE), where all items exceed the threshold of 0.5 (Table 1), as recommended by Hair et al. (2017). These findings underscore the robustness of the measurement model, ensuring that each item adequately reflects its respective construct in assessing

tourists' perceptions and motivations related to visiting Mount Ramelau.

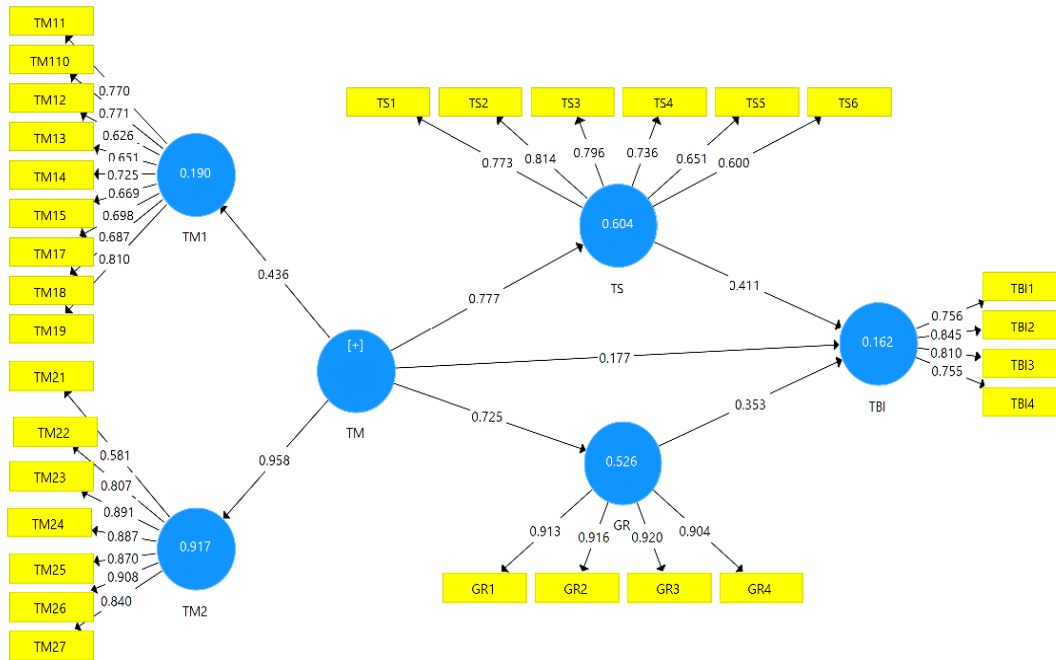


Figure 1. Outer Loading (OL) for Convergent Validity

Discriminant validity. The Fornell-Larcker criterion (FLC) plays a critical role in structural equation modeling by ensuring discriminant validity among constructs within a research framework. It evaluates whether each construct measures a distinct concept by comparing the square root of its Average Variance Extracted (AVE) with its correlations with other constructs in the model. According to this criterion, for a construct to demonstrate discriminant validity, its square root of

AVE must exceed its correlations with other constructs. This quantitative assessment provides assurance that each construct accurately reflects its intended theoretical concept in the SEM analysis. Adhering to the FLC guidelines, as outlined by Hair et al. (2017), enhances the robustness and credibility of SEM findings across various academic disciplines and research contexts. The application and fulfillment of the FLC in Table II validate its effectiveness in confirming discriminant validity in the study.

Table II. Fornell-Larcker Criterion for Discriminant Validity

Item	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>Government Roles (GR)</b>	0,913					
<b>Tourist Motivation (TM1)</b>	0,117	0,436	0,714			
<b>Tourists Motivation (TM2)</b>	0,751	0,958	0,192	0,833		
<b>Tourists Behaviour Intention (TBI)</b>	0,037	0,240	0,406	0,127	0,793	
<b>Tourists Satisfaction (TS)</b>	0,639	0,777	0,255	0,749	0,322	0,733

The confirmation of discriminant validity is strengthened by the Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio (HTMT) values presented in Table III. As recommended by Henseler et al. (2015), a threshold value below 0.85 is considered adequate for HTMT to establish clear discriminant validity among constructs. In our study, all HTMT values calculated were below this threshold, indicating distinctiveness between each construct included in the model. This rigorous quantitative analysis

supports the robustness of our findings, ensuring that the relationships observed between constructs are genuine and not distorted by potential overlaps.

Therefore, the results indicate that all items exhibit validity both in terms of convergent and discriminant validity. This signifies that the items are suitable for measuring the relationships between variables within the inner model. The robust validation of these items ensures their reliability in



accurately capturing the intended theoretical constructs and their distinctiveness from one another. This comprehensive assessment supports the credibility and integrity of the Table III. Heterotrait-Monotrait for Discriminant Validity

Item	1	2	3	4
<b>Tourist motivation (TM1)</b>	0,148			
<b>Tourist motivation (TM2)</b>	0,808	0,224		
<b>Tourists Behaviou intention (TBI)</b>	0,099	0,490	0,198	
<b>Tourists Satisfaction (TS)</b>	0,712	0,294	0,818	0,462

#### 4.2. Inner Model Measurement

In Smart-PLS 3.0 analyses, R-squared ( $R^2$ ) values are pivotal metrics for evaluating the extent to which variables in a structural equation model elucidate the observed variance in the dependent variable, Tourist Behavior Intention (Hair et al., 2019; Henseler et al., 2015).  $R^2$  ranges between 0 and 1, with higher values indicating a greater proportion of variance explained by the model constructs. For tourist behavior intentions, the  $R^2$  value is 0.162, corresponding to 16.2% (see Table I). This signifies that the combined influences of the independent variable (Tourist Motivation) and the mediation variables (Government Role, and Tourist Satisfaction) collectively clarify approximately 16.2% of the variability observed in tourist behavior intentions.

The  $R^2$  value of 0.162 suggests that while tourist motivation, government role, and tourist satisfaction significantly contribute to explaining tourist behavior intention, a substantial 83.8% of the variance remains unexplained by the model. This unexplained variance could stem from factors such as unmeasured variables, stochastic fluctuations, or complexities not accounted for within the current model framework.

Assessing  $R^2$  values is crucial for determining the model's adequacy in explaining the dependent variable. A higher  $R^2$  indicates stronger predictive capability, implying that the model constructs effectively capture and explicate patterns within the observed data (Hair et al., 2019; Henseler et al., 2015). However, the moderate  $R^2$  observed for Tourist Behavior Intention (16.2%) suggests that while tourist motivation, government role, and tourist satisfaction are statistically meaningful predictors, additional variables or model refinements are necessary to enhance explanatory power. This approach ensures a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing tourist behavior intention in the specific context under study.

#### 4.3 Results of Hypothesis Test

measurement model used in this study, affirming its suitability for analyzing the relationships and interactions among variables of interest.

The study investigates the direct impacts of Tourist Motivation (TM) on various tourism outcomes. Firstly, tourist motivation does not significantly influence Tourist Behavior Intention (coefficient = 0.177,  $T = 0.991$ ,  $p = 0.322$ ), thus failing to support  $H_1$ . However, tourist motivation positively affects Government Role (coefficient = 0.725,  $T = 14.701$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), supporting  $H_2$ , and Tourist Satisfaction (coefficient = 0.777,  $T = 33.445$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), supporting  $H_3$ . Furthermore, Tourist Satisfaction significantly influences tourist behavior intention (coefficient = 0.411,  $T = 3.140$ ,  $p = 0.002$ ), supporting  $H_4$ . Conversely, Government Role negatively impacts Tourist Behavior Intention (coefficient = -0.353,  $T = 4.220$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), indicating an inverse relationship and not supporting  $H_5$ . These findings highlight the complex relationships between tourist motivation, government role, tourist satisfaction, and tourist behavior intention in the context of tourist decision-making and satisfaction.

The study also examines the indirect impacts of Tourist Motivation on Tourist Behavior Intention through mediators. Tourist motivation influences tourist behavior intentions indirectly through Tourist Satisfaction with a coefficient of 0.319,  $T$  statistic of 3.067, and  $p$ -value of 0.002, indicating statistical significance ( $p < 0.01$ ) and supporting  $H_6$ . Additionally, tourists motivation indirect impact on tourist behavior intentions via Government Role yields a coefficient of -0.256,  $T$  statistic of 3.791, and  $p$ -value of 0.000, signifying statistical significance ( $p < 0.001$ ). The negative coefficient suggests an inverse relationship between tourist motivation and tourist behavior intentions mediated by government role, thereby not supporting  $H_7$ . These findings underscore the nuanced pathways through which tourist motivation influences tourist behavior intention, highlighting the roles of tourist satisfaction and government role as mediators in tourist decision-making processes.

Table IV. Direct and Indirect relationship tests

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (IO/STDEV)	P Values	Note
<b>Tourist motivation -&gt; Tourist behaviour intention</b>	0,177	0,183	0,178	0,991	0,322	No Significant
<b>Tourist motivation -&gt; Government role</b>	0,725	0,735	0,049	14,701	0,000	Significant
<b>Tourist motivation -&gt; Tourist satisfaction</b>	0,777	0,785	0,023	33,445	0,000	Significant
<b>Tourist satisfaction -&gt; Tourist behaviour intention</b>	0,411	0,411	0,131	3,140	0,002	Significant
<b>Government role -&gt; Tourist behaviour intention</b>	-0,353	-0,361	0,084	4,220	0,000	Significant
<b>Tourist motivation -&gt; Tourist satisfaction -&gt; Tourist behaviour intention</b>	0,319	0,323	0,104	3,067	0,002	Significant
<b>Tourist motivation -&gt; Government role -&gt; Tourist behaviour intention</b>	-0,256	-0,266	0,068	3,791	0,000	Significant

## 5. Discussions

### 5.1. Direct Effect

In the context of structural equation modeling (SEM) using Smart-PLS 3.0, the analysis of direct impacts of various constructs on Tourist Behavior Intention reveals crucial insights into tourist behavior dynamics. The coefficients, T statistics, and p-values provide a detailed understanding of these relationships' strength and significance. For instance, the direct impact of Tourist Motivation on Tourist Behavior Intention is not statistically significant, with a T statistic of 0.991 and a p-value of 0.322, which is above the conventional significance level of 0.05. Although Tourist Motivation has a positive coefficient (0.177), indicating a potential positive influence, the evidence does not support a statistically significant direct effect. This finding aligns with previous research suggesting that Tourist Motivation alone may not directly drive behavioral intentions without other mediating factors, such as Tourist Satisfaction and Perceived Value, playing a role (Agyeiwaah et al., 2019; Lee et al., 2020). Recent studies corroborate this, emphasizing the indirect mediation by other variables from motivation to behavior intention (Lam & Hsu, 2006).

The direct impact of Tourist Motivation on Government Role is highly significant, with a T statistic of 14.701 and a p-value of less than 0.001. The high coefficient (0.725) indicates a strong positive relationship, suggesting that higher levels of tourist motivation are significantly associated with more positive perceptions of the government's role. Motivated tourists are likely to notice and appreciate government efforts in enhancing tourism infrastructure and policies (Wang & Pizam, 2021). Additionally, the direct impact of Tourist Motivation on

Tourist Satisfaction is also highly significant, as shown by a T statistic of 33.445 and a p-value of less than 0.001. The strong positive coefficient (0.777) suggests that tourist motivation greatly enhances tourist satisfaction, with motivated tourists reporting higher satisfaction when their expectations are met (Kim and Uysal, 2021; Oliver, 2014; Zhang et al., 2021). This underscores the importance of enhancing tourist motivation and satisfaction through targeted marketing and high-quality services (Yoon & Uysal, 2005; Wang et al., 2021).

Furthermore, the direct impact of Tourist Satisfaction on Tourist Behavior Intention is significant, with a T statistic of 3.140 and a p-value of 0.002. The positive coefficient (0.411) indicates that higher tourist satisfaction leads to greater intention to return or recommend the destination, highlighting the critical role of satisfaction in influencing behavior intentions (Baker & Crompton, 2000). However, the direct impact of Government Role on Tourist Behavior Intention is significant but negative, with a T statistic of 4.220 and a p-value of less than 0.001. The negative coefficient (-0.353) suggests an inverse relationship, indicating that excessive government intervention might reduce tourists' behavioral intentions by diminishing the attractiveness or spontaneity of their experience (Dwyer & Kim, 2003; Nunkoo et al., 2022). This implies that policymakers must balance their interventions to avoid detracting from the tourist experience (Lee & Arcadia, 2011; Liu et al., 2018).

### 5.2. Indirect Effect

In the context of structural equation modeling using Smart-PLS 3.0, examining the indirect impacts of various constructs on Tourist Behavior Intention reveals essential mediating dynamics that influence tourist behavior. By

analyzing these indirect effects, we gain insights into how underlying factors interplay to shape tourist behavior intention. The coefficients, T statistics, and p-values provide critical information about the significance and direction of these mediated relationships. For example, the indirect impact of Tourist Motivation on Tourist Behavior Intention through Tourist Satisfaction as a mediator is robustly supported by statistical significance, with a T statistic of 3.067 and a p-value of 0.002, well below the conventional significance level of 0.01. The coefficient of 0.319 indicates that tourist motivation positively influences tourist behavior intention indirectly through tourist satisfaction.

This suggests that motivated tourists, driven by the desire for fulfilling experiences and high expectations, tend to express higher satisfaction when these expectations are met, enhancing their intention to revisit or recommend the destination. This mediated relationship is well-documented in the literature, emphasizing satisfaction as a pivotal determinant of behavioral intentions. Scholars such as Oliver (2014) underscore that tourist satisfaction is critical in translating motivation into actual behavior intentions. For instance, Kim et al. (2015) demonstrated that tourist satisfaction acts as a mediator between motivational factors and revisit intentions, reinforcing the importance of maintaining high levels of tourist satisfaction to leverage the impacts of motivation on behavior intentions effectively.

Furthermore, the positive mediation effect of tourist satisfaction underscores the imperative for destination managers to prioritize enhancing satisfaction through superior service quality, amenities, and the overall tourist experience. Recent empirical studies further validate this mediated relationship. Zhang et al. (2021) found that the quality of the tourist experience, influenced by motivational factors, significantly amplifies satisfaction levels, subsequently influencing behavioral intentions. Similarly, Lee et al. (2020) argue that meeting the heightened expectations of motivated tourists through tailored experiences enhances their satisfaction and increases their likelihood of recommending the destination. These findings collectively highlight the critical role of tourist satisfaction as an intermediary mechanism in shaping Tourist Behavior Intention.

Destinations aiming to foster positive behavior intentions among tourists should focus on continuously improving service standards, offering personalized experiences, and fulfilling diverse tourist expectations to enhance overall satisfaction levels effectively. The indirect impact of Tourist Motivation on Tourist Behavior Intention through the Government's Role as a mediator is statistically significant, supported by a T statistic of 3.791 and a highly significant p-value of less than 0.001. The negative coefficient of -0.256 indicates that tourist motivation influences tourist behavior intention inversely through government roles. This implies that while motivated tourists may initially expect positive contributions from government interventions in tourism, perceptions of excessive regulation or intervention can detract from their behavioral intentions.

This finding resonates with a body of literature exploring the intricate dynamics of government involvement in tourism. Research by Dwyer & Kim (2003), Nunkoo et al. (2022) and

Kim et al., (2017) highlight that overly stringent regulations can create an atmosphere of rigidity, diminish the spontaneity of experiences, and compromise the authenticity that tourists seek. Liu et al. (2018) further emphasize that while regulations are essential for maintaining safety and standards, overly burdensome measures can adversely affect tourist perceptions and subsequent behavior intentions. Recent empirical studies substantiate these insights. Wang & Pizam (2021) underscore that tourists value a delicate balance between effective governance and the freedom to explore and enjoy destinations without feeling overly regulated. Their study suggests that perceptions of excessive government intervention can diminish the overall tourism experience, reducing the likelihood of tourists returning or recommending the destination.

Moreover, Nunkoo and Ramkissoon (2011) suggest that while tourists appreciate infrastructure improvements and safety measures facilitated by governments, interventions perceived as intrusive can negatively impact overall satisfaction and future intentions. In light of these findings, policymakers are encouraged to adopt a nuanced approach to regulatory efforts in tourism. Balancing regulatory frameworks to enhance the tourism experience while preserving the spontaneity and authenticity that attract tourists is crucial. This approach involves addressing safety and infrastructure needs and ensuring that regulations are perceived as facilitative rather than restrictive. By promoting a favorable regulatory environment, policymakers can support positive tourist experiences, fostering enhanced behavioral intentions and sustainable tourism development.

## 6. Conclusions and Implications

Based on the findings from structural equation modeling using Smart-PLS 3.0, the direct impact of Tourist Motivation on Tourist Behavior Intention was found to be statistically insignificant. This suggests that while tourist motivation positively influences behavior intention, its effect is dependent on mediating factors that either amplify or diminish this relationship. Notably, tourist motivation significantly enhances perceptions of government roles, indicating that highly motivated tourists view governmental involvement more positively. This highlights the crucial role of motivation in shaping governance perceptions within tourism destinations. Furthermore, tourist motivation significantly boosts tourist satisfaction, showing that motivated tourists derive greater satisfaction when their expectations are met. The significant relationships between government roles and tourist satisfaction further underscore their importance in influencing tourist behavior and satisfaction levels, providing valuable insights for destination managers and policymakers aiming to optimize tourist experiences and enhance destination attractiveness.

The indirect impact of tourist motivation on behavior intention through tourist satisfaction as a mediator is statistically significant. This indicates that tourist motivation enhances behavior intention indirectly by positively influencing tourist satisfaction. Satisfied tourists, driven by high motivation, are more likely to exhibit positive behavior intentions, such as revisiting or recommending the destination. Conversely, the

indirect impact of tourist motivation on behavior intention through government roles as a mediator is statistically significant but negative. While tourist motivation positively influences perceptions of government roles, excessive government intervention or regulation may adversely affect behavior intention. This underscores the delicate balance needed in governmental roles to foster positive tourist behavior intentions. Destination managers should prioritize improving tourist satisfaction by focusing on service quality, amenities, and the overall visitor experience. This strategic emphasis is crucial for converting tourist motivation into positive behavior intentions, enhancing destination competitiveness, and fostering visitor loyalty.

### 7. Limitations and recommendations for future research

Based on the research employing structural equation modeling with Smart-PLS 3.0, several theoretical and practical limitations emerge, offering avenues for future investigation.

- a. While the study identifies tourist satisfaction and government roles as significant mediators between tourist motivation and behavior intention, the specific mechanisms underlying these mediations remain under-explored. Future research could conduct in-depth qualitative and quantitative analyses to unravel how satisfaction and perceptions of government roles mediate the relationship between motivation and behavior intentions.
- b. The study's focus on a specific geographic and cultural context limits the generalizability of findings. Future studies should undertake comparative analyses across diverse tourism contexts to ascertain the robustness and transferability of observed relationships. Comparing urban versus rural settings, different cultural contexts, or varying tourism types could reveal context-specific influences on tourist motivation-tourist behavior intention dynamics.
- c. The cross-sectional nature of the study precludes definitive causal conclusions. Future research should employ longitudinal designs or experimental methodologies to establish temporal sequences and causality among tourist motivation, tourist satisfaction, government role, and tourist behavior intention. This approach would elucidate how changes in motivation, satisfaction, and perceptions of government roles influence tourists' intentions and behaviors over time.
- d. Reliance on self-reported data introduces potential biases such as standard method variance and subjectivity. Future studies should adopt mixed-method approaches, incorporating objective measures and triangulating data from multiple sources to enhance reliability and validity. Utilizing diverse data collection methods could provide a more comprehensive understanding of tourists' experiences and perceptions.
- e. The study's sample size and sampling method may limit the generalizability of results. Future research should aim for larger, more diverse samples to ensure broader representation and increase statistical power. Including diverse tourist segments and destinations would

strengthen the external validity of findings and enable more robust statistical analyses.

- f. While the study offers theoretical insights, practical implications for destination managers and policymakers require further exploration. Future research should investigate the implementation and effectiveness of strategies to enhance tourist satisfaction and optimize government roles across different tourism contexts. This could involve case studies or action research to evaluate real-world applications and outcomes.

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