

THE INFLUENCE OF DESTINATION EXPERIENCES ON TOURIST SATISFACTION AND REVISIT INTENTIONS IN WELLNESS TOURISM: A GENDER-BASED ANALYSIS

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Abstract

Wellness tourism, a burgeoning trend, entails travellers seeking destinations that offer services aimed at enhancing physical, mental, and emotional well-being. This study delved into the relationship between tourists' wellness experiences, their satisfaction levels, and their intentions to revisit such destinations. It also explored the mediating role of tourist satisfaction and the moderating influence of gender in this context. Data were collected from individuals who had experienced wellness tourism using a purposive sampling approach. Out of 500 questionnaires distributed to tourists visiting Uttarakhand for wellness services, 438 valid responses were gathered. Data analysis was conducted using SPSS 23.0 and SmartPLS 4.0. The findings underscored the significant impact of educational, entertainment, and escapist experiences on tourists' revisit intentions, with the exception of the esthetic experience. Importantly, all four experiences positively and significantly affected tourist satisfaction. Furthermore, the study revealed that the favourable effects of wellness tourism on tourists' intentions to revisit could be reinforced through the mediating role of satisfaction. Additionally, gender emerged as a significant moderating factor. This research provides valuable insights for researchers and marketers interested in understanding visitor satisfaction and revisit intentions in the context of wellness tourism.

Key words: Gender, Mediator, Moderator, Revisit Intentions, Tourist Satisfaction, Wellness Tourism Experience

JEL Classification: L83, Z32, Z39

I. INTRODUCTION

Traveling is regarded as a physically and psychologically beneficial activity. For a change of pace and relaxation, taking holidays and taking short travels is a natural element of human existence (Fritz & Sonnentag, 2006). Wellness tourism experiences encompass a wide range of transformative journeys that prioritize the physical, psychological as well as emotional well-being of tourists (Mueller & Kaufmann, 2001; Goodarzi et al., 2016). In the 21st century, wellness tourism has gained recognition all over the world because visitors increasingly see it as a practical way to lessen the problems of the modern hectic lifestyle and improve general well-being (Mueller & Kaufmann, 2001; Kelly, 2010; Chen & Petrick 2016). Despite accounting for just 6% of all visits, wellness travel accounted for 14% of all tourists spending worldwide in 2015 (Global Wellness Institute, 2016). Global wellness tourism is expected to have a market value of US\$ 1592.6 billion by 2030, up from US\$ 801.6 billion in 2020 (Allied Market Research, 2021).

Wellness tourism experiences give a break from the pressures and obligations of daily life while providing relaxation, renewal, and personal development (Luo et al., 2018; Garvanova et al., 2021). These experiences are incredibly diverse,

servicing a wide range of preferences and needs. They can include spa retreats, yoga and meditation retreats, fitness and adventure escapes, detox and weight-loss programs, holistic healing and alternative therapies, cultural immersions, and more (Koskinen & Wilska, 2019; Dilletta et al., 2021). Wellness experiences focus on emotional well-being and stress reduction. Activities like mindfulness meditation, journaling, and group therapy are often included to promote emotional balance and self-awareness. As per Smith & Kelly (2006), wellness tourism is widely promoted as a kind of vacation activity that satisfies all well-being categories and indicates a successful adjustment in lifestyle and behaviour. The travel industry's robust and developing wellness tourism sector has become well-known as a way to refresh the body, feed the mind, as well as soothe the spirit. According to Morgan et al., (2009), the tourist sector's primary economic offering is experience. Tourists participate in the distinctive and memorable activities that tourism firms and locations host (Tung & Ritchie, 2011; Nicolaides and Grobler 2017).

Furthermore, tourists having great experience from the wellness services are more likely to return to the same place again. For the development of tourism wellness programs, knowledge of visitors' intentions for repeat visits is essential (Setiawan & Kurniawan, 2019). Tourists who are visiting again are more

profitable than the first-time visitors. Therefore, determining what influences visitors' decision to return to a location is essential for tourism authorities to evaluate that location's economic viability (Petrick et al., 2001; Quintal & Polczynski, 2010). In fact, recent advances in studies of revisit intention have shown that evaluating suitable models of particular tourist behavior may help the wellness resorts to comprehend why people return to a certain location (Petrick et al., 2001; Sparks, 2007). Moreover, according to Maunier and Camelis (2013), one of the most immediate psychological effects of a tourist experience is satisfaction. Prior empirical studies have mainly investigated satisfaction with wellness tourism from the leisure domain in a different light (Mueller & Kaufmann, 2001; Steiner & Reisinger, 2006; Um et al., 2006). The majority of the studies examined the influence of wellness experience on tourist well-being through satisfaction (Luo et al., 2018; Wiese et al., 2018; Lee & Jeong, 2021). However, the experience economy study hasn't yet been used to assess the customer experience in wellness tourism for revisit intentions, as far as the writers of this article are aware. It is also unclear if gender has a moderating influence on the link between wellness tourism experience, visitor satisfaction, and visitor desire to return (Biswas et al., 2020; Marn-Garca et al., 2021). Moreover, the studies related to wellness tourism are mainly from other nations. Therefore, the study is conducted to fill all these research gaps.

The key motive of this study is to inspect visitors' experiences, levels of satisfaction, and revisit intentions in wellness tourism in the presence of gender as a moderator. Four specific criteria—educational, entertainment, escapist, and esthetic given by Pine and Gilmore (1999)—were used to evaluate the tourism wellness experience. The study is the first to explore the association of these variables in India specifically in Uttarakhand. The state is known for its natural beauty, serene landscapes, and spiritual significance, making it an attractive destination for wellness tourists. The state offers various wellness experiences, including yoga retreats, meditation centres, and Ayurvedic treatments. So, conducting research in this region can offer valuable visions into the broader field of wellness tourism and visitor satisfaction. Hence, this study offers a theoretical as well as practical framework for further research in wellness tourism. The findings may help industry professionals better understand how wellness tourism increases visitors' willingness to return and, as a consequence, provide more persuasive marketing messages to tourists.

II LITERATURE REVIEW

Wellness Tourism Experience

Wellness tourism is a growing trend where individuals seek to improve their well-being by traveling to place that offer activities and services focused on physical, mental, and emotional health (Mueller & Kaufmann, 2001; Lee & Kim, 2015; Sandberg, 2017). Wellness tourism is a type of travel that focuses on promoting and enhancing the overall well-being of individuals. It goes beyond traditional vacations and leisure travel by emphasizing activities and experiences that are designed to improve and maintain physical, mental, and emotional health. Wellness tourism is driven by the growing interest in self-care, personal development, and a desire for a healthier lifestyle (Moreno-González et al., 2020). These experiences can vary widely, but they all aim to promote relaxation, rejuvenation, and overall wellness even while traveling (Travis & Ryan, 2004). The Global Wellness Institute (2016) defines “Wellness tourism as the travel associated with the pursuit of maintaining or enhancing one’s physical and psychological health.” Wellness travellers often choose destinations known for their natural beauty, tranquillity, and therapeutic qualities. These could be spa towns, yoga retreat centres, coastal resorts, or remote eco-friendly lodges.

Moreover, wellness tourism often includes mindfulness practices like meditation and Tai chi and these activities help travellers reduce stress, improve mental clarity, and promote relaxation. Wellness tourism is considered a personal lifestyle preference in which travellers have the ability to achieve a holistic state of health (body as well as spirit) while on vacation without receiving direct medical treatment (Wang et al., 2020). Luo et al. (2018) comprehensively analysed peoples' wellness experiences as per their engagement and reaction to an external stimulus. It was discovered that the wellness tourism experience has a variety of elements as follows:

The term "educational experience" describes how visitors to a wellness destination actively interact, which leads to their intellectual development and horizons expanding.

The term "entertainment experience" describes how visitors perceive pleasure or enjoyment when traveling, as well as any unplanned, overwhelming moments of delight.

The term "esthetic experience" describes how visitors are delighted by the beauty of the local environment or works of art, which may ultimately improve their spiritual lives.

Escapist experiences generally result from escaping normal life and finding novelty. Travellers seek to return home feeling refreshed, recharged, and with a greater sense of balance in their lives.

Wellness Tourism Experience and Tourist Revisit Intentions

Tourist revisit intentions refer to a traveller's likelihood or desire to return to a particular destination they have visited in the past (Yoon & Uysal, 2005; Um et al., 2006). Several factors can influence whether tourists decide to revisit a destination or explore new ones. Wellness tourism experiences can significantly influence tourist revisit intentions. When travellers have positive and transformative experiences during wellness trips, they are more likely to consider returning to the same place or seeking out similar experiences in the future (Chen et al., 2023).

Educational Experience and Tourist Revisit Intentions

Educational experiences significantly influence tourist revisit intentions, especially when travellers find these experiences enriching, transformative, and conducive to personal growth (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). When travellers feel that they have learned and grown during their visit, they are more likely to consider a return visit to further their education and well-being (Zhang et al., 2016). Educational wellness experiences empower tourists to take control of their health and well-being. They learn self-care strategies and gain the tools necessary to lead healthier and more balanced lives (Zhang et al., 2018; Chen et al., 2023). Thus, the following hypothesis was framed:

H1a: Educational experience significantly influences Tourist Revisit Intentions.

Entertainment Experience and Tourist Revisit Intentions

Wellness tourism entertainment experiences, which combine relaxation and well-being with entertainment and leisure activities, can have a significant impact on tourist revisit intentions. When travellers have enjoyable and rejuvenating entertainment experiences within a wellness context, they are more likely to consider returning to the destination (Petrick et al., 2001). Furthermore, tourists who experience relaxation and stress reduction through entertaining activities during their wellness trip may want to return to continue benefiting from these stress-relief methods (Hwang & Lyu, 2015; Lee et al., 2020). Moreover, travellers who appreciate cultural enrichment and want to deepen their understanding of a destination's heritage may be motivated to revisit (Luo et al., 2021). Therefore, the following hypothesis was framed:

H1b: Entertainment experience significantly influences Tourist Revisit Intentions.

Escapist Experience and Tourist Revisit Intentions

Escapist experiences allow tourists to escape from the stresses and routines of everyday life and immerse themselves in tranquillity and relaxation; it can have a profound impact on tourist revisit intentions (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). Thus, when travellers have a sense of escapism and find refuge in a destination, they are more likely to consider returning to recapture that feeling (Dahanayake et al., 2023). Escapist wellness often takes a holistic approach to well-being, addressing physical, psychological as well as emotional aspects. Tourists who appreciate this comprehensive approach may want to return to a destination that aligns with their wellness goals (Luo et al., 2018; Zhang et al., 2018; Soonsan et al., 2023). Hence, the hypothesis was framed as follows:

H1c: Escapist experience significantly influences Tourist Revisit Intentions.

Esthetic Experience and Tourist Revisit Intentions

The esthetic experience of a place in wellness tourism can play a crucial role in influencing tourist revisit intentions. When tourists find a destination visually appealing, serene and esthetically pleasing, it can leave a lasting impression that motivates them to return (Setiawan & Kurniawan, 2019). It is said that destinations with natural beauty, such as stunning landscapes, pristine beaches, lush forests, or serene lakes, can create a strong visual allure (Soonsan et al., 2023). Hence, esthetically pleasing surroundings, whether natural or man-made, can create lasting memories and a sense of visual appeal that motivates tourists to return for more enriching experiences (Zhang et al., 2018; Garrod & Dowell, 2020; Lee et al., 2020). Therefore, the following hypothesis was framed:

H1d: Esthetic experience significantly influences Tourist Revisit Intentions.

Wellness Tourism Experience and Tourist Satisfaction

As per Oliver (1977), satisfaction is a personal assessment of products and services. The success of the tourism industry depends heavily on tourist satisfaction. Satisfied visitors are more inclined to promote a place to others, return to it, and increase the local economy via their purchases. High-quality services provided by hotels, restaurants, tour operators, and other tourism-related businesses are essential for tourist satisfaction. This includes friendly and attentive staff, clean and comfortable accommodations, and excellent dining experiences. The post-service experience, when a visitor contrasts expectations with reality, determines satisfaction. A visitor is disappointed if the service experience falls short of expectations, yet delighted if the service

experience exceeds expectations (Çoban, 2012).

Educational Experience and Tourist Satisfaction

Educational experiences can significantly contribute to tourist satisfaction when they are well-designed and effectively delivered. These experiences offer tourists the opportunity to learn, grow, and improve their well-being, and when executed properly, they can leave a lasting positive impact (Farmaki & Stergiou, 2019). Educational wellness experiences that contribute to personal growth, emotional well-being, and self-awareness can lead to high levels of satisfaction. The process of wellness tourism involves visitors learning new skills or information; those who identify with the location or create positive memories often have better satisfaction (Luo et al., 2018; Chen et al., 2020). Thus, the hypothesis was framed as given below:

H2a: Educational Experience significantly influences Tourist Satisfaction

Entertainment Experience and Tourist Satisfaction

Entertainment experiences can have a significant impact on tourist satisfaction when they are well-designed and align with the well-being goals and preferences of the tourists. These experiences combine relaxation and entertainment, providing tourists with an enjoyable and rejuvenating escape from their daily routines (Song et al., 2015; Luo et al., 2018). It has been shown that tourism activities have good effects: visitors are more satisfied when they have an enjoyable trip that meets their expectations (Pizam et al., 1978; Sirgy et al., 2011; Lou et al., 2017). Tourists' pleasure and well-being will decline in the absence of such an encounter (Boo et al., 2018; Less & Jeong, 2021). Therefore, the following hypothesis was framed:

H2b: Entertainment Experience significantly influences Tourist Satisfaction

Escapist Experience and Tourist Satisfaction

Experiences in wellness tourism that provide visitors with a chance to get away from the pressures and strains of daily life may have a significant influence on visitor happiness. Travellers' feelings of pleasure are often high when they feel as if they have actually fled and sought sanctuary in a location (Quadri-Felitti & Fiore, 2013). Studies found that tourists are more likely to be satisfied with their trip when they find the escape they are looking for (Boo et al., 2018; Ko et al., 2018). The ability to disconnect from the hectic lifestyle contributes significantly to overall satisfaction (Liu et al., 2023). Hence, the hypothesis as given below was framed:

H2c: Escapist Experience significantly

influences Tourist Satisfaction

Esthetic Experience and Tourist Satisfaction

The esthetics of a destination, including its natural beauty, architectural design, ambiance, and overall visual appeal, play a vital role in shaping tourists' perceptions and overall satisfaction (Song et al., 2018). Studies documented that those who identify with the location or create positive memories often have better satisfaction (Luo et al., 2018; Chen et al., 2020). Tourists who find the environment visually soothing and calming are more likely to experience a deeper sense of relaxation, leading to higher satisfaction (Liu et al., 2023). Hence, the hypothesis was framed as given below:

H2d: Esthetic Experience significantly influences Tourist Satisfaction

Tourist Satisfaction and Tourist Revisit Intentions

Tourist satisfaction and tourist revisit intentions are closely related in the tourism industry, as satisfied tourists are more likely to consider returning to same place for future trips. It can be rightly said that when tourists have a highly satisfying experience during their visit to a destination, they are more inclined to want to return. Positive memories and experiences encourage tourists to revisit the same place (Ali et al., 2016; Loi et al., 2017; Prayag et al., 2017). Additionally, tourists who have formed emotional attachments to a destination, perhaps due to memorable experiences or a sense of belonging are more likely to want to return to relive those emotional connections. Therefore, overall levels of satisfaction have a positive association with choosing to return to the same location (Chen & Gursoy, 2001; Quintal & Polczynski, 2010; Chi, 2012). Therefore, the following hypothesis was framed:

H3: Tourist Satisfaction significantly influences Tourist Revisit Intentions.

Mediation of Tourist Satisfaction

The majority of earlier research on visitor satisfaction utilises it as an auxiliary variable to investigate how it mediates the link between the cause and effect factors (Su et al., 2015; Biswas et al., 2021; Su et al., 2022). The mediation role of tourist satisfaction in the association between wellness tourism experience and tourist revisit intentions is a crucial concept in understanding how these variables are interconnected. In this context, mediation implies that tourist satisfaction acts as an intermediary factor that helps explain how and why wellness tourism experiences influence tourists' intentions to revisit. Tourist satisfaction is influenced by the wellness tourism experience (Ko et al., 2018). When tourists

have positive, fulfilling, and enriching experiences during their wellness trips, they tend to be more satisfied. A model of the factors determining visitor satisfaction has been developed by some researchers who looked at the tourism experience as a pre-variable to that outcome (Jo et al., 2014; Liu et al., 2015). Some other scholars have investigated the relationship between visitor satisfaction and the antecedent factors influencing visitor willingness to return, and they discovered that visitor satisfaction had a favourable influence on visitor intent to return (Chi, 2012; Prayag et al., 2017; Kim et al., 2020). However, the relationship between the wellness tourism experience (education, entertainment, escapist, and esthetic) and visitor intentions to return has not been specifically analysed in prior research. Thus, the following hypotheses are framed:

H4a. The association between Educational Experience and Tourist Revisit Intentions significantly mediated by Tourist satisfaction

H4b. The association between Entertainment Experience and Revisit Intentions significantly mediated by Tourist satisfaction

H4c. The association between Escapist Experience and Revisit Intentions significantly mediated by Tourist satisfaction

H4d. The association between Esthetic Experience and Revisit Intentions significantly mediated by Tourist satisfaction

Moderating Role of Gender

Gender differences in intellect, emotions, and behaviour towards objects and events are evident in tourism-related activities (Pan et al., 2020). Tourists' perceptions and values of wellness tourism experiences may be influenced by gender variations in priorities and preferences. Men and women could enjoy different wellness activities, spa services, cultural experiences, or adventurous activities, for instance (Carballo et al., 2021). Therefore, gender may moderate the relationship positively, meaning that the effect of wellness tourism experiences on revisit intentions is stronger for one gender compared to the other. Gender has been shown to moderate the impact of travel on experience in significant amounts of studies (Karande et al., 2007; Moon, 2021). Additionally, gender may moderate the relationship negatively, indicating that the influence of wellness tourism experiences on revisit intentions is weaker for one gender. In this case, men might be less affected by wellness experiences when considering revisiting the destination. Furthermore, gender may moderate the relationship positively, implying that the influence of tourist satisfaction on revisit intentions is stronger for one gender compared to the other. For instance, high levels of satisfaction may have a stronger influence on women's intentions to revisit than on men's.

Understanding and addressing these differences can help tourism providers create more tailored and effective strategies for both male and female tourists (Kim et al., 2020). However, it was not examined previously whether gender moderates the association between wellness tourism experience (education, entertainment, esthetic, and escapist) and tourist satisfaction with revisit intentions. Thus, the following hypotheses are framed:

H5a. Gender moderates the association between Educational Experience and Tourist Revisit Intentions

H5b. Gender moderates the association between Entertainment Experience and Revisit Intentions

H5c. Gender moderates the association between Escapist Experience and Revisit Intentions

H5d. Gender moderates the association between Esthetic Experience and Revisit Intentions

H5e. Gender moderates the association between Tourist Satisfaction and Revisit Intentions

III CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This study aims to find out if the wellness tourism experience influences the revisit intentions of tourists through tourist satisfaction in India. Based on the previous literature and the hypotheses of this study, a conceptual framework has been developed as given in Figure 1.

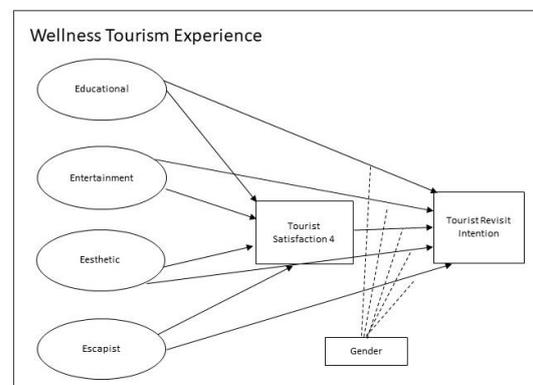


Figure: 1 Research framework

IV RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Participants: The tourists who experience wellness services (spa & wellness services, medical services, Yoga, healthcare services, and beautification) during their vacations in Uttarakhand state were the research participants in this study. Uttarakhand was selected as it offers a compelling setting for the present study due to its established position in wellness tourism, diverse offerings, cultural significance, and potential for exploring the various dimensions of wellness experiences.

Purposive and convenience sampling was employed to get the data since the population of the research was unknown and the sample frame was also not accessible. A self-administered survey was given to 500 individuals, 468 of whom returned it, and 438 of which were deemed valid for data analysis

Measurement Instrument Six key variables and the respondents' socio-demographic profile were covered through a questionnaire that served as the major source of the study data. To be more precise, educational, entertainment, esthetics, and escapism experiences were chosen as the four elements to quantify the wellness tourism experience. All four factors were measured using a 4-item scale for each factor (Luo et al., 2018). Then, five items were adapted to analyse tourist satisfaction (Zulvianti et al., 2022). Finally, four items were used to measure tourist revisit intentions (Park et al., 2019). The questions were appropriately modified for this particular case based on the measurement's usage of a Likert-type 5-level scale (1 being strongly disagree and 5 being strongly agree).

Data Analysis

SPSS 23 and SmartPLS 4 were used to analyse the data, structural model and hypotheses (Ringle et al. 2015). In order to determine the socio-demographic findings, SPSS was utilized, and SmartPLS was used to examine the measurement model using variance-based Partial Least Squares (PLS). According to Chin et al. (2008) and Ali et al. (2018), SmartPLS is especially useful when dealing with complex models that have multiple latent variables and many observed variables. It's known for its ability to handle non-normal data and small sample sizes, making it a flexible choice for researchers working with diverse datasets. For the analysis of mediation, moderation, and path coefficients in structural models, SEM-PLS is recommended (Hair et al. 2017).

V RESULTS

The demographic characteristics of respondents are as per Table 1. It shows that majority of respondents are male (54.3%) and 26.9% respondents are between the age group of 20-30 years. Furthermore, most of the participants having a qualification of graduation level i.e. 43.2%. Moreover, it is found that majority of the respondents are earning 25-1 lac per month.

Table: 1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

Demographic Variables	Categories	Frequency	Valid Percentage
Gender	Male	238	54.3
	Female	200	45.7
Age	Below20	75	17.1
	20-30	118	26.9
	30-40	66	15.1
	40-50	86	19.4
	Above 50	94	21.5
Education	Diploma or Below	79	18.0
	Graduation	189	43.2
	Post-Graduation	115	26.3
	Ph.D. or Higher	55	12.6
Occupation	Student	71	16.2
	Private Employee	103	23.5
	Public Employee	138	31.5
	Self-Employed	126	28.8
Income PM	Below 25K	76	17.4
	25-50K	151	34.5
	50-1 Lac	144	32.9
	More than 1 Lac	67	15.3

Measurement Model Analysis

A collection of observed variables' factor structure is confirmed using the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) approach (Hair et al. 2012). It is determined using the CFA procedure if the proposed structure offers a good fit to the data. In other words,

there is an association between the variables that may be seen and the latent, or unobserved, notions that underlie them (Child 1990). Additionally, the CFA would confirm that every item is adequately matched with the appropriate features of the overall construct being assessed.

To Access the measurement model, the item loadings in the measurement model were examined and found to be higher than the minimum value of 0.60 (Kline, 2015). Then, Cronbach's alpha was used to determine the inter-item reliability of the items, with a minimum threshold of 0.70 (Nunnally et al.,

1967). Afterwards, composite reliability and Average variance extracted (AVE) were examined for construct validity of the study with acceptable threshold of 0.50 (Fornell and Larcker, 1981; Bagozzi and Yi, 1988) and 0.70 (Hair et al., 2010), respectively. All these results are depicted in Table 2.

Table 2: Measurement Model

Variables	Items	Loadings	Cronbach's alpha	CR (rho_a)	CR (rho_c)	AVE
Educational	Edu1	0.792	0.770	0.782	0.853	0.592
	Edu2	0.776				
	Edu3	0.794				
	Edu4	0.812				
Entertainment	Ent1	0.799	0.832	0.841	0.888	0.664
	Ent2	0.809				
	Ent3	0.836				
	Ent4	0.815				
Escapist	Esc1	0.880	0.813	0.906	0.873	0.635
	Esc2	0.879				
	Esc3	0.734				
	Esc4	0.774				
Esthetic	Est1	0.806	0.861	0.873	0.905	0.706
	Est2	0.865				
	Est3	0.873				
	Est4	0.814				
Tourist Satisfaction	TSt1	0.775	0.882	0.884	0.914	0.680
	TSt2	0.803				
	TSt3	0.816				
	TSt4	0.845				
	TSt5	0.880				
Tourist Revisit Intentions	RI1	0.840	0.839	0.843	0.892	0.675
	RI2	0.826				
	RI3	0.789				
	RI4	0.830				

Thereafter, the discriminant validity of scale variables was examined. The discriminant validity is defined “when the square root of the AVE (diagonal values) of each construct is larger than its corresponding correlation coefficients” (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The findings of the Fornell and Larcker assessment of discriminant validity According to the criteria in Table 3, all values on the diagonals are higher than the corresponding row and column values, demonstrating the scales are discriminant. It helps to

ensure that the constructs being studied are indeed measuring different aspects of the theoretical framework and not simply overlapping or redundant concepts. However, Henseler et al. (2015) challenged this approach. Therefore, the HTMT technique (Henseler et al. 2015) was used to further determine the discriminant validity, with a value not exceeding 0.85 (Kline, 2005). Table 4's analysis of the study's findings reveals that all HTMT values satisfied the requirement of being less than 0.85.

Table 3: Discriminant Validity (Fornell and Larker Criterion)

Sr. No.	Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Educational	0.770					
2	Entertainment	0.468	0.815				
3	Escapist	0.084	0.012	0.797			
4	Esthetic	0.132	0.108	0.022	0.840		
5	Tourist Satisfaction	0.237	0.276	0.112	0.227	0.825	
6	Tourist Revisit Intentions	0.491	0.582	0.077	0.121	0.555	0.821

Table 4: Discriminant Validity (HTMT)

Sr. No.	Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Educational						
2	Entertainment	0.583					
3	Escapist	0.099	0.043				
4	Esthetic	0.157	0.139	0.042			
5	Tourist Satisfaction	0.284	0.318	0.126	0.259		
6	Tourist Revisit Intentions	0.602	0.679	0.079	0.142	0.644	

Note: HTMT = Heterotrait-monotrait ratio of correlations.

Structural Model Analysis

When the measurement model's findings are good, the next step is to evaluate the structural model using PLS-SEM. The direct, total indirect, and moderation effects are included in SmartPLS's analysis of the PLS-SEM algorithm's outputs. A collection of observable (measured) and unobserved (latent)

variables are tested for patterns of directional and non-directional correlations using SEM (MacCallum 2012). The constructs' collinearity was examined prior to model evaluation. The VIF value of all the variables is less than 2.0, which indicates no issue with collinearity, according to Table 5, which maintains a threshold of 5.0 (Ringle et al., 2015).

Table 5: Collinearity (VIF Values)

	VIF
Edu --> RI	1.315
Ent -->RI	1.333
Esc --> RI	1.019
Est --> RI	1.062
Edu --> TS	1.301
Ent --> TS	1.285
Esc --> TS	1.008
Est --> TS	1.021
TS --> RI	1.157

Note: Edu=Educational, ENT=Entertainment, Esc=Escapist, Est=Esthetic, TS=Tourist Satisfaction,

TRI=Tourist Revisit Intentions

After the collinearity test, the path coefficients were evaluated using a 5000 bootstrapping approach (Chin et al. 2008). The model fit was evaluated with the standardized root-mean-square residual (SRMR) and the standardized fit index (NFI). An NFI score greater than 0.90 indicates a strong model fit. The NFI number in this instance was 0.933 that was more than the minimum acceptable value of 0.90. Additionally, the model's SRMR score of 0.060 fell below the 0.08 criterion (Hair et al., 2017). These fit indices show that the model fits the data well. Additionally, using the coefficient of determination (R²), the model's explanatory ability was evaluated. Table 7 demonstrates that every (R²) value is more than the stated cut-off threshold of 0.10 (Falk & Miller, 1992).

Table 6: Goodness of Fit Model

	Model Values
Chi-square	1579.125
NFI	.933
SRMR	.060

Table 7: Explanatory power of the model

	R ²	R ² Adjusted
Tourist Satisfaction	.135	.127
Tourist Revisit Intentions	.548	.543

Direct Effects

In order to verify the suggested hypotheses, the path coefficients are evaluated. Table 8's path coefficients with direct impacts of variables demonstrate that the majority of T values are greater than 2.0 and statistically significant, demonstrating the acceptance of direct hypotheses. The research found the significant standardized path coefficients of the relationship between educational experience and tourist revisit intentions (H1a) is 0.207 ($t = 4.572$, $p < 0.01$) and the association of entertainment experience (H2a) is 0.324 ($t = 6.218$, $p < 0.01$), and escapist (H3c) is 0.232 ($t = 2.617$, $p < 0.01$) with tourist revisit intentions. However, the association of esthetic experience (H3d) 0.022 ($t = 0.594$, $p > 0.01$) with

revisit intentions is insignificant. So, the hypotheses H1a-H1c are accepted and H1d is rejected. Furthermore, the association between wellness tourism experience and tourist satisfaction is examined. Empirical results indicate the significant standardized path coefficients for educational experience (H2a) 0.109 ($t = 4.894$, $p < 0.01$), entertainment experience (H2b) 0.203 ($t = 3.542$, $p < 0.01$), escapist experience (H2c) 0.097 ($t = 2.127$, $p < 0.01$), and esthetic experience (H2d) 0.189 ($t = 3.957$, $p < 0.01$) with satisfaction. It leads to the acceptance of hypotheses H2a-H2d. Additionally, the influence of tourist satisfaction on tourist revisit intention is also found to be statistically significant (H3) 0.434 ($t = 9.992$, $p < 0.01$). The path coefficients are displayed in figure no. 2

Table 8: Path Coefficients with Direct Effects

	H	Original Sample	T	P values	Decision
Edu --> TRI	H1a	0.207	4.572	0.000	Accepted
Ent --> TRI	H1b	0.324	6.218	0.000	Accepted
Esc --> TRI	H1c	0.232	2.617	0.037	Rejected
Est --> TRI	H1d	0.022	0.594	0.552	Rejected
Edu --> TS	H2a	0.109	4.894	0.000	Accepted
Ent --> TS	H2b	0.203	3.542	0.000	Accepted
Esc --> TS	H2c	0.097	2.127	0.033	Accepted
Est --> TS	H2d	0.189	3.957	0.000	Accepted
TS --> TRI	H3	0.434	9.992	0.000	Accepted

Note: Edu=Educational, Ent=Entertainment, Esc=Escapist, Est=Esthetic, TS=Tourist Satisfaction, TRI=Tourist Revisit Intentions

Mediation Analysis

The indirect impact of the tourist satisfaction which explains the indirect association between tourism wellness experience and tourist revisit intention are depicted in Table 9. Mediation analysis predicted in hypotheses H4a-H4d are supported by the results that tourist satisfaction and mediating the relationship of educational experience (H4a) 0.047 (t

$= 2.795$, $p < 0.01$), entertainment experience (H4b) 0.088 ($t = 3.299$, $p < 0.01$), escapist experience (H4c) 0.042 ($t = 2.112$, $p < 0.01$), and esthetic experience (H4d) 0.082 ($t = 3.716$, $p < 0.01$) with tourist revisit intention. As anticipated, every outcome was determined to be statistically significant, which allowed all indirect hypotheses to be accepted.

Table 9: Indirect Effects

	H	Original Sample	T	P Values	Decision
Edu --> TS --> TRI	H4a	0.047	2.795	0.023	Accepted
Ent --> TS --> TRI	H4b	0.088	3.299	0.001	Accepted
Esc --> TS --> TRI	H4c	0.042	2.112	0.035	Accepted
Est --> TS --> TRI	H4d	0.082	3.716	0.000	Accepted

Note: Edu=Educational, Ent=Entertainment, Esc=Escapist, Est=Esthetic, TS=Tourist Satisfaction, TRI=Tourist Revisit Intentions

Moderation Analysis

Moreover, the moderation effect of gender is also examined on the association of wellness tourism experience and satisfaction with revisit intentions of tourists. The empirical results show that gender significantly moderates the association of educational (H5a) ($t = 2.268, p < .01$) and entertainment (H5b) ($t =$

$2.675, p < .01$) with tourist revisit intentions. However, it does not moderate the relationship of escapist (H5c) ($t = 0.268, p > .01$) and esthetic experience (H5d) ($t = 0.509, p > .01$) with revisit intentions. Additionally, the moderation effect of gender is significant on the association between tourist satisfaction and tourist revisit intentions (H6) ($t = 5.493, p < .01$).

Table 10: Moderation Effects

	H	Original Sample	T	P values	Decision
Gender x Edu --> TRI	H5a	0.088	2.268	0.023	Accepted
Gender x Ent --> TRI	H5b	0.125	2.675	0.007	Accepted
Gender x Esc --> TRI	H5c	0.008	0.268	0.789	Rejected
Gender x Est --> TRI	H5d	0.016	0.509	0.611	Rejected
Gender x TS --> TRI	H6	0.221	5.493	0.000	Accepted

Note: Edu=Educational, Ent=Entertainment, Esc=Escapist, Est=Esthetic, TS=Tourist Satisfaction, TRI=Tourist Revisit Intentions

VI DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

People are becoming more health-conscious and are looking for ways to improve their overall well-being. As a result, they seek destinations and accommodations that offer wellness services to help them relax, de-stress, and maintain a healthy lifestyle. (Fetscherin & Stephano, 2016). It has been a common phenomenon in both developed and developing nations to understand service quality, travel experience, tourist satisfaction, and tourist revisit intention in the perspective of wellness tourism (Lin, 2014; He et al., 2021). Studying wellness tourism experiences in India is a fascinating and important research endeavour, given India's rich cultural heritage, natural beauty, and growing prominence in the global wellness tourism sector. Based on this, this research article aimed to examine the influence of the wellness tourism experience on tourist revisit intentions. Additionally, the mediating role of tourist satisfaction and the moderating role of gender were also examined.

Understanding tourists' product selection decisions and prospective repeat behaviour requires an understanding of revisit intention. The study found a significant positive association between educational, entertainment, and escapist experiences and tourist revisit intentions. It explains when travellers feel that they have learned and grown during their visit, they are more likely to consider a return visit to further their education and well-being. Similarly, when tourists have fun and memorable experiences, they are more inclined to visit the same place again to re-live those moments. The results are similar to prior research studies (Zhang et al., 2018; Luo et al., 2021;

Chen et al., 2023). Conversely, esthetic experiences are found to be insignificantly related to tourist revisit intentions. It can be described that the lack of significance between esthetic experiences and revisit intention indicates that other factors may have a more substantial influence on tourists' decisions to revisit wellness destinations. In other words, not all tourists engage in wellness tourism primarily for the beauty of the place. Furthermore, empirical results display a significant influence of all four wellness experiences on tourist satisfaction. It is a critical factor in the success of the tourism industry and customers who have wellness experience are more likely to be satisfied with the services. These results support the findings of existing studies (Sirgy et al., 2011; Lou et al., 2017; Boo et al., 2018; Luo et al., 2018; Chen et al., 2020; Liu et al., 2023). In addition to this, satisfaction positively significantly impacts tourist revisit intentions in line with (Chen & Gursoy, 2001; Quintal & Polczynski, 2010; Chi, 2012). Thus, tourists who have a highly satisfying experience during their visit to a wellness destination are more inclined to want to return. Positive memories and experiences encourage tourists to revisit the same destination to have wellness services.

Furthermore, the mediation role of tourist satisfaction was also found to be significant in the association between wellness experience and tourist revisit intentions. It implies that tourist satisfaction acts as an intermediary factor that helps explain how and why wellness tourism experiences influence tourists' intentions to revisit. Tourist satisfaction is influenced by the wellness tourism experience. When tourists have positive, fulfilling, and enriching experiences during their wellness trips, they tend to be

more satisfied. Subsequently, they tend to return to the same wellness place again in the future. Some previous studies also show similar results (Chi, 2012; Prayag et al., 2017; Kim et al., 2020). Moreover, gender was found to be significantly moderating the relationship of educational and entertainment experience with tourist revisit intention. This might be due to the fact that the effect of wellness tourism experiences on revisit intentions is stronger for one gender compared to the other (Karande et al., 2007; Moon, 2021). For instance, female tourists may be more influenced by positive wellness experiences in their decisions to revisit than male tourists. Similarly, female tourists may seek relaxation and spa treatments, while male tourists may prioritize adventure activities or sports (Pan et al., 2020; Carballo et al., 2021). The results point to a rising and inflated demand for wellness vacations in the future. Wellness tourism is a fundamental change in how tourists look to bolster their well-being. As a result, resorts, hotels, tour operators, and local communities are being forced to reassess and revitalize their offers in order to meet the rising demand for wellness experiences. This is changing the face of destinations.

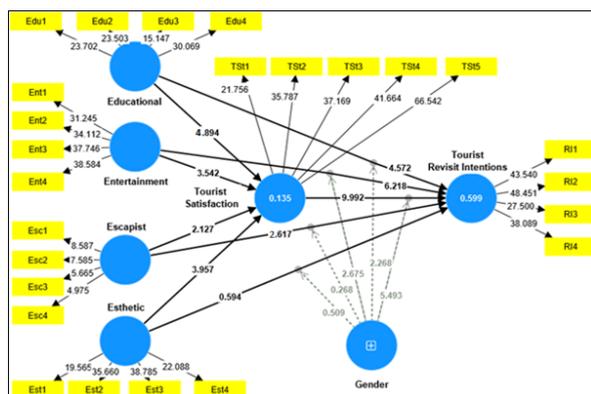


Figure: 2 Path Coefficients

VII IMPLICATIONS

Theoretical Implications

The study contributes to a deeper theoretical understanding of the dynamics between wellness tourism experiences, satisfaction, and revisit intentions. It highlights the role of different dimensions of wellness in shaping tourists' perceptions and intentions, offering a more nuanced perspective on the field. It reinforces the idea that a positive experience goes beyond a one-time visit and can lead to sustained interest in the destination. Further, the exception of the esthetic experience in the model raises questions about its significance in wellness tourism. This finding prompts further theoretical exploration into the factors that make the esthetic aspect of wellness less influential in driving satisfaction and revisiting intentions compared to

other dimensions. Wellness experiences are not one-dimensional but encompass various facets; each contributing differently to tourist satisfaction and revisit intentions. This understanding challenges traditional, simplistic views of wellness tourism. Moreover, the research underscores the importance of considering gender as a moderating variable in tourism studies. This finding extends existing theories by acknowledging that gender differences can significantly influence how tourists respond to and engage with wellness tourism experiences, necessitating gender-sensitive frameworks.

Practical Implications

In terms of practical application, the current research offers business professionals in the market helpful guidelines for creating wellness tourism experiences. Destination marketers and wellness tourism providers can leverage the findings to enhance their marketing strategies. Promoting wellness experiences that align with the dimensions found to be significant (educational, entertainment) can attract a wider audience of wellness tourists. According to the research findings, developing informative and entertaining options at wellness locations may boost visitor satisfaction and encourage more people to return. To accommodate these characteristics, wellness providers might vary their offerings. Additionally, by recognizing the significance of the educational, entertainment, and escapist dimensions, wellness providers can curate more enriching and diverse experiences that align with the interests of tourists. This includes offering workshops, cultural activities, and wellness programs that cater to these dimensions. Moreover, the study supports the idea of market segmentation within wellness tourism. Wellness centres can segment their target markets based on tourists' preferences for specific wellness dimensions, allowing for more personalized marketing efforts. As per the results, tourist satisfaction is a crucial mediator. It indicates that maintaining high service quality is essential for wellness destinations to provide excellent wellness services. Continuous improvement in services, staff training, and facilities can help boost satisfaction levels. The results emphasize how crucial it is to perform empirical research to guide decisions in the wellness tourism sector. Planning strategically and allocating resources may be guided by on-going study and observation of visitor preferences and experiences.

VIII LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE SCOPE

This research has a few drawbacks, regardless of its excellent contributions. These limitations can be eliminated in future studies. First, the research sample solely includes Indian wellness tourists, thus there are no comparisons with other forms of wellness tourism in other nations. The survey's reach may be widened in future research, and those studies can compare samples from other nations, making the results more broadly applicable. Second, this research examined only one potential mediating factor—tourist satisfaction—in its analysis of the effects of the wellness tourism experience on visitors' inclinations to return. Thus, future studies should integrate other factors for a comparative investigation of the mediating impact, providing more thorough recommendations for the long-term growth of wellness tourism and methods to enhance visitors' revisit intentions. Moreover, other variables impacting revisit intention should be included in the model(s). Third, only gender was examined as a moderating variable, while other demographic variables might also act as a moderator. Thus, future studies could incorporate other socio-demographic variables as well.

IX CONCLUSION

Wellness tourism experiences have gained popularity as individuals seek meaningful and rejuvenating travel experiences. They offer a chance to recalibrate one's well-being, reconnect with oneself and nature, and return home with a sense of renewal and energy. The study's findings show that visitor wellness experiences may be an effective way to increase visitors' desire to return. In response to the features of wellness tourism, this paper develops a robust model using empirical evidence and finds that, with the exception of the esthetics experience, a wellness tourism experience may elicit visitor satisfaction, which favourably affects visitor return intentions. The research has shown significant and positive relationships between educational, entertainment, tourist satisfaction, and revisit intentions by examining the moderating role of gender. In addition, the moderating role of gender in the relationship between wellness tourism experience and tourist revisit intentions acknowledges that gender differences can impact how tourists perceive and respond to wellness experiences. Moreover, the theoretical and practical implications of the study shed light on the complex interplay of wellness tourism experiences, satisfaction, and revisit intentions.

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