Domestic Tourists' Perceived Value and Satisfaction in Island Tourism: The Significance of Education and Awareness in Sustainable Tourism

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ABSTRACT

Tourism has been found to be a significant contributor to the economy. However, the success of a travel destination is largely determined by the interplay between the tourism service provider, tourists' satisfaction and the destination itself. This study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of domestic visitors' satisfaction levels and perceived value of island tourism, with focus on Sapi Island, Sabah. By addressing challenges in visitor management, infrastructure development and environmental preservation, the paper aims to provide insights that support balanced tourism growth. The study attempts to determine the essential elements that influence visitors' by looking at elements including relevance, accessibility, infrastructure, cultural value, recreation and aesthetic aspects. Purposive random selection was performed, with 384 respondents representing domestic visitors to Sapi Island in Sabah. Questionnaires were circulated from August to October 2024. The results provide insightful information to direct tourism management plans, raise visitors' satisfaction and increase the destination's attractiveness for domestic travellers. This study holds significant value in contributing to sustainable tourism practices, particularly in Sapi Island. This study also highlights the importance of educating all tourism stakeholders, including tourists, about the importance of preserving the environment of the tourism destination. Effective tourism education will not only provide valuable insights for tourists, but it will also help the tourism destination to achieve a more sustainable future while enhancing tourists' satisfaction.

Keywords: Tourist Satisfaction, Perceived Value, Tourism Education, Sapi Island Sabah

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF STUDY

Introduction

Studies on domestic tourists' satisfaction can help to improve tourism management strategies and visitor experiences. Tourist satisfaction encompasses the total experience and satisfaction gained from visiting a destination (Sohn et al., 2018). Lina et al. (2025) found that service quality, natural attractiveness, recreational possibilities and cultural experiences all had an impact on tourist satisfaction. This in turn, will lead to favourable word-of-mouth and repeat visits, boosting the destination's economic benefits and sustainability (Tosun et al., 2015). According to Bayih and Singh (2020), tourists' overall satisfaction is significantly predicted by both push and pull travel motivations, which in turn will influence the intention to revisit and recommend. Therefore, understanding the factors that influence tourists' satisfaction can help stakeholders enhance service quality and tailor marketing efforts to meet their expectations. Despite making up the majority of tourism, the domestic travel market is often overlooked and disregarded in favour of international tourism in terms of studies and policies. To achieve positive and sustainable development, domestic tourism should be amalgamated with the international tourism, which are extremely sensitive to both external and internal environments (Bayih and Singh, 2020). Tourism, as a key economic contributor, is a dynamic sector that will

not only augment labour but also create jobs, increase consumption expenditures, and provide employment prospects (Georgios, 2022).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Elements of Perceived Value

Bigne and Sanchez (2001) defined perceived value as a tourist's view of the benefits and advantages gained from their tourism experience. The proof involves weighing the benefits of travel against the expenditures and efforts required to explore a region. This refers to the perceived balanced between the benefits of tourism and the time, resources, and effort invested by visitors. Perceived value, which includes both monetary and non-monetary benefits, has a positive impact on travellers' intentions to return to a destination and recommend it to others. Kim, Hsu and Lee (2017) found that perceived value had a significant impact on travel decisions. The experience directly impact customer satisfaction and likelihood to return or suggest. It also impacts on how travellers evaluate a destination' appeal and competitiveness in the travel business. Visitors to popular sites should expect experiences that meet or surpass their expectations. In contrast, low perceived value might lead to negative bahaviours. Visitors who are disappointed or do not reach their expectations are less likely to return or promote the destination to others.

Improving perceived value is crucial to encourage positive tourist behaviour and outcomes. A study by Regalado-Pezúa (2023) found that perceived value has a substantial impact on tourist satisfaction and intention to revisit. They found that higher perceive value led to improved satisfaction and higher probability of tourists returning and promoting the destination. In addition, tourists' perceived service quality is also an important predictor of satisfaction, which influences behavioural intentions. The improvement of service quality will increase perceived value, resulting in positive tourist behaviors such as recurring trips and favourable word of mouth (Alén, Rodríguez, & Brea, 2007). In essence, perceived value in tourism is not solely about price, it encompasses the entire spectrum of benefits and experiences that tourists perceive to derive from their visit, making it a pivotal aspect of destination and management and marketing strategies.

Assessing Satisfaction Level

Tourist satisfaction in tourism refers to the ability of a destination to fulfill or surpass tourists' expectation and experience. It is an important component in determining tourists' future behavior, such as intention to return and their inclination to promote the destination to others. A thorough understanding of tourists' attitudes and satisfaction is important for a successful marketing strategies and tourism management (Hadinejad et al. 2024). Visitors use this indicator to evaluate how well a place fits their needs through services, activities and overall experience. Successful tourism destinations require high levels of visitor satisfaction due to variables like favourable word-of-mouth, repeat visits, and overall success. According to Pujiastuti et al. (2022), perceived value and level of satisfaction play distinct roles in understanding visitor behaviour. Perceived value influences decision-making and a destination's overall value, whereas satisfaction assesses the experience's success in satisfying expectations and encouraging future behavior. To ensure sustainable tourism development and peasant tourist experiences, location management must monitor and improve these aspects. According to Oliver (2010), customer satisfaction refers to a consumer's experience of fulfillment, indicating that a product or service feature or product itself provides adequate consumption-related satisfaction. In tourism, this idea has a significant impact on tourists' future conduct, including repeat trips and good recommendations (Baker and Crompton, 2000). Satisfaction evaluation involves both cognitive and emotive components. Cognitive satisfaction refers to the intellectual appraisal of service quality, whereas affective satisfaction is the emotional response to the experience.

Education and Awareness in Sustainable Tourism

Maintaining a destination's natural environment requires the awareness and knowledge of sustainable tourism. The negative impacts of tourism is unavoidable (Wójcicki, Świtlik, & Dobrowolska, 2023) and therefore it is

crucial to reduce them as much as possible. Studies have indicated that there are certain negative aspects of tourism, particularly with regard to the destinations' nature. Problems such as irresponsible waste disposal, depletion of natural resources, and destruction of natural habitats, all of which brings impact on the wildlife and all the associated sociocultural life (Stem et al, 2003; Steven, Pickering & Castley, 2011). Furthermore, nature based tourism typically entails travelling to pristine, sensitive, and mostly uninterrupted areas (Larsen, 2016), which are susceptible to human impact (Wójcicki, Świtlik, & Dobrowolska, 2023). An early study showed that tourists' behavior and actions, rather than the overwhelming amount of tourists, contribute to environmental devastation (Lucas, 1984). These tourism activities are not negligible because it will bring both short and long term impact to the wildlife species and environment (Shannon et al., 2017). These negative impact will cause the host not only the destruction of the environment, but also the visitors' satisfaction as well. In the case of Sapi Island, Zahari et al (2022) discovered that marine debris, particularly plastics, is a major problem in that particular area. In their study, they highlighted the importance of educating the communities about waste management in order to preserve the natural beauty of the island.

Other than educating the local communities and the tourism players, tourists also need to be educated with the awareness and knowledge of sustainable tourism. There is an urgent need to educate the public about preserving the nature, particularly when travelling to nature destinations, particularly endangered areas, because their actions can put pressure on nature, therefore posing challenges on maintaining a sustainable destination (Wójcicki, Świtlik, & Dobrowolska, 2023). Providing education and awareness to all stakeholders, including tourists, as well as developing integrated strategies, offer promising solutions for lasting sustainable development and biodiversity conservation (Moorhouse et al., 2015; De Zoysa, 2022). Kolodziejczyk (2021) even proposed the establishment of educational facilities at popular tourist locations so that tourists could learn everything there is to know about conservation regulations. Through efficient interpretation and education, nature-based tourism needs to embrace sustainable tourism practices while supporting biodiversity and conservation (Buckley, 2015). The lack of awareness among tourists about environmental consequences is an urgent problem that needs to be addressed. These tourists must be educated to raise their awareness, make them more environmentally conscious, and make them care about the location that they visit (Jacobson & Robles, 1992). Furthermore, environmental education will a positive impact on the environment by influencing tourists to behave responsibly (Wang et al., 2022). Additionally, it was discovered that environmental education influences visitors' understanding, which in turn motivates them to act responsibly, thus offering a true solution for the present issue (Wang et al, 2024). By providing the necessary information, the negative impact on environment can be minimised, the destination will have a more sustainable future while enhancing tourists' experience and satisfaction.

Study setting

The tourism sector in Kota Kinabalu benefits several businesses, including hotels, restaurants and tour operators, due to rising tourist numbers (Danting et al., 2018). Sapi Island is located off the coast of Kota Kinabalu in Sabah, Malaysia and known as one of the five islands that form part of Tunku Abdul Rahman Marine Park. The island, known for its pristine beaches, crystal-clear waters, and bright coral reefs, is a favourite destination for both domestic and international travellers seeking a tropical holiday. Sapi Island offers a variety of recreational activities, including snorkeling, scuba diving and trekking. Its lush tropical terrain and diverse marine life make it ideal for nature lovers. Sapi Island, which is easily accessible by a short ride from Jesselton Point, is a popular destination in Sabah's expanding ecotourism business.

The industry's social, cultural and economic highlights the need for customized services and infrastructure to fulfill visitor expectations (Nguyen, 2021). Tourism stakeholders in Sabah rely on these information to customize services and infrastructure, improving visitor satisfaction and experience. To conserve Sapi Island's natural ecosystem, measures such as enhanced trash management and eco-friendly practices have been developed based on guest comments (Chen and Chen, 2010). Sapi Island plays a significant part in Sabah's tourism business, in addition to its natural beauty and recreational offerings. Stakeholders can promote sustainable tourism on Sapi Island by addressing visitor demands and preserving the island's unique ecosystems for future generations. Sapi Island is a well known tourist destination in Sabah, so it is sensible to use it as a reference to other tourism destination studies, particularly in island tourism.

The investigation aims to better understand the satisfaction and perceive value of domestic visitors visiting Sapi Island, Sabah. Although Sapi Island is a famous tourist destination, there is less empirical study on the value and satisfaction of domestic tourists. Developing effective destination management and marketing strategies requires understanding the perceived value and happiness of domestic visitors (Hsu et al, 2020). Previous studies showed that perceived value has a direct impact on traveler satisfaction and behaviour, leading to increased destination loyalty and economic benefits (Oliver, 1997; Bigne et al., 2005; Chi and Qu, 2008). Overall, this investigation may provide substantial insights into the aspects that impact tourists' perceived value and pleasure with their visit to Sapi Island, ultimately affecting the destination's competitiveness.

The goal of this study is to gain a thorough understanding of domestic visitors' satisfaction levels and perceived values in Sapi Island, Sabah. Su et al. (2020) defined perceived value as the perceived benefits or value of a destination, which contribute to the entire visitor experience. The inquiry will consider several aspects of the location, including relevance, accessibility, infrastructure, cultural value, recreation and aesthetic qualities. The study attempts to improve tourist management techniques and increase visitor satisfaction by analysing these factors. This study intends to evaluate domestics tourists' satisfaction with their experiences in Sapi Island, Sabah, and identify critical elements that impact their perceived value. Understanding these characteristics can help tourism operators enhance their services and increase overall satisfaction. Overall, this study aims to improve service quality and make Sapi Island a top tourism destination in Malaysia for domestic tourists seeking a rewarding travel experience. Specific studies studying about tourists' satisfaction in Pulau Sapi is limited. However, the findings from this study are crucial in the context of understanding tourists' expectations and factors that influence their satisfaction, particularly in island tourism. This research will benefit the tourist sector by providing more enjoyable and cost-effective experiences for future travellers.

The specific objectives of this paper are as follows:

1. To investigate the elements of perceived value used by domestic tourists to assess their visit to Sapi Island, Sabah

2. To examine the satisfaction level of domestic tourists visiting Sapi Island, Sabah

METHODOLOGY

The study collected and analysed data using quantitative methods. The study's data was collected via questionnaires. To ensure that respondents understood the questionnaire's questions, both English and Bahasa Malaysia were used. Questionnaires were first produced in English, then translated into Bahasa Malaysia, and finally back to English to guarantee question accuracy, readability and consistency. According to McDonald (2022), comparing the source language text message to the destination language text is one of the most essential aspects of determining message accuracy. The questionnaire was broken into three sections: A (demographic profiles), B (perceived value), and C (satisfaction level). The Likert scale was used in the questionnaire to categorise respondents' levels of agreements of disagreement with the statements presented. Purposive random sampling was performed, with 384 respondents representing domestic visitors to Sapi Island in Sabah. Questionnaires were circulated from August to October 2024. This study uses the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) for data analysis and a questionnaire as a data collection tool.

FINDINGS

Demographic profiles of respondents

Table 1 shows demographic information for 384 respondents. This study focusses on the perceived value and satisfaction level of domestic tourists in Sapi Island, Sabah, taking into account respondents' tourist background. Gender, age, race and frequency of visit were among the factors in demographics.

Table 1: Demographic profiles of respondents (N=384)

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	201	52.3
	Female	183	47.7
Age	19 and below	33	8.6
	20 - 29	157	40.9
	30 - 39	84	21.9
	40 - 49	48	12.5
	50 -59	39	10.2
	60 and above	23	6.1
Race	Malay	129	33.6
	Indian	77	20.1
	Chinese	109	28.4
	Others	69	18.0
Frequency of visit to Sapi Island	Once a year	144	37.5
	Twice a year	89	23.2
	3 - 5 times in a year	88	22.9
	More than 5 times in a year	63	16.4

Male respondents outnumber female respondents, with 201 males (52.3%) and 183 females (47.7 %). The majority of these 384 responders are between the ages of 20 and 29, with 157 responses, accounting for 40.9% of all respondents. Out of 384 responses, 84 (21.9%) were aged 30 to 39. The age group of 19 and below had 33 respondents out of 384, accounting for 8.6% of the total. The age groups of 40-49 and 50-59 had 48 and 39 respondents respectively, representing 12.5% and 10.2% of the total. Finally, the age category of 60 and above included just 23 respondents (6.1% of total respondents).

The majority of respondents (129, or 33.6%) are Malay. Chinese respondents account for 109 respondents, or 28.4% of the total, while 77 Indians (20.1%). 69 others *18.0%) of respondents representing various ethnicities such as Kadazan, Dusun, Rungus, Bisaya, Bajau, Suluk, Murut, Brunei, Sungai, Bugis, Sino and Iban.

Regarding the respondents' frequency of visits to Sapi Island Sabah as a tourist destination. Respondents can provide replies in four ranges: once a year, twice a year, three to five times a year, or more than five times a year. The Table indicates that the majority of respondents only visited Sapi Island once per year. It takes 144 out of 384 responders, or 37.5% of 100%. 89 respondents visited Sapi Island twice a year, accounting for 23.2%, while another 88 visited 3-5 times, accounting for 22.9% of all respondents. Only 63 respondents (16.4%) reported visiting Sapi Island more than 5 times per year.

Research Objective 1: To investigate the element of perceived value used by domestic tourists to assess their visit to Sapi Island, Sabah

Table 2 shows data analysis on perceived value among domestic tourists in Sapi Island, including frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation. The findings highlight that Sapi Island's natural beauty is visually appealing. Out of 384 respondents, 178 chose strongly agree, while 170 chose agree, representing 46.4% and 44.3% respectively. Neutral was the third most common response, accounting for 17.4% of all respondents. In addition, the sum of respondents who selected disagree and strongly disagree is 14 and 5, or 3.6% and 1.3%, respectively, making it the least frequently selected option in this item.

Table 2: Elements of perceived value assessed by domestic tourist to Sapi Island, Sabah (N=384)

Elements	Scale	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Mean	Standard Deviation
1. The natural beauty of Sapi Island is visually appealing.	Strongly Disagree	5	1.3	4.31	0.824
	Disagree	14	3.6		
	Neutral	17	4.4		
	Agree	170	44.3		
	Strongly Agree	178	46.4		
2. The quality of recreational facilities enhances my overall experience.	Strongly Disagree	11	2.9	4.19	0.864
	Disagree	8	2.1		
	Neutral	23	6.0		
	Agree	196	51.0		
	Strongly Agree	146	38.0		
3. I find the recreational activities on Sapi Island enjoyable and worthwhile.	Strongly Disagree	5	1.3	4.34	0.855
	Disagree	17	4.4		
	Neutral	16	4.2		
	Agree	151	39.3		
	Strongly Agree	195	50.8		
4. I am satisfied with the accessibility and amenities provided on Sapi Island.	Strongly Disagree	9	2.3	4.13	0.874
	Disagree	12	3.1		
	Neutral	35	9.1		
	Agree	193	50.2		
	Strongly Agree	135	35.2		
5. The cultural significance of Pulau Sapi positively impacts my overall experience.	Strongly Disagree	9	2.3	4.39	0.902
	Disagree	12	3.1		
	Neutral	20	5.2		
	Agree	122	31.8		
	Strongly Agree	221	57.6		

The second aspect, “the quality of recreation facilities enhances my whole experience”. 196 respondents (51.0%) chose the agreed-upon scale point, resulting in the highest ranking for this issue. Strongly agree and neutral were the second and third most popular options, with 146 (38.0%) and 23 (6.0%) respondents, respectively. Only 11 respondents (2.9%) chose the fourth option, while 8 respondents (2.1%) opted strongly disagree. The third item in the data analysis “I find Sapi Island's recreational activities enjoyable and beneficial”. The majority of responders (195 out of 384) strongly agreed with the statement, accounting for 50.8% of the total. 151 responders (39.3%) agree with the statement. The disagree scale point is the third most common, with 17 respondents (4.4%). The neutral and strongly disagree options were chosen by 16 (4.2%) and 5 (1.3%) respondents, respectively, making it the least often selected item. The fourth item indicates satisfaction with the accessibility and amenities of Sapi Island. The majority of responders (193 out of 384) agreed, accounting for 50.3% and receiving the highest scale point. Furthermore, 135 respondents (35.2%) strongly agree with this statement, making it the second highest ranking. Neutral was the third most common response, accounting for 35 responses or 9.1% of the total. Disagreement was the second lowest, with just 19 respondents or 3.1% of the total. Finally, strongly disagree is the least common, with only 9 (2.3%) respondents. The questionnaire revealed that “the cultural significance of Sapi Island had a favourable impact on my overall experience”, with 57.6% of 221 respondents strongly agreeing with this statement. The second largest frequency is the agree scale point, with 122 responders (31.8%). Following the neutral scale point, 20 respondents (5.2%) disagreed, 12 disagreed (3.1%), and 9 severely disagreed (2.3% of total replies).

Research Objective 2: To examine the satisfaction level of domestic tourists visiting Sapi Island, Sabah

Table 3 shows data analysis on level of satisfaction among domestic tourists in Sapi Island, including frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation. The first item, "Staff are always polite," received 173 responses, with 45.1% agreeing (scale rate = 4, mode). Among 162 respondents, 42.2% agreed with the item,

making it the second most popular pick. Some respondents chose indifferent, disagree, or strongly disagree with the item, with 30 (7.8%), 15 (3.9%), and 4 (1.0%) respectively. The mean for this question is 4.23, with a standard deviation of 0.835. The second question is whether the staff is particularly helpful in aiding clients with enquiries. The majority of responders (183, 47.7%) agreed with the statement with a scale rate of 4. Only 9 (2.3%) of respondents strongly disagreed, while 15 (3.9%) disagreed. 155 (40.4%) respondents strongly agreed with the question, followed by 22 (5.7%) who answered neutrally. The mean for this question is 4.20, with a standard deviation of 0.889.

Table 3: Satisfaction of domestic tourist visiting Sapi Island, Sabah (N=384)

Elements	Scale	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Mean	Standard Deviation
1. Staff are always polite.	Strongly Disagree	4	1.0	4.23	0.835
	Disagree	15	3.9		
	Neutral	30	7.8		
	Agree	173	45.1		
	Strongly Agree	162	42.2		
2. The staff are very helpful in assisting customer with inquiries.	Strongly Disagree	9	2.3	4.20	0.889
	Disagree	15	3.9		
	Neutral	22	5.7		
	Agree	183	47.7		
	Strongly Agree	155	40.4		
3. I am satisfied with the service provided.	Strongly Disagree	13	3.4	4.20	0.892
	Disagree	8	2.1		
	Neutral	20	5.2		
	Agree	192	50.0		
	Strongly Agree	151	39.3		
4. I am enjoyed my travel experience while using the excellent service quality.	Strongly Disagree	15	3.9	4.30	0.929
	Disagree	6	1.6		
	Neutral	17	4.4		
	Agree	157	40.9		
	Strongly Agree	189	49.2		
5. I had a pleasant journey because of the good service quality.	Strongly Disagree	6	1.6	4.40	0.873
	Disagree	12	3.1		
	Neutral	28	7.3		
	Agree	115	29.9		
	Strongly Agree	223	58.1		
6. I am satisfied with the overall safety and management at Sapi Island.	Strongly Disagree	7	1.8	4.35	0.884
	Disagree	13	3.4		
	Neutral	25	6.5		
	Agree	133	34.6		
	Strongly Agree	206	53.6		
7. The crowd levels had an impact on my overall experience. (Difficult to relax or do activities because of the number of visitors).	Strongly Disagree	45	11.7	3.83	1.367
	Disagree	27	7.0		
	Neutral	45	11.7		
	Agree	98	25.5		
	Strongly Agree	169	44.0		

8. I am satisfied with the wildlife encounters (e.g. marine life, birds) at Sapi Island.	Strongly Disagree	6	1.6	4.27	0.927
	Disagree	22	5.7		
	Neutral	25	6.5		
	Agree	141	36.7		
	Strongly Agree	190	49.5		
9. The island was well-maintained and clean.	Strongly Disagree	11	2.9	4.40	0.964
	Disagree	13	3.4		
	Neutral	26	6.8		
	Agree	95	24.7		
	Strongly Agree	239	62.2		
10. I had memorable moments during my time on Sapi Island.	Strongly Disagree	9	2.3	4.28	0.888
	Disagree	14	3.6		
	Neutral	16	4.2		
	Agree	165	43.0		
	Strongly Agree	180	46.9		

The third question concerns if “I am satisfied with the service provided”. The majority of respondents (192, 50.0%) agreed with the statement with a scale rate of 4. The second largest scale percentage of responders, 151 (39.3%), indicated strong agreement. The survey results show that 20 (5.2%) respondents answered neutrally, while 8 (2.1%) and 13 (3.4%) answered disagree or strongly disagree. The mean for this question is 4.20, with a standard deviation of 0.892. The fourth question is that “I enjoyed my vacation experience and had excellent service quality”. Out of 189 respondents (scale rate=5, median), 49.2% strongly agree with the statement. Among the 157 respondents, 40.9% agreed with the item, making it the second most popular pick. However, 17 respondents (4.4%) chose to be neutral on the subject. The lowest scale is strongly disagree and disagree, with 15 people strongly disagreeing (3.9%) and 6 disagreeing (1.6%) on the issue. The mean for this question is 4.00, with a standard deviation of 0.929. In response to the fifth question, “I had a positive experience due to the good service quality”. The majority of respondents, 223 (58.1%), strongly agreed with the statement (scale rate=5, median). Only 6 (1.6%) responders indicated strongly disagree, the lowest scale rating. 115 (29.9%) people strongly agreed with the question, followed by 28 (7.3%) who were impartial, and 12 (3.1%) who disagreed. The mean for this question is 4.40 with a standard deviation of 0.873.

The sixth question asks “I am pleased with the overall safety and management at Sapi Island”. The majority of respondents (53.6%) strongly agreed (scale rate=5) with this statement. The second highest scale rate is agree, with 133 (34.6%) respondents. Next, 25 (6.5%) of respondents answered neutrally. The survey results show that 13 (3.4%) respondents disagreed, while 7 (1.8%) strongly disagreed with the questions. The mean for this question is 4.35, with a standard deviation of 0.884. The seventh question is whether “crowd level had an impact on my entire experience (Difficult to relax or participate in activities due to the large number of people)”. Of the responders, 169 (44.0%) strongly agreed with the statement (scale rate = 5). The second highest scale rate is agree, with 98 (25.5%) of responders. The scale rates for neutral and strongly agree are 45 (11.7%) each. Only 27 respondents (7.0%) indicated disagreement, the lowest scale rate. The mean for this question is 3.83 with a standard deviation of 1.367.

The next question is “I am satisfied with nature interactions on Sapi Island, including marine life and birds”. 190 respondents (49.5%) strongly agreed with the statement, followed by 141 (36.7%) who agreed, 25 (6.5%) who were neutral, 22 (5.7%) who disagreed, and 6 (1.6%) who strongly disagreed. The mean for this question is 4.27 with a standard deviation of 0.927. The ninth item in the data analysis is "The island was well-maintained and clean”. The majority of responders (239 out of 384) strongly agreed with the statement, accounting for 62.2% of the total. There are also 95 responses (24.7% of the total) that agree with the statement. The neutral scale point is the third most common, with 26 respondents (6.8%). Additionally, disagree and strongly disagree had the lowest scale rates of 13 (3.4%) and 11 (2.9%), respectively, making it the least commonly used item. The mean for this question is 4.40 with a standard deviation of 0.964. Question

10 asks about "unforgettable memories from my time on Sapi Island". The majority of responders (180, 46.9%) strongly agreed (scale rate=5). Only 9 (2.3%) respondents strongly disagreed, indicating the lowest response rate. In total, 165 respondents (43.0%) agreed, 16 (4.2%) were neutral, and 14 (3.6%) disagreed with the question. The mean for this question is 4.28, with a standard deviation of 0.888. Based on 10 questions, the average satisfaction level among domestic tourists in Sapi Island was 3.83 to 4.40.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

To find out what motivates people to travel to Sapi Island, the researcher posed a number of linked questions. According to the responses, the majority of tourists concur that Sapi Island is mostly visited for its cultural value, which enhances their entire experience, rather than for professional or business-related reasons. These results are consistent with earlier studies emphasizing the value of cultural heritage in augmenting visitor experiences (Chong, 2021; Tan, 2018). Brooks et al. (2023) stated that cultural heritage sites often enhance visitors' experiences by providing a deeper connection to the place and its history. Sapi Island is renowned for its stunning natural beauty, relaxed atmosphere and recreational opportunities, all of which make it the perfect place for leisure activities that provide a break from everyday life and draw large numbers of tourists. This is in line with research by Smith (2019), who found that tourists' perceptions of the worth of a destination are greatly influenced by its natural beauty. Because their first visit was so enjoyable, many tourists return back to the island. For instance, in the questionnaire, participants indicated how much they like the tranquil settings and breathtaking views of the ocean, which make them want to come back. This return visit shows that Sapi Island continuously lives up to the expectations of tourists looking for a tranquil and revitalizing getaway. Jones and William (2020) concurred, finding that the unspoiled surroundings and little human interference improve the whole experience and cultivate a profound respect for natural environments. Visitors' experiences are greatly enhanced by Sapi Island's natural beauty, which leaves them with lifelong memories that encourage return trips. This connection to nature creates a sense of familiarity and attractiveness to the location. This island offers more than simply vacation, it's a place to reconnect with nature and experience a peaceful, memorable getaway. Davies's (2018) earlier work, which highlighted the significance of natural features in producing unforgettable travel experiences, support this conclusion.

While some travellers were interested in seeing the historical and cultural sites, others stated that the destination's reputation as a serene and picturesque place drew them in. this response attest to the importance of these perceived value components in drawing tourist to the island. However, additional research has demonstrated that accessibility and recreational opportunities are also very important in determine how satisfied and positive visitors are (Hassan, 2020; Rahman, 2019). Overall, the results show that Sapi Island's recreational opportunities, natural beauty and cultural relevance are important components of perceived value that draw domestic travellers and improve their entire experience. These components support earlier studies and emphasise how crucial it is to retain and advance these qualities in order to maintain the island's appeal as a tourist destination.

Excellent service, safety and the natural surroundings are important satisfaction criteria that draw tourists to Sapi Island. The staff's politeness and eagerness to answer any questions made a big difference in the visitors' experience. These results are consistent with the earlier research that highlights the value of staff professionalism and friendliness in raising visitors' satisfaction (Lee, 2021; Kim, 2020). The expertise and friendliness of the staff make guests feel valued and supported during their visit. This contentment with the service makes one feel at ease and contributes to a memorable experience. Additionally, many of respondents in this study agreed about how much they like the excellent service they receive. A pleasant and simple travel experience supported by first-rate service has a significant impact on favorable perceptions of the destination. In agreement, Smith (2019) discovered that total visitor satisfaction is greatly impacted by service quality in several areas, including transportation, information sharing and customer support. In addition, recreational experiencing aspects, such as the admiration of natral landscapes, have a substantial impact on tourists' memories of a destination. These positive memories have significant impact on their satisfaction and loyalty (Park, Kim, & Choi, 2017).

The administration and safety of this island are also major factors in attracting visitors. Visitors report feeling comfortable while there and mentioning efficient management strategies that ensure their wellbeing. The

island's hygiene and well-maintained facilities have a big impact on this satisfying experience. Johnson and Sampson (2019) stated that in order to create a secure and comfortable atmosphere for tourists, cleanliness and efficient management are essential. Also, Soehardi (2021) stated that tourist satisfaction depends largely on aspects such as accessibility, appeal, safety and health and hygiene. Furthermore, the island's natural experiences such as the variety of birds and marine life are frequently cited as the trip's high points. Adventurous and nature lovers are drawn to the island because of the opportunity to see these wonders in a pure and well-preserved environment. Some respondents agreed that the island's stellar service reputation drew them in and emphasized how the island's tidy and well-kept surroundings enhanced their enjoyment of their vacation. This feedback shows how significant these elements are in drawing tourists to the island, including excellent service, cleanliness and safety. However, earlier studies have demonstrated that accessibility and recreational opportunities are also very important in determining how satisfied and positive visitors are (Lim, 2020; Rahman, 2019). These results demonstrate the importance of first-rate service, security and the surrounding environment in drawing domestic travellers to Sapi Island. The primary determinants of satisfaction align with prior studies and emphasise the need of upholding high standards in these areas to ensure continued visitor satisfaction.

Educational institutions can benefit greatly from this research, especially those that study tourism. It gives visitors a deeper understanding of the factors influencing their perception of value and degree of pleasure. In addition to recent advancements in cultural tourism. It emphasizes the significance of these components for both education and efficient tourist management and marketing methods. Additionally, this research provides students with a useful illustration of the growth of tourism, specifically in place like Sapi Island. By examining the complexities needed to maintain such a setting, the research highlights the challenges faced by tourism professionals in finding a balance between growth and environmental and cultural preservation. It also highlights how crucial it is to use sustainable tourist techniques to make sure that the growth of the industry doesn't negatively impact the environment or disrupt the cultural heritage of the community. A study by Wójcicki, Świtlik, & Dobrowolska (2023) found that if tourism is not properly managed, it can pose more threat than benefits. Uncontrolled development, irresponsible waste disposal, and disturbance of wildlife habitat may all outweigh the economic value of tourism. They emphasised the importance of educating the tourists and other stakeholders in order to minimise the impact of tourism to the destination. In this regard, the study offers insightful insights on the necessity of responsible tourist strategies that preserve the destination's identity while also drawing tourists. It also highlights how important it is to ensure that the benefits of tourism do not negatively impact local residents' way of life. Students may make well-informed judgements on how to market and run tourism destinations in a profitable and sustainable way by using the study's insights. This study helps students negotiate the difficulties of contemporary tourism development by looking at the particular instance of Sapi Island and providing useful, real-world examples that they may use in their future tourist management employment.

The knowledge gathered from this study can help local companies create goods and services that specifically address the tastes and requirements of tourists. Businesses should think about marketing handicrafts manufactured locally, providing family-friendly activities or panning cultural events that provide visitors genuine experiences. These programs can help businesses better meet the needs of travellers, which can ultimately boost their bottom line. By aligning their products, with what tourists are seeking for, local companies can increase their visibility and revenue. This paper emphasises how crucial it is to include the local community in tourism-related activities in order to guarantee that the financial gains from travel are shared equitably and directly assist the community. This could entail locals educating visitors about their cultural heritage through performances or it could entail employing them for tourism-related professions.

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