

# Tourist Motivation and Satisfaction Towards Hot Springs Destination

Lusianus Kusdibyo<sup>1,\*</sup> Lina Setiawati<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Department of Business Administration, Politeknik Negeri Bandung, Bandung 40012, Indonesia*

\**Corresponding author. Email: [lusianus.kusdibyo@polban.ac.id](mailto:lusianus.kusdibyo@polban.ac.id)*

## ABSTRACT

This research aims to examine and measure the relationship between tourist motivation and satisfaction towards natural hot springs tourism. A self-administered questionnaire was distributed and a total of 375 data were valid for the analysis. A two-stage PLS-SEM was carried out to evaluate the measurement and structural model. The result shows that all the hypotheses tested have positive and significant effects. Tourist push motivation has a strong effect on pull motivation and satisfaction. Tourist pull motivation itself has a significant impact on satisfaction. These findings imply that both tourist push and pull motivations need to become primary attention for hot springs destination managers to create tourist satisfaction.

**Keywords:** *hot springs, push motivation, pull motivation, satisfaction, PLS-SEM*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Natural hot springs are scattered all over Indonesia since this country is situated in the Asia Pacific Ring of Fire, which is home to numerous volcanoes. People visit hot springs for a variety of reasons, including recreation and health [1-3]. Natural hot springs tourism is one of the advantages of the West Java province as it has a total of 12 natural hot springs resorts, the majority of which are visited by domestic visitors. However, there is scarce of studies that identify why actually tourists are attracted to hot springs destinations and what their level of satisfaction is. Indeed, both motivation and satisfaction are the basic constructs in understanding tourism behavior in tourism studies [4]. Thus, it is worthwhile to analyze tourist motivation and satisfaction with hot springs as motivation is a driver for tourists to visit a destination, and satisfaction is believed a key success to market a destination [5]. Motivation and satisfaction later can lead to destination loyalty [6, 7] which is believed to be imperative in current competitive tourism destination markets.

Past studies on hot springs have investigated tourist motivation and satisfaction separately [7, 8], and sparse studies combine these two variables in one analysis. For example, Cain, Busser's [8] study identifies spa customer segments based upon their motivations and tests these segments in relation to other variables. Another study is carried out by Kamata [9] who uses a factor-cluster approach to segment Japanese spa tourists based on their motivations. However, these two studies do not include

the satisfaction variable. A study related to tourist hot springs satisfaction is conducted by Shavanddasht and Allan [7] who investigate the satisfaction of first-time and repeat hot springs tourists and link it with involvement and loyalty constructs. These three studies measure tourist hot springs' motivation and satisfaction independently. Thus, it is necessary to combine both motivation and satisfaction in one study in the hot springs tourism context to better understand the nature of the antecedent and consequence of these two variables. Further, tourists' motivation and satisfaction in hot springs tourism may have different components to other tourism attractions.

Driving by the identified research gap, this study seeks to measure the influence of tourist motivation on satisfaction. The contribution of this study is twofold. Theoretically, it will extend our current knowledge on motivation and satisfaction in the hot springs tourism context. Practically, it will offer hot springs destination managers a practical tool that can be used to promote their destination on the basis of tested items on tourist motivation and satisfaction.

## 2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### 2.1. Tourist Satisfaction

Satisfaction in the tourism context describes an emotional positive evaluation of tourist vacation experience [10]. Oliver's [11] expectation-

disconfirmation theory (EDT) is an appropriate model to evaluate cognitive satisfaction. EDT measures the difference between what is expected and what is received. Satisfaction will be achieved when what is expected and what is received are equal. However, dissatisfaction occurs when what is received is lower than what is expected. In contrast, delight is when what is received is beyond what is expected [11, 12]. The EDT model has been widely used to explain tourist satisfaction [10]; however, some scholars claim that in addition to cognitive evaluation, affective evaluation is also essential in shaping satisfaction. As a result, many tourism studies, including the present one, use cognitive-affective satisfaction metrics [13]. In hot springs tourism, satisfaction is reported as a pleasurable feeling due to the hygiene and cleanness, safe environment, convenience, staff, and friendliness of hot spring destinations in fulfilling tourists' needs [7, 8]. When tourists are satisfied with a particular destination, it is believed that the destination meets the tourists' needs [14]. Thus, tourists' satisfaction with hot springs is achieved when the hot springs facilities meet or exceed their expectations. It can be said, then, that satisfaction is a key indicator in destination marketing that encourages visitors to revisit.

## **2.2. Travel Motivation**

Motivation is the psychological factor that propels people to take action [15]. Scholars have mostly agreed that the push and pull motivation model is commonly accepted and often used in various tourism studies [16, 17] to explain tourist travel motivation behavior. Dann [18] notes that tourist motivation must be examined using a two-level framework, the driving or the push factors and the pull factors. The push factors are focused on the question "why," which is a psychological factor in tourists' travel decisions. Meanwhile, the pull factors concentrate on the issue of "where," which is a physiological element in destination selection [18, 19]. The pull factors are used in response to the push factors in this motivation system, which is focused on the interaction viewpoint. The push factors are correlated to tourist internal motivation while the pull factors are related to the destination attraction that attracts tourists to visit [20, 21]. In other words, the push factors encourage individuals to travel while the pull factors help to understand why people choose a particular tourist destination. Despite the fact that they are independent decisions, they are related one to another [22]. People travel because they are driven by their internal motivation and drawn by the external factors from destination qualities; as a result, tourist push motivation comes first, followed by pull motivation factors.

H1: Tourist push motivation influences pull motivation.

Earlier research indicates that few tourism researchers have looked into the relationship between motivation and satisfaction, but not in hot springs tourism. Albayrak and Caber [23] come up with two diverse ways in an effort to understand motivation-satisfaction associations. The first group proposes that motivation is the only indicator of tourist satisfaction; on the other hand, the latter group indicates that other factors play a role. Fluker and Turner [24] argue that the majority of research with the first viewpoint has failed to demonstrate a clear connection between motivation and satisfaction. This occurs because other constructs mediate the relationship between the two [25]. Thus, previous research has primarily relied on the second viewpoint. This research, however, uses the first perspective to show that there is a direct link between tourist motivation and satisfaction.

H2: Tourist push motivation influences tourist satisfaction.

The pull factors, which describe the characteristics of a destination that can enhance tourist incentive to travel, generate more interest from researchers and tourism marketing literature [18]. People travel because they are internally motivated and externally attracted by the characteristics of the destination [26]. They can take into account more than one pull factor at a time, as long as it responds well to the push factors [4, 18]. The destination selection is influenced by the pull factors, which include a combination of facilities and services or attributes provided by the destination [27]. It covers tangible resources e.g. recreation, beaches, facilities, and cultural attractions, and the traveler's perceptions and expectations e.g. benefit expected, marketing image, and novelty [28, 29]. Besides destination attributes in general, the quality of the accommodation, accessibility of the destination, the beauty of the scenery, the weather condition or climate, and the neatness are considered to be the other most significant factors affecting tourist satisfaction [30]. In addition, hot springs pull factors may include a pleasant atmosphere, natural environment, clean facilities, easy access, staff hospitality, and convenience. These attributes will impact hot springs' tourist satisfaction.

H3: Tourist pull motivation influences tourist satisfaction.

## **3. RESEARCH METHODS**

This study used a quantitative method to measure the relationship between variables. A two-stage PLS-SEM was employed to test the hypotheses. The first stage was to measure the reliability and validity of the data by examining the factor loadings, Cronbach's alpha, construct reliability, and average variance extracted. The Fornell-Larcker Criterion was used to measure the

discriminant validity. The second stage was conducted to test the structural model by examining the Goodness of Fit (GoF), the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ), and the cross-validated redundancy ( $Q^2$ ). The cut-off values to examine the first and the second stages followed the recommendation proposed by [31-34]. This study employed eleven indicators to measure push motivation and nine indicators for pull motivation. Four satisfaction indicators were also used. A five-point Likert scale, from 1 as “strongly disagree” to 5 “strongly agree”, was applied to measure all the indicators. The questionnaire was written in the Indonesian Language (*Bahasa Indonesia*) because the sample was made up of domestic tourists. Prior to distribution, the questionnaire was tested by two tourism marketing academics and three hot spring users to ensure its validity and suitability. All constructs, variables, and references used in this analysis were derived from previous research. Push motivation was adapted from [31] and [8]. Pull motivation was modified from [31]. Satisfaction was adjusted from [13] and [32].

The data were collected using a convenience sampling process. This approach allows someone over the age of 18 and has ever visited hot springs and bathed in the pool to be selected as a respondent. These criteria enable the researchers to get the right respondents to achieve the research objectives. The data collection took place within three months from June to August 2019 at the hot springs tourist attractions in Ciater Subang and Cipanas Garut, West Java, Indonesia using a self-administered technique. Of 390 data collected, 375 of them were valid for further data analysis. This sample size meets the 360 sample size criteria for using a 5% margin of error and a 95% confidence level [33].

#### 4. RESULTS

The results are explained in subsequent paragraphs. The characteristics of 375 respondents gathered in this study can be explained as follow. Male and female tourists are relatively equal in percentage with 46% and 54% in their distribution. Most of them are between 37 to 52 years old (34%), between 25 to 36 years (25%), between 18 to 24 years (27%), and above 53 years old (13%). The majority are private employees (36%), government employees (28%), university students (16%), high school students, and others (11% and 10% respectively). The purposes of visit are for recreation (56%) and health (44%).

The hypothetical relationships were measured using SEM-PLS. The appropriateness of the SEM model was evaluated in two phases. The measurement model is the first step, and the structural model evaluation is the second [34]. The construct validity and reliability were tested in the first stage to confirm the reliability and standardized indicator loadings. The loadings factor cut-off value is 0.6; indicators below the cut-off value (covering push1, push2, push3, push8, and push9) were

not included for further analysis. To determine the reliability and the internal consistency, the composite reliability value (CR) was set above 0.7. Additionally, convergent and discriminant validity were carried out to assess the validity of the construct. The average of variance extracted (AVE) was used to measure the convergent validity with the cut-off value of 0.5. The Fornell-Larcker Criterion was used to assess discriminant validity with a value below 0.9. This study satisfies all measurement requirements. The results of the construct validity fulfill the cut-off value as suggested by [35, 36]. Table 1 and Table 2 provide the results of the convergent and discriminant validity and the Fornell-Larcker Criterion respectively.

**Table 1.** Loading, Cronbach’s alpha (CA), construct reliability (CR), AVE (average variance extracted)

| Construct/item              | Loading* | CA    | CR    | AVE   |
|-----------------------------|----------|-------|-------|-------|
| Push Motivation             |          | 0.772 | 0.838 | 0.664 |
| Rest and relaxation         | 0.664    |       |       |       |
| Self-esteem                 | 0.662    |       |       |       |
| Escape                      | 0.715    |       |       |       |
| Novel experience            | 0.700    |       |       |       |
| Bathing in hot springs      | 0.669    |       |       |       |
| Social interaction          | 0.676    |       |       |       |
| Pull Motivation             |          | 0.887 | 0.909 | 0.525 |
| Scenic beauty               | 0.704    |       |       |       |
| Natural attractions         | 0.703    |       |       |       |
| Outdoor resources           | 0.735    |       |       |       |
| Sports activities           | 0.711    |       |       |       |
| Cleanliness and safety      | 0.791    |       |       |       |
| Facilities for recreational | 0.720    |       |       |       |
| Entertainment               | 0.689    |       |       |       |
| Historic and cultural       | 0.682    |       |       |       |
| Accessibility               | 0.781    |       |       |       |
| Satisfaction                |          | 0.832 | 0.888 | 0.664 |
| I am satisfied              | 0.825    |       |       |       |

| Construct/item                | Loading* | CA | CR | AVE |
|-------------------------------|----------|----|----|-----|
| My expectation is fulfilled   | 0.788    |    |    |     |
| Overall, I am happy           | 0.822    |    |    |     |
| I will revisit the hot spring | 0.823    |    |    |     |

Note: \*All significant at  $p < 0.05$

Table 2. Fornell-Larcker Criterion

|                 | Pull Motivation | Push Motivation | Satisfaction |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Pull Motivation | 0.725           |                 |              |
| Push Motivation | 0.619           | 0.681           |              |
| Satisfaction    | 0.713           | 0.612           | 0.815        |

The second stage was the structural model evaluation. This evaluation was conducted by applying bootstrapping using 5.000 iterations to evaluate the coefficient paths and the indicators' significance [36]. The evaluation of inner models was done in three ways by looking at  $R^2$ ,  $Q^2$ , and GoF. The results of these three tests are as follow. The total average of the  $R^2$  test in endogenous constructs shows a strong value of 0.556; it means that 55.6% of variation on tourist satisfaction can be accounted for by the push and pull motivation. According to Chin [37], the value of  $R^2 = 0.67$  is considered strong, 0.33 is moderate, and 0.19 is weak. The  $Q^2$  test results show small to large values, the value of  $Q^2 = 0.02$  is considered small, 0.15 is moderate, and 0.35 is large [36]. The  $Q^2$  of pull motivation and satisfaction are positive (0.245 and 0.433 respectively), representing the appropriate prediction of the proposed model (Chin et al., 2008). Meanwhile, the GoF test shows a large value (0.586). According to Tenenhaus, Mauger [38], a small GoF value is 0.1, moderate GoF is 0.25, and a large GoF is 0.38. From the testing of  $R^2$ ,  $Q^2$ , and GoF, it appears that the model formed is robust. So the hypotheses testing could be carried out.

Table 3 depicts the results of the hypotheses test. Push motivation, as expected, has a significant direct effect on pull motivation ( $\beta = 0.619$ ,  $p < .05$ ) and satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.276$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Hence, hypotheses H<sub>1</sub> and H<sub>2</sub> are accepted. Further, there is a significant direct effect of pull motivation on satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.146$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Thus, hypothesis H<sub>3</sub> is also accepted.

Table 3. The hypotheses testing results

|                                       | Coeff | t-value | Result   |
|---------------------------------------|-------|---------|----------|
| H1 Push motivation => Pull motivation | 0.619 | 19.661  | Accepted |
| H2 Push motivation => Satisfaction    | 0.276 | 5.752   | Accepted |
| H3 Pull motivation => Satisfaction    | 0.542 | 13.971  | Accepted |

Note: All significant at  $p < 0.05$

Figure 1 depicts a summary model of the relationship between variables. The figure shows the factor loadings of each variable, the correlations among variables, and the  $R^2$  of each dependent variable. The  $R^2$  represents the proportion of the variance for dependent variables (pull motivation and satisfaction) that are explained by an independent variable (push motivation) in a regression model. The results of  $R^2$  in Figure 1 show that 38.3% of pull motivation is explained by push motivation and 55.6% of satisfaction is explained by both push and pull motivations.

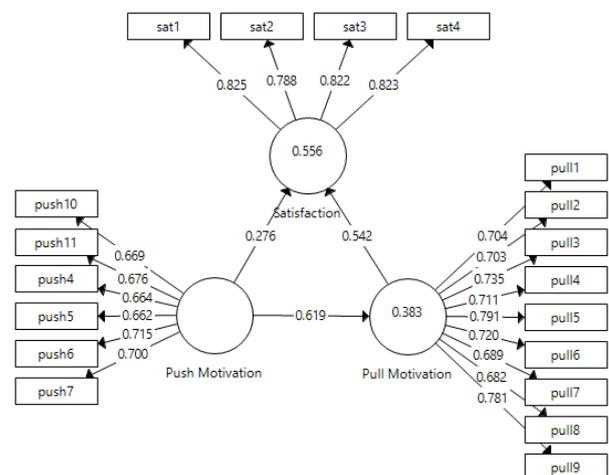


Figure 1 The Estimate Model Results

## 5. DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATION

First, this study produces important results about the relationship between hot springs tourist motivation and satisfaction. Hot springs tourists' push motivation significantly influences pull motivation. This result backs up the theory that push motivation comes before pull motivation [4, 18]. The relationship between push and pull motivation is rarely tested in previous studies. Thus,

this finding extends the extant literature on tourism marketing by providing empirical evidence on the relationship between these two motivations in the hot springs tourism context. The finding is in line with the concept which says that once travelers decide to travel, they will consider the pull factors of a destination that attracts them [4]. Therefore, pull factors generally are the destination attributes that correspond adequately to the push motivators [30]. This finding implies that hot springs destination managers should develop the destination in response to the push factors to attract tourist visitation. Push factors are internal factors derived from the internal needs of the travelers, thus it is difficult to control or influence by destination managers. Meanwhile, pull factors can be controlled through the provision of competitive destination attributes to attract tourists to visit the destination. Thus, destination managers could indirectly influence the travelers' push factors by providing attributes of the destination that match tourists' internal needs e.g. bathing in hot springs, clean and healthy hot springs, and friendly staff.

Second, the result of the study shows that hot springs tourist push motivation influences satisfaction. This finding supports a previous study conducted by Bayih and Singh [30] in the context of different tourism attractions in Ethiopia including nature-based tourism, historical castles, and leisure tourism. The result of this study also supports Wong, Musa's [4] study in the context of Malaysia as a country for a second home retirement destination. However, it contradicts the result obtained by Yoon and Uysal [16], in which the hypothesized relationship between the two constructs is not supported. This finding implies that tourist internal motivations are important to achieve satisfaction in hot springs tourism. Tourists push motivation such as getting close to nature, refreshing mind, escaping from routine, taking a healthy bath, and enjoying relaxed time need to be satisfied. The result of this study shows that the hot springs destinations have successfully fulfilled tourists' psychological needs. Destination managers may explore these motivation factors for preparing more promotional programs for the destination.

Third, the study shows that pull motivation factors also have a positive effect on satisfaction. This finding implies that attributes of a destination play a great role in creating hot springs tourist satisfaction. This is not surprising, as pull factors are visible aspects of the destination, allowing visitors to visually identify the destination. This finding supports many empirical works in the tourism field [4, 5, and 39]. However, it is different from Yoon and Uysal's [16] study which reports a negative correlation between tourist satisfaction and pull motivation. Wong et al. (2020) note that pull factors affect a traveler's destination choice, with a combination of facilities and services playing a key role. Thus, in order to fulfill tourists' needs, hot springs destination managers should ensure that the facilities and staff provided will meet or exceed tourists' expectations.

Fourth, theoretically, the findings of this study are important to enhance the understanding regarding the interrelationships between push motivation, pull motivation, and satisfaction. The findings reveal that push motivation is more dominant in influencing hot springs tourist pull motivation. The results support efforts to better understand tourist push and pull motivation in order to increase tourist satisfaction with hot springs tourism. Thus, to develop hot spring destinations, researchers should seriously consider tourist motivation and satisfaction variables. This study has proved that motivation-satisfaction variables are the main determinants of hot springs tourist visitation. It is one of the scant studies in hot springs tourism and undoubtedly adds to the understanding of motivation-satisfaction relationships in the context of hot springs destinations. Research on hot springs tourism is limited, therefore this study adds to the literature.

## 6. CONCLUSION

The outcomes of this study have managerial consequences for hot springs destination managers in Subang and Garut especially, as well as all hot springs destination managers generally. Firstly, hot spring tourists' satisfaction is greatly influenced by their push and pull motivation. For this reason, satisfaction-forming factors need to be considered. These factors include fulfilling the expectations of tourists with the reality they feel, giving various aspects of hot springs tours that can provide satisfaction, and covering overall feelings of satisfaction felt by tourists. Secondly, tourist push motivation has a great role to play in influencing tourist pull motivation as demonstrated by their direct significant relationship. Thus, hot springs managers should take attention to keep an excellent perception of the destination attributes that induce tourists to visit. Lastly, the push motivation variable has a greater significant effect on satisfaction compared to other relationships. For this reason, destination managers need to seriously take attention to this variable for the purpose of promoting the destination. The satisfaction aspect needs to be continuously improved as this variable is an important indicator for tourists' revisit intention. Likewise, the push motivation variable needs to be increased so that it has a greater effect on satisfaction. Improvements in tourists' satisfaction can be done by the managers through improving both push and pull motivation variables. The push motivation variable itself can be improved by launching promotions that can induce motivating factors of tourists to visit hot springs.

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