

## **TOURIST ATTITUDES TOWARD SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN BALI: THE ROLES OF POSITIVE IMPACT, EXPERIENTIAL SATISFACTION, AND MOTIVATION**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This study examines tourists' attitudes toward sustainable tourism development in Bali. Adopting a quantitative explanatory design, data from an online survey of 200 respondents who visited Bali within the past five years were analyzed using PLS-SEM. The results reveal that perceived positive impact and experiential satisfaction significantly influence attitudes toward sustainable tourism development. While motivation has no significant direct effect, it strengthens the relationship between perceived positive impact and attitude. Conclusively, tourists respond most strongly to visible destination benefits and lived experiences. Therefore, Bali's sustainable tourism communication should emphasize tangible local benefits and memorable visitor experiences.*

**Keywords:** *sustainable tourism, tourist attitude, positive impact, experiential satisfaction, motivation, Bali, PLS-SEM*

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Tourism remains one of the most visible arenas in which sustainability becomes concrete. In destinations such as Bali, tourism is not only an economic sector; it is also a social system that shapes local livelihoods, cultural preservation, land use, visitor behavior, and the quality of everyday life. As recent studies show, sustainable tourist behavior is now a fast-growing field, with scholars increasingly focusing on the factors that make tourists willing to support environmentally and socially responsible destinations rather than merely consume them as short-term leisure spaces (Li et al., 2024). This shift is important because many destinations are moving from a recovery mindset to a more structural sustainability agenda, where the key question is how to preserve destination value over time while still allowing tourism to contribute to welfare.

Bali is an especially relevant context for this discussion. The island has long been marketed as a high-value destination based on culture, nature, and hospitality, but its tourism future now

depends on balancing attractiveness with stewardship. Recent scholarship and public debate point to the tensions created by pressure on infrastructure, environmental quality, cultural sensitivity, and destination governance. At the same time, Bali continues to be a laboratory for sustainable tourism initiatives, from community-based tourism to greener accommodations and stronger visitor codes of conduct. These developments make Bali a suitable context for examining what shapes tourist attitudes toward sustainable tourism development.

This article examines the roles of perceived positive impact, experiential satisfaction, and motivation in shaping tourists' attitudes toward sustainable tourism development in Bali. The study is situated within the contemporary sustainability-tourism agenda and moves beyond crisis-centered narratives to focus on how tourist perceptions and experiences can support long-term social, cultural, economic, and environmental sustainability. Conceptually, tourists tend to support sustainable tourism development when they see real benefits for local communities, gain satisfying experiences, and have motivations that are in line with environmental and cultural values. In addition, motivation may operate as a boundary condition, strengthening certain relationships while leaving others unchanged.

The relevance of this problem has increased. A 2021 study argued that sustainable tourism is not simply an ethical label but a practical force for keeping tourism viable under changing conditions (Palacios-Florencio et al., 2021). More recent work has expanded the conversation by showing that sustainable tourist behavior is shaped by a combination of values, perceptions, destination characteristics, and experiential quality, and that these relationships are not always linear (He & Timothy, 2024; de Araújo et al., 2025; Suhartanto et al., 2025). Recent studies also highlight that tourists' support for sustainable tourism is increasingly shaped by their perception of social benefits and destination stewardship, especially when sustainability outcomes are visible and easy to evaluate (Alhomaïd et al., 2025). This means that a tourism destination cannot rely only on symbolic sustainability. It must produce positive effects that tourists can see, feel, and evaluate.

The present study addresses the following research questions:

- (1) Do positive impact, experiential satisfaction, and motivation influence attitude toward sustainable tourism development in Bali?
- (2) Does motivation moderate the relationship between positive impact and attitude toward sustainable tourism development?
- (3) Does motivation moderate the relationship between experiential satisfaction and attitude toward sustainable tourism development?

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES**

### **2.1 Sustainable tourism and tourist attitude**

Sustainable tourism refers to tourism development that meets present needs without compromising the environmental integrity, cultural authenticity, and socio-economic well-being required by future generations. In destination settings, sustainable tourism is not only a

planning concept but also an evaluative lens through which tourists judge whether the destination respects local communities, protects natural resources, and creates fair value distribution. The attitude of tourists toward sustainable tourism development therefore matters because attitude is an important psychological antecedent of support, recommendation, revisit intention, and compliance with destination norms.

Recent literature has reinforced the importance of sustainable tourist behavior as a distinct research domain. Li et al. (2024) show that the field is expanding quickly and that scholars are increasingly distinguishing between intended sustainable behavior and actual behavior. In destination research, this matters because tourists may verbally support sustainability while still making choices that create pressure on resources. The challenge for destination managers is not only to raise awareness, but to shape favorable attitudes that translate into responsible evaluation and action.

## 2.2 Positive impact

Positive impact in tourism refers to the tourist's perception that destination development creates beneficial outcomes for the host community and the destination itself. These outcomes may include better recreation facilities, stronger protection of natural and cultural assets, improved understanding of local heritage, local job creation, and greater community pride. The construct is closely linked to Social Exchange Theory (SET), which argues that individuals evaluate social phenomena by comparing perceived benefits and costs (Homans, 1974). In tourism contexts, support for tourism development tends to increase when stakeholders perceive that tourism generates greater benefits than negative consequences (Ap, 1992). Therefore, when tourists perceive that tourism produces net benefits, they are more likely to accept and support destination development.

In Bali, positive impact is especially visible when tourism contributes to the maintenance of temples, cultural events, local crafts, heritage villages, and community infrastructure. Recent work on sustainable destination governance continues to emphasize that tourists are more supportive when sustainability is presented as a lived destination advantage rather than as an abstract environmental slogan. Studies in related settings show that perceptions of positive destination outcomes can be decisive for sustainable tourism support, especially when visitors can observe concrete social and cultural benefits (Palacios-Florencio et al., 2021; Suhartanto et al., 2025).

## 2.3 Experiential satisfaction

Experiential satisfaction refers to the overall positive evaluation of the tourist's lived experience after consumption. This perspective is consistent with Expectation-Confirmation Theory, which proposes that satisfaction emerges when actual experiences meet or exceed prior expectations (Oliver, 1980). In tourism settings, satisfaction reflects tourists' post-consumption evaluation of whether the destination experience fulfills their desired outcomes. It goes beyond satisfaction with a single service encounter and captures how the destination experience feels as a whole (Zeithaml et al., 2006). When tourists enjoy the trip, feel emotionally uplifted, and

judge that the experience exceeded expectations, satisfaction increases. In sustainable tourism contexts, experiential satisfaction matters because responsible destinations are not expected to be less enjoyable; rather, sustainability is expected to enhance or at least support the quality of the experience.

Recent studies continue to show that satisfaction is one of the most stable predictors of positive post-visit outcomes. Lin et al. (2025) further demonstrate that high-quality experiential value enhances tourists' perceived destination worth and strengthens their willingness to endorse sustainability initiatives. In coastal, island, and ecotourism settings, satisfaction has been linked to loyalty, recommendation behavior, and pro-environmental intention (Xiaona & Weiwei, 2011; He & Timothy, 2024; Carvache-Franco et al., 2026). In practical terms, tourists tend to value sustainability practices more when they are not perceived as reducing the comfort or quality of the travel experience. If a destination is clean, authentic, well-organized, and emotionally rewarding, tourists may infer that sustainability is compatible with quality.

#### 2.4 Motivation

Motivation is the internal and external force that drives tourists to travel, choose a destination, and engage with specific experiences. Tourism motivation theory suggests that travel decisions are driven by both internal push factors (e.g., escape, relaxation, self-development) and external pull factors (e.g., destination attractiveness, culture, and natural attractions) (Crompton, 1979). Iso-Ahola (1982) further argues that tourism behavior reflects the simultaneous desire to escape routine environments and seek intrinsic rewards. Classical tourism research has long treated motivation as a central explanation for travel choice (Crompton, 1979), and more recent studies continue to confirm that motivations shape how tourists perceive destination attributes, value experiences, and decide whether to support sustainable options. In sustainable tourism, motivation may include curiosity about local culture, desire for authentic or environmentally responsible experiences, novelty seeking, and interest in destinations that appear to care about long-term stewardship.

The role of motivation in sustainable tourism is not always direct. Cross-national evidence also shows that tourist motivation often acts as an interpretive lens, shaping how visitors evaluate destination impacts and sustainability cues during their trip (Nguyen-Viet et al., 2026). Some tourists may be highly motivated to travel to environmentally responsible destinations, but their attitude still depends on whether the destination actually delivers visible benefits and a satisfying experience. Recent research on Gen Z sustainable travel and ecotourism confirms that motivation interacts with environmental awareness, social norms, and perceived destination value rather than operating in isolation (de Araújo et al., 2025; Suhartanto et al., 2025). Previous findings show that motivation can act as a direct predictor or as a variable that influences the strength of the relationship between constructs.

#### 2.5 Hypothesis development

The first hypothesis concerns the influence of positive impact on attitude toward sustainable tourism development. When tourists observe that tourism helps protect natural and cultural

resources, improves recreational facilities, and supports local heritage, they are more likely to evaluate tourism development positively. This leads to the following hypothesis:

H1. Positive impact has a positive effect on attitude toward sustainable tourism development.

The second hypothesis focuses on experiential satisfaction. Tourists who enjoy their trip, feel that the experience improves their mood, and believe that the destination exceeds expectations are likely to view sustainable tourism development more favorably. Satisfaction lowers resistance to destination change and increases openness to responsible development. From an expectation-confirmation perspective, tourists who perceive that their destination experience fulfills or exceeds expectations are more likely to develop favorable attitudes toward the destination and its development initiatives (Oliver, 1980). Therefore:

H2. Experiential satisfaction has a positive effect on attitude toward sustainable tourism development.

The third hypothesis examines motivation as a direct antecedent. Tourists whose travel motives include environmental concern, cultural curiosity, and interest in meaningful experiences should be more supportive of sustainable tourism development because the destination aligns with their preferences and values. Consistent with tourism motivation theory, travelers who are motivated by cultural exploration, environmental concern, and learning opportunities are more likely to develop favorable evaluations of destinations that support sustainability goals (Crompton, 1979; Iso-Ahola, 1982). Hence:

H3. Motivation has a positive effect on attitude toward sustainable tourism development.

The fourth hypothesis proposes that motivation strengthens the link between positive impact and attitude. When tourists are already motivated by sustainability-related or culture-related reasons, the positive effects of destination development become more salient and more persuasive. Thus:

H4. Motivation positively moderates the relationship between positive impact and attitude toward sustainable tourism development.

The fifth hypothesis suggests that motivation also strengthens the link between experiential satisfaction and attitude. Tourists with stronger travel motives should be more sensitive to the satisfaction they derive from the destination and therefore more likely to translate satisfaction into a favorable sustainability attitude. Accordingly:

H5. Motivation positively moderates the relationship between experiential satisfaction and attitude toward sustainable tourism development.

## 2.6 Theoretical anchor and conceptual logic

The model can be interpreted through Social Exchange Theory (Homans, 1974; Ap, 1992) and attitude formation logic. Social exchange theory suggests that individuals evaluate tourism development by weighing benefits and costs. If the benefits are visible, direct, and meaningful, attitudes become more favorable. In the case of sustainable tourism, the “benefit” is not limited

to income or convenience; it also includes the preservation of place identity, the protection of local resources, and the prospect that tourism will remain viable in the long run. Positive impact therefore functions as a concrete exchange signal: the destination is not just receiving tourists, but also transforming tourism into a public good.

Experiential satisfaction adds a second layer to this logic. Tourist evaluations are generally influenced by direct experience during travel, not by technocratic analytical considerations. They respond to what they feel while traveling. Even when they support sustainability in principle, their final attitude is strongly shaped by how the trip actually feels. This is why satisfaction can override other intentions. A sustainable destination that fails to deliver comfort, fun, or memorable experiences is unlikely to win strong attitudinal support. Conversely, a destination that combines sustainability with enjoyment creates a powerful reinforcement loop, because tourists can view sustainable tourism as both responsible and pleasurable.

Motivation is conceptually more complex. In tourism research, motivation is often treated as the reason for travel, but it can also indicate the kind of experience a tourist wants to co-create. In sustainable tourism, motivation may reflect ecological concern, cultural curiosity, self-development, or a search for authenticity. These motives do not necessarily produce attitude by themselves. Instead, they may influence how tourists interpret what they see. While traditional models often position motivation as a direct antecedent that determines satisfaction and subsequent destination evaluation (Yoon & Uysal, 2005), its role in sustainability-focused frameworks can be more nuanced. If a traveler already values nature or culture, then evidence of positive destination impact can become more persuasive. This is why the moderation logic in the present study is meaningful: motivation may not function as a universal driver, but it may amplify the effect of certain destination cues.

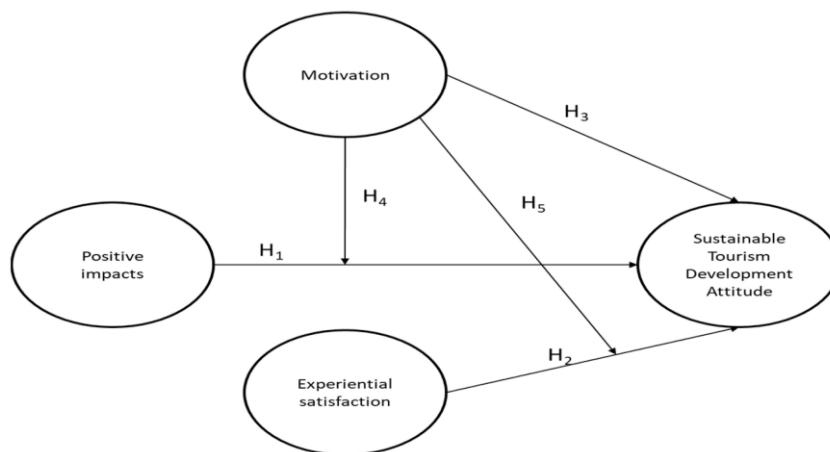


Figure 1. Research model

## 2.7 Relevance for Bali in the current sustainability era

Bali illustrates a broader tourism dilemma. The destination remains attractive because of its culture, landscape, and hospitality, yet those same assets are vulnerable to overuse. Recent debates about tourism pressure, visitor behavior, infrastructure strain, and environmental quality make sustainable tourism development a practical necessity, not just a branding choice. In such a setting, tourist attitudes matter because they influence whether sustainability efforts are likely to be accepted, appreciated, and reinforced by visitors themselves.

A destination like Bali cannot depend solely on attracting more visitors. It must also ensure that tourists notice the benefits of tourism development, experience those benefits positively, and remain willing to support the destination's sustainability journey. The current study is therefore useful not only for theoretical development but also for destination governance. The research results show that tourists respond positively to sustainability efforts when the benefits can be directly observed and integrated into the travel experience.

## 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Research design

This study uses a quantitative, explanatory design with a cross-sectional survey approach. The objective is to test the direct and moderating effects of positive impact, experiential satisfaction, and motivation on attitude toward sustainable tourism development. The design is appropriate because the study seeks to explain relationships among latent constructs rather than to explore new themes qualitatively.

### 3.2 Population, sample, and sampling method

The population consists of tourists who have visited Bali. The sample was selected using non-probability purposive sampling combined with convenience sampling. Respondents were approached online through social media and instant-messaging channels. The screening criterion required respondents to be at least 18 years old and to have visited Bali within the last five years. After the screening process, 200 valid responses were retained for analysis. This sample size is adequate for PLS-SEM because the technique is well suited to predictive models and moderate sample sizes.

### 3.3 Data collection and instrument

Primary data were collected through a self-administered online questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. The instrument was adapted from Santos-Roldán et al. (2020), with minor contextual wording adjustments for Bali. The construct of positive impact was measured through four items capturing the perceived environmental, cultural, recreational, and heritage-related benefits of tourism. Experiential satisfaction was measured through four items reflecting emotional and evaluative satisfaction with the trip. Motivation was measured through four items representing environmentally

oriented, culturally curious, novelty-seeking, and learning-oriented travel motives. These dimensions reflect the functional approach to tourism motivation, which highlights how specific psychological needs drive tourist behavior (Fodness, 1994). Attitude toward sustainable tourism development was measured through three items assessing whether tourists viewed sustainable tourism development as desirable and socially acceptable.

### 3.4 Data analysis

The analysis was conducted in four stages. First, the respondent profile was summarized using frequency analysis (Malhotra, 2010). Second, descriptive statistics were used to examine the mean and standard deviation of each item and construct (Malhotra, 2010). Third, the measurement model was assessed through outer loading, reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. Reliability was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability; convergent validity through AVE and item loadings; and discriminant validity through the Fornell–Larcker criterion and HTMT. Fourth, the structural model was tested using collinearity assessment (VIF), coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ), predictive relevance ( $Q^2$ ), path coefficients, and moderation analysis. Bootstrapping was used to assess significance (Hair et al., 2017).

### 3.5 Respondent profile

**Table 1. Respondent profile**

Characteristic	Category	n (%)
Gender	Male	81 (40.5)
	Female	119 (59.5)
Age	18–25	120 (60.0)
	26–35	24 (12.0)
	36–45	35 (17.5)
	46–55	14 (7.0)
	>55	7 (3.5)
Residence	DKI Jakarta	71 (35.5)
	West Java	88 (44.0)
	Central Java	4 (2.0)
	East Java	3 (1.5)
	Bali	9 (4.5)
	Other	25 (12.5)
Occupation	Student	84 (42.0)
	Office employee	70 (35.0)
	Entrepreneur	25 (12.5)

	Unemployed	4 (2.0)
	Retired	3 (1.5)
	Other	14 (7.0)
Income	< IDR 1,500,000	49 (24.5)
	IDR 1,500,000–4,500,000	49 (24.5)
	IDR 4,500,001–7,500,000	29 (14.5)
	IDR 7,500,001–10,500,000	26 (13.0)
	> IDR 10,500,000	47 (23.5)
Trip expenditure	< IDR 1,500,000	24 (12.0)
	IDR 1,500,000–4,500,000	87 (43.5)
	IDR 4,500,001–7,500,000	38 (19.0)
	IDR 7,500,001–10,500,000	20 (10.0)
	> IDR 10,500,000	31 (15.5)
Trip purpose	Business	17 (8.5)
	Leisure	140 (70.0)
	Visiting friends/ family	11 (5.5)
	Family event	1 (0.5)
	Solo travel	3 (1.5)
	Other	28 (14.0)
Trip payer	Self	101 (50.5)
	Company	33 (16.5)
	Travel companion	5 (2.5)
	Other friend	4 (2.0)
	Family	77 (38.5)
Trip recommender	Self	123 (61.5)
	Company	37 (18.5)
	Travel companion	28 (14.0)
	Other friend	15 (7.5)
	Family	47 (23.5)

*Note: percentages are based on 200 valid responses and rounded to one decimal place.*

Table 1 summarizes the profile of the 200 respondents. The sample is dominated by women (59.5%) and younger tourists aged 18–25 (60%). Most respondents live in West Java (44%) and DKI Jakarta (35.5%), and the largest occupational group is students (42%). The trip purpose is

mainly leisure (70%), which is consistent with the interpretive logic of sustainable tourism as a lived leisure experience rather than a purely utilitarian activity.

## 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1 Respondent profile

The respondent profile indicates a relatively young and leisure-oriented sample. Women account for a slightly larger share than men, and students make up the largest occupational group. The dominance of visitors aged 18–25 suggests that the findings may be particularly reflective of younger tourists, who are often more responsive to novelty, authenticity, and sustainable consumption cues. This matters because sustainable tourism attitudes are not purely demographic; they are also shaped by experience and value orientation. Still, the sample provides a useful picture of how a broad group of visitors evaluate Bali’s sustainable tourism development.

### 4.2 Descriptive findings

Descriptive results show that motivation received the highest average score, followed closely by positive impact and experiential satisfaction. The attitude toward sustainable tourism development also scored positively, although it was the lowest among the four constructs. This pattern suggests that respondents already have a relatively favorable orientation toward sustainable tourism, but their attitude is somewhat more cautious than their self-reported motivation and satisfaction. In other words, tourists may be willing to endorse sustainability in principle, yet their judgment of actual destination development remains more critical.

**Table 2. Operationalization of constructs, outer loadings, means, and standard deviations**

Construct	Item	Item wording (condensed)	Outer loading	Mean	SD
Positive impact	PI1	Tourism promotes protection of natural resources	0.731	3.865	0.904
	PI2	Tourism promotes protection of cultural resources	0.713	4.525	0.734
	PI3	Tourism improves local recreation facilities and resources	0.820	4.420	0.717
	PI4	Tourism improves understanding of local heritage	0.751	4.375	0.710
Experiential satisfaction	SAT1	Traveling in Bali makes my day better	0.786	4.475	0.728
	SAT2	I really enjoy my trip to Bali	0.737	4.670	0.575

	SAT3	Being in Bali is worthwhile	0.797	4.050	0.865
	SAT4	My Bali trip exceeds expectations	0.791	3.945	0.861
Motivation	MOT1	I want to visit an eco-friendly place	0.783	4.655	0.621
	MOT2	I want to experience a different culture	0.756	4.595	0.656
	MOT3	I want to see how locals live sustainably	0.845	4.415	0.763
	MOT4	I want to learn something new and interesting	0.796	4.665	0.619
Sustainable tourism attitude	SUS1	Tourist behavior in Bali does not disturb residents	0.793	3.870	0.945
	SUS2	Positive aspects outweigh negative aspects	0.776	4.040	0.836
	SUS3	Tourists care for flora and fauna habitats	0.764	3.695	0.996

*All outer loadings are above 0.70, indicating satisfactory indicator reliability.*

### 4.3 Measurement model assessment

The measurement model performs well overall. All item outer loadings are above the commonly accepted threshold of 0.70, indicating strong indicator reliability (Hair et al., 2017). Composite reliability values exceed 0.80 for all constructs, and Cronbach's alpha values are above 0.68, which is acceptable for exploratory and applied research. AVE values are also above 0.50, confirming convergent validity. Discriminant validity is supported because each construct's square root of AVE exceeds its correlations with other constructs in the Fornell–Larcker matrix (Fornell & Larcker, 1981), and all HTMT values remain below the recommended cutoffs (Hair et al., 2017). Taken together, the measurement results show that the constructs are empirically distinct and internally consistent.

**Table 3. Reliability assessment**

Construct	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability
Positive impact	0.753	0.841
Experiential satisfaction	0.788	0.860
Motivation	0.808	0.873
Sustainable tourism attitude	0.680	0.821

*All constructs meet the minimum thresholds for internal consistency.*

**Table 4. Convergent validity and Fornell–Larcker criterion**

Construct	AVE	PI	SAT	MOT	SUS
PI	0.570	0.755			
SAT	0.606	0.436	0.778		
MOT	0.633	0.385	0.265	0.796	
SUS	0.605	0.459	0.427	0.162	0.778

#### 4.4 Structural model assessment

Collinearity is not a concern because all inner VIF values are well below the critical threshold of 5.0. The  $R^2$  value for attitude toward sustainable tourism development is 0.327, indicating that the model explains 32.7% of the variance in the dependent variable. Although this is not a very high value, it is acceptable in behavioral research and suggests that the model captures an important part of tourist attitude formation while leaving room for additional predictors. The  $Q^2$  value of 0.167 is positive, which indicates predictive relevance.

**Table 5. Collinearity, explained variance, and predictive relevance**

Endogenous construct / path	VIF	$R^2$	$Q^2$
PI → SUS	1.385		
SAT → SUS	1.278		
MOT → SUS	1.709		
PI*MOT → SUS	1.559		
SAT*MOT → SUS	1.274		
SUS		0.327	0.167

#### 4.5 Hypothesis testing

The bootstrapping results support H1, H2, and H4, but not H3 and H5. Positive impact has a strong and significant effect on attitude toward sustainable tourism development ( $\beta = 0.335$ ,  $t = 4.897$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). Experiential satisfaction also has a significant positive effect ( $\beta = 0.249$ ,  $t = 3.688$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). Motivation, however, does not have a significant direct effect ( $\beta = 0.111$ ,  $t = 1.556$ ,  $p = 0.120$ ). For moderation, motivation significantly strengthens the positive impact–attitude relationship ( $\beta = 0.196$ ,  $t = 2.964$ ,  $p = 0.003$ ), but it does not significantly moderate the satisfaction–attitude relationship ( $\beta = 0.052$ ,  $t = 0.799$ ,  $p = 0.424$ ).

**Table 6. Hypothesis testing and moderation analysis**

Hypothesis	Relationship	$\beta$	t-stat	p-value	Decision	Supported?
H1	Positive impact → sustainable tourism attitude	0.335	4.897	<0.001	Positive and significant	Yes
H2	Experiential satisfaction → sustainable tourism attitude	0.249	3.688	<0.001	Positive and significant	Yes
H3	Motivation → sustainable tourism attitude	0.111	1.556	0.120	Not significant	No
H4	Motivation × positive impact → sustainable tourism attitude	0.196	2.964	0.003	Positive moderation	Yes
H5	Motivation × experiential satisfaction → sustainable tourism attitude	0.052	0.799	0.424	Not significant	No

#### 4.6 Discussion of supported hypotheses

The data clearly demonstrates that perceived positive impacts play the most crucial role in shaping tourist attitudes in Bali ( $\beta = 0.335$ ,  $t = 4.897$ ). Through the lens of Social Exchange Theory, this strong correlation indicates that tourists evaluate the destination based on a pragmatic cost-benefit balance rather than treating sustainability as a mere ethical concept. When visitors observe concrete actions—such as heritage preservation, infrastructure upgrades, and active protection of cultural and natural assets—their psychological buy-in toward broader sustainability goals increases significantly. This finding aligns with the arguments of He and Timothy (2024) as well as Suhartanto et al. (2025), who noted that contemporary travelers require empirical, visual cues of destination stewardship before committing to pro-environmental attitudes. Consequently, marketing bodies in Bali must shift from moral persuasion to strategic benefit signaling, ensuring that the socio-cultural dividends of tourism are clearly visible to the naked eye.

On the other hand, experiential satisfaction offers a different dynamic in shaping tourist perspectives ( $\beta = 0.249$ ,  $t = 3.688$ ). While positive impact acts as a primary catalyst, satisfaction functions as an essential stabilizer during the trip. This relationship suggests that tourists are highly reluctant to support sustainability if it demands a compromise on personal comfort or enjoyment. Instead, a well-managed, authentic, and emotionally rewarding holiday creates a positive reinforcement loop where sustainability is viewed as a premium feature of

destination quality rather than a form of tourist sacrifice. This operational mechanism supports the experiential frameworks established by Zeithaml et al. (2006) and Li et al. (2024), where overall holiday fulfillment serves as the bedrock for favorable post-visit evaluations.

An intriguing interaction becomes visible when motivation is tested as a moderating variable within this framework. The empirical data confirms that motivation positively moderates the link between positive impact and attitude ( $\beta = 0.196$ ,  $t = 2.964$ ), yet it completely fails to moderate the satisfaction-attitude pathway. This discrepancy reveals that travel motives—such as cultural curiosity or eco-awareness—serve specifically as an interpretive lens for environmental cues. Travelers who arrive with high sustainable awareness are naturally more sensitive to local community benefits, making them easier to engage through sustainable storytelling. This non-linear interaction supports the multi-layered behavioral models proposed by de Araújo et al. (2025), confirming that internal values amplify the reception of external destination characteristics.

#### 4.7 Why H3 and H5 were not supported

The rejection of H3 ( $\beta = 0.111$ ,  $p = 0.120$ ) challenges a long-standing assumption in tourist behavior research that high eco-cultural motivation automatically translates into pro-sustainability attitudes. In the context of Bali, this disconnect suggests a temporal shift in how tourists evaluate their surroundings. While pre-visit motivations (e.g., seeking eco-friendly spots or learning local traditions) dictate destination selection, they quickly become distal once the tourist steps foot on the island. On-site realities, actual interactions, and direct observations completely override initial psychological drives. This transition from expectation to physical evaluation matches the findings of Chang, Backman, and Huang (2014), who observed that post-consumption attitudes are heavily grounded in tangible value rather than the abstract desires that initiated the journey.

Additionally, the demographic profile of the respondents offers a practical explanation for this statistical insignificance. The sample is heavily skewed toward younger cohorts and students (60% aged 18–25), a group known for reporting universally high scores in eco-friendly motivations. This ceiling effect creates narrow statistical dispersion, limiting the model's capacity to establish a direct causal path between motivation and attitude.

This lack of internal variation also explains why H5—the moderating role of motivation on the satisfaction-attitude link—was left unsupported ( $\beta = 0.052$ ,  $p = 0.424$ ). Because the overall satisfaction mean was high across the board, the translation from a great holiday experience to a supportive sustainability attitude happens universally, regardless of whether the traveler was initially motivated by green values or basic leisure. Direct experience effectively standardizes the visitor's judgment. This outcome re-establishes classical principles from Crompton (1979) and Iso-Ahola (1982): travel motives trigger behavior and frame initial expectations, but once direct consumption occurs, experiential quality becomes the dominant mechanism in defining long-term evaluative attitudes.

#### 4.8 Additional interpretation of the respondent profile and construct means

The respondent profile helps explain why the results may have taken this shape. The sample is relatively young and leisure-oriented, with students forming the largest occupational group. Such respondents are often receptive to novelty, storytelling, and destination symbolism, which may explain why motivation scored high. At the same time, younger visitors can also be more critical in judging whether sustainability claims are credible. This may help account for the gap between high motivation and a comparatively lower attitude score. In other words, the sample may have been willing to endorse sustainability in principle, but less ready to translate that orientation into strong evaluative support unless the destination made its benefits visible.

The construct means reinforce this interpretation. Motivation received the highest average score, followed by positive impact and experiential satisfaction, while attitude toward sustainable tourism development was the lowest of the four constructs. That pattern is important because it shows that motivation does not automatically convert into endorsement. Tourists may want eco-friendly or culturally meaningful experiences, yet still withhold strong support for sustainability unless those preferences are matched by observable destination outcomes. This is a useful reminder that tourists' internal motives are only one part of the evaluation process; the destination must still validate those motives through concrete impact and a satisfying experience.

The relatively narrow dispersion in the satisfaction items also suggests that many respondents evaluated the Bali trip in broadly similar terms. That makes the satisfaction result easier to interpret: because experience quality was already fairly positive, the key question was not whether tourists were satisfied, but whether that satisfaction translated into support for sustainable tourism development. The answer is yes, although the path appears stronger as a direct effect than as a moderated one. This again supports the idea that satisfaction is a stable and broadly applicable mechanism in tourism attitude formation.

## 5. CONCLUSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND FUTURE RESEARCH

### 5.1 Conclusion

Overall, the findings suggest that tourist attitudes toward sustainable tourism development in Bali are driven most strongly by visible positive impact and, to a lesser extent, by experiential satisfaction. Motivation matters, but mainly as a contextual factor that shapes how tourists interpret destination benefits. It does not operate as a universal predictor, and it does not strengthen every relationship in the model. This makes the pattern of results more realistic and more useful: tourists do not respond to sustainability in a perfectly symmetrical way. They react most when they can see real value in the destination and when the experience itself feels rewarding.

## 5.2 Managerial implications

Based on the empirical findings, several practical recommendations are proposed for Bali's tourism management. First, Bali needs to change how it communicates sustainability, moving away from generic "green slogans" and focusing more on showing real benefits. Marketing and promotions should clearly show how tourism money is used to fix local infrastructure, preserve heritage villages, and protect cultural sites. Tourists are pragmatic; they want to see concrete proof that their visit actually helps the local community before they can truly support sustainable development.

Second, destination managers should treat experiential quality as part of sustainability strategy. Clean surroundings, smooth visitor flows, friendly service, and emotionally memorable experiences are not separate from sustainability; they are one of the pathways through which sustainability becomes persuasive to tourists. A destination that is sustainable but unpleasant will not earn the same support as one that is both responsible and enjoyable.

Finally, these strategies will work better if Bali uses precision targeting based on tourist motivations. Visitors who already care about nature and culture are much quicker to notice and appreciate local sustainability efforts. Therefore, marketing messages and tour packages—like eco-tours or cultural interactions—should be aimed specifically at this group. By focusing on these eco-conscious travelers, Bali can gain stronger and more active support for its sustainability journey without wasting promotional resources.

## 5.3 Limitations

This study has several limitations. The data are cross-sectional, so causal claims should be interpreted cautiously. The sample is concentrated among younger respondents and visitors from Java, which limits generalization to all tourist segments. The study also focuses on one destination, Bali, so destination-specific effects may influence the results.

## 5.4 Future research avenues

Future research should first test whether the pattern observed in Bali is tied to destinations where the sustainability benefits are highly visible. In this study, positive impact emerged as the strongest predictor of attitude, suggesting that tourists may respond most strongly when they can directly observe tangible local benefits. A useful next step would therefore be to replicate the model in destinations where sustainability outcomes are less visible, more contested, or harder for tourists to evaluate, such as urban heritage sites, mass tourism islands, or destinations with stronger overtourism pressures. If positive impact remains the dominant driver in those settings, the result would strengthen the argument that tourists rely primarily on observable destination value rather than abstract sustainability claims. This cross-destination validation is particularly relevant given evidence that regional and destination-specific conditions can alter how tourists evaluate sustainability initiatives (Mohaidin et al., 2017).

Second, future studies should unpack motivation more precisely. In the present model, motivation did not directly predict attitude, yet it did strengthen the relationship between

positive impact and attitude. That pattern suggests that motivation is not simply a general “good traveler” trait; rather, it may work only for specific kinds of motives, such as eco-cultural curiosity, authenticity seeking, novelty seeking, or learning-oriented travel. Future research could therefore distinguish these motives instead of treating motivation as a single broad construct. This would allow researchers to examine whether some motives amplify sensitivity to destination benefits while others do not. Such a design would also help explain why motivation mattered as a boundary condition in this study but not as a direct antecedent.

Third, future research should separate pre-visit motivation from post-visit satisfaction more explicitly. The current findings suggest that motivation may be more distal, whereas satisfaction appears more proximal and directly linked to attitude. A longitudinal design would be especially valuable here: researchers could measure motivation before the trip, then satisfaction and attitude after the trip. This would make it possible to test whether motivation primarily shapes destination choice and expectations, while actual sustainability attitudes are formed later from experience and perceived impact. Such a design would also clarify why motivation did not moderate the satisfaction–attitude link, even though it did moderate the positive impact–attitude link in this study.

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