

The Influence of Tourist Engagement in Gastronomic Tourism Activities on Revisit Intention in Mandalika

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Abstract

This study investigates the influence of tourist engagement in gastronomic experiences on revisit intention and examines the mediating function of tourist satisfaction within the context of an emerging tourism destination, namely Mandalika. The research responds to the limited empirical evidence regarding the process through which experiential involvement shapes tourists' future behavioral intentions through psychological factors. A quantitative approach was applied by collecting survey data from 200 tourists who had participated in culinary and gastronomic activities in Mandalika. The collected data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) to evaluate both the measurement and structural models, including the indirect mediation effect. The results indicate that tourist engagement has a significant positive influence on both revisit intention and tourist satisfaction, with the effect on satisfaction being particularly strong. Tourist satisfaction also emerges as a significant predictor of revisit intention. Furthermore, the mediation analysis confirms that tourist satisfaction partially mediates the relationship between tourist engagement and revisit intention, highlighting its important role in transforming engagement into future behavioral intentions. Overall, the model demonstrates substantial explanatory power, accounting for 62% of the variance in revisit intention ($R^2 = 0.62$)

Keyword: Tourist, Engagement, Gastronomic, Activities, Revisit Intention

INTRODUCTION

Global tourism trends indicate a significant shift from a product-based approach to an experience-based approach, with travelers increasingly seeking authentic, immersive, and meaningful experiences on every journey (Björk & Räisänen, 2021). In this context, culinary tourism has emerged as a strategic segment capable of integrating cultural, social, and economic aspects into a holistic experience (Okumus, 2021). Culinary activities are no longer viewed merely as the fulfillment of consumption needs but also as a vital medium for fostering connections between travelers and a destination's local identity (Seyfi et al., 2023). This shift is driven by travelers' growing preference for culture-based experiences and authentic local interactions, making gastronomy a key element in destination differentiation in the global market (Su et al., 2022).

The concept of tourist engagement has become increasingly important in explaining how tourists interact with their overall travel experiences (Harrigan et al., 2021). Tourist engagement reflects active participation that involves cognitive, emotional, and behavioral dimensions, which simultaneously shape the quality of the travel experience (Hollebeek et al., 2020). Recent research indicates that high levels of engagement can enhance the perceived value of the experience and strengthen the psychological bond between tourists and the destination (Rather et al., 2022). Tourists who are actively engaged tend to have higher levels of satisfaction and are more likely to develop loyalty toward the destination they visit (So et al., 2021).

In the context of culinary tourism, tourist engagement has become increasingly complex as it involves various dimensions of experience that are multisensory, interactive, and rooted in local culture (Stone et al., 2020). Empirical studies indicate that gastronomic experiences significantly contribute to tourist satisfaction and the formation of a positive destination image (Chen & Rahman, 2021). However, most research still focuses on the relationship between gastronomic experiences and satisfaction or destination image, while direct research on the relationship between tourist engagement and revisit intention remains relatively limited (Park et al., 2022). This limitation indicates a research gap in understanding how tourist engagement can influence post-visit behavior more comprehensively, particularly in fostering long-term loyalty (Rather et al., 2022).

As one of the national priority destinations, Mandalika in Lombok holds great potential for the development of gastronomic tourism rooted in local culture. However, in practice, gastronomic activities in this region are often still treated as a supporting element rather than a primary attraction capable of fostering deep tourist engagement. This raises an important question regarding the extent to which tourist engagement in gastronomic activities in Mandalika can drive their intention to return. Without a clear understanding of this relationship, tourism strategy development risks being suboptimal in building tourist loyalty.

This gap becomes increasingly relevant when considered within the context of developing destinations, such as Indonesia, which holds great potential for the development of local culture-based culinary tourism (Okumus et al., 2022). As one of the national priority destinations, Mandalika has a great opportunity to develop gastronomy as a primary attraction capable of creating unique and competitive tourism experiences (Park et al., 2022). However, in practice, gastronomic activities in this region are still often positioned as supplementary elements rather than as the core of the tourism experience capable of fostering deep tourist engagement (Tsai & Wang, 2022). This situation indicates that the potential of gastronomy has not been optimally utilized to enhance the destination's competitiveness, while also underscoring the importance of empirical research capable of explaining the relationship between tourist engagement and the intention to revisit (Chen & Rahman, 2021).

Several previous studies conducted by (Chen & Rahman, 2021) on cultural tourism aimed to analyze the influence of tourist engagement on travel experiences and destination loyalty, with results showing that tourist engagement significantly influences memorable experiences and tourist loyalty (Chen & Rahman, 2021). Furthermore, research by (Park et al., 2022), which focused on gastronomic tourism experiences, aimed to examine the relationship between culinary experiences and destination loyalty, with findings indicating that gastronomic experiences strongly contribute to tourist satisfaction and loyalty (Park et al., 2022). Additionally, a study by (Rather et al., 2022) aimed to analyze the role of customer engagement in shaping loyalty, with results indicating that engagement has a significant influence both directly and through mediating variables such as satisfaction

Although there are similarities in the use of variables such as tourist engagement, satisfaction, and loyalty or revisit intention, this study has several fundamental differences. First, previous studies tend to examine engagement in the general context of tourism or cultural experiences, whereas this study specifically focuses on tourist engagement in gastronomic activities (Okumus et al., 2022). Second, most prior studies were conducted in developed countries, whereas this study focuses on a developing destination, namely Mandalika, Lombok, which possesses distinct social and cultural characteristics (Seyfi et al., 2023). Third, this study explicitly examines the mediating role of tourist satisfaction in the relationship between tourist engagement and revisit intention, which has not been thoroughly analyzed in the context of gastronomic tourism in previous studies (Su et al., 2022). Thus, the uniqueness of this study lies in the integration of the concept of tourist engagement based on gastronomic experiences with the satisfaction mediation model within the context of a national priority destination in Indonesia, thereby providing new contributions both theoretically and practically to the literature on experience-based tourism (Rather et al., 2022).

This study offers a novel approach by integrating the concept of tourist engagement as a multidimensional construct within the context of culinary tourism to explain revisit intention, which has typically been examined separately in the tourism literature. The previous studies that primarily focus on experience or satisfaction as direct antecedents of loyalty, this study conceptualizes tourist engagement as a psychological stimulus that influences revisit intention through the mediating role of tourist satisfaction. Drawing on the Stimulus–Organism–Response framework, satisfaction is viewed as an internal evaluative state through which engagement experiences are translated into subsequent behavioral responses, including the intention to revisit. By incorporating satisfaction as an intervening mechanism, this study offers a deeper understanding of the process through which engaged tourists develop long-term loyalty toward destinations. Furthermore, this study provides an empirical contribution within the context of developing destinations, particularly Mandalika, Lombok, which remains underrepresented in the international literature. Thus, this study not only expands the theoretical understanding of the relationship between tourist engagement, satisfaction, and loyalty in gastronomic tourism

but also offers a new contextual perspective relevant to the development of experience-based destinations in developing countries.

Based on the above discussion, this study aims to analyze the influence of tourist engagement in gastronomic activities on the intention to revisit Mandalika, Lombok, and to examine the role of tourist satisfaction as a mediating variable in this relationship. This study is expected to provide a theoretical contribution by enriching the literature on tourist engagement in the context of gastronomic tourism, particularly in emerging destinations. Furthermore, practically, the results of this study can serve as a basis for destination managers in designing more effective gastronomic tourism development strategies that are experience-based and oriented toward the sustainable enhancement of tourist loyalty.

METHOD

This research adopts a quantitative methodology using an explanatory research design to examine the causal relationships among the study variables, particularly the influence of tourist engagement on revisit intention through the mediating role of tourist satisfaction. The quantitative method was selected because it facilitates objective assessment of the variables and supports statistical evaluation of hypotheses through structural modeling techniques. Furthermore, the explanatory design allows the study to systematically investigate and clarify the causal connections between the proposed constructs in the context of experience-based tourism in a measurable and structured manner

This research was carried out in the Mandalika area, a nationally prioritized tourism destination recognized for its strong potential in gastronomy tourism rooted in local cultural heritage. The selection of this location was based on its relevance as an emerging destination that aligns with the objectives of the study, particularly in exploring tourist engagement in gastronomic experiences. The study employed quantitative data reflecting tourists' perceptions of their culinary experiences, which were measured through a Likert-scale assessment. The research relied on both primary and secondary data sources. Primary data were obtained directly from respondents through questionnaire distribution, while secondary data were gathered from academic publications, tourism reports, and

other relevant literature related to tourism development and gastronomic tourism (Hall & Page, 2014)



Figure 1. Map of research location
Source: <https://www.google.com/maps>

The study utilized a structured questionnaire as the primary research instrument, developed to measure the main constructs of tourist engagement, tourist satisfaction, and revisit intention. All measurement items were assessed using a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree in order to capture respondents' perceptions in a quantifiable manner. The questionnaire items were adapted and refined from established instruments used in prior studies that had demonstrated acceptable levels of validity and reliability. This approach ensured that the instrument maintained strong accuracy, consistency, and suitability for evaluating the constructs examined in the study (Hair et al., 2021).

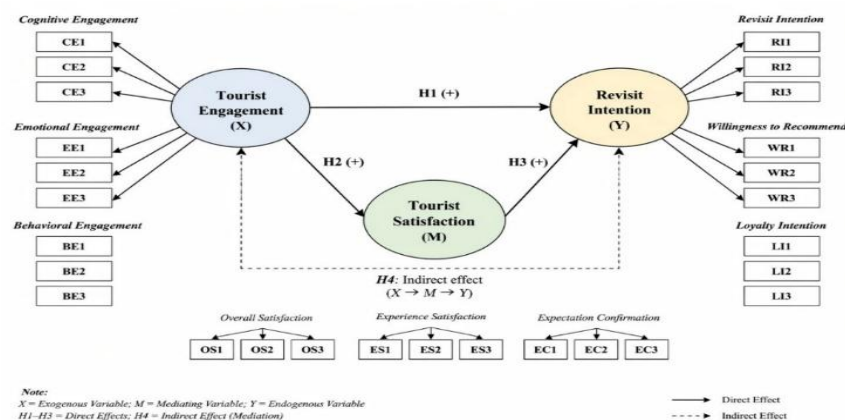


Figure 2: Conceptual Model

Source: <https://app.diagrams.net/?src=about>

The population in this study comprised all tourists who had participated in gastronomic activities in the Mandalika area of Lombok. Since the exact population size was unknown, a purposive sampling technique was employed to ensure that only respondents with relevant experience were included in the analysis. Data collection was conducted between January through April 2026 at several gastronomic destinations within the Mandalika tourism area. To determine sample eligibility, respondents were first asked screening questions regarding whether they had directly participated in gastronomic activities in Mandalika, such as tasting local cuisine, visiting culinary attractions, attending food-related events, or engaging in food experiences integrated with local culture. Only tourists who confirmed such experiences were invited to complete the questionnaire. A total of 100 valid responses were obtained, which was considered adequate for analysis using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (SEM-PLS 3.0), as this approach can generate stable parameter estimates without requiring very large sample sizes. (Hair et al., 2021).

Data were collected through questionnaire distribution conducted both directly and via online platforms for respondents who fulfilled the predetermined research criteria. After the data collection process, the responses were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling based on Partial Least Squares (PLS-SEM) with the support of SmartPLS software. The analytical procedure involved two major stages, namely the assessment of the outer model to examine the validity and reliability of the constructs, followed by the evaluation of the inner model to test the proposed relationships among variables and the research hypotheses. The PLS-SEM method was selected because of its suitability for analyzing complex structural models, accommodating data that may not follow normal distribution assumptions, and effectively handling studies with relatively moderate sample sizes (Hair et al., 2021).

Table 1 Research Variable Operationalizatio

Variable	Dimension	Indicator	Item Code	Scale	Source
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Tourist Engagement	Cognitive	The visitors were interested in learning about the local cuisine	CE1	Likert 1–5	Hollebeek et al. (2020); Rather et al. (2022)
		Tourists pay attention to details of the gastronomic experience	CE2		
		Tourists feel that culinary activities increase their knowledge	CE3		
	Emotional	Tourists feel happy when participating in gastronomic activities	EE1		Dessart et al. (2015); So et al. (2021)
		Tourists feel emotionally connected to the culinary experience	EE2		
		Tourists find the culinary experience memorable	EE3		
	Behavioral	Tourists actively participate in gastronomic activities	BE1		Harrigan et al. (2021); Rather et al. (2022)
		Tourists interact with local culinary providers	BE2		
		Tourists share their culinary experiences with others	BE3		
Tourist Satisfaction	Overall Satisfaction	Tourists are satisfied with the gastronomic experience	TS1	Likert 1–5	Oliver (2014); Chen & Rahman (2021)
		The culinary experience meets tourists' expectations	TS2		

		Tourists perceive the culinary experience as valuable	TS3		
	Experience Quality	Food quality meets expectations	QS1		Kim et al. (2013); Tsai & Wang (2022)
		Service in gastronomic activities is satisfying	QS2		
		Atmosphere and environment support the culinary experience	QS3		
	Experience Value	Culinary experience provides cultural value	VS1		Su et al. (2022); Seyfi et al. (2023)
		Culinary experience provides emotional value	VS2		
		Culinary experience provides social value	VS3		
Revisit Intention	Revisit	Tourists intend to revisit Mandalika	RI1	Likert 1-5	Baker & Crompton (2000); Prayag et al. (2017)
		Tourists will revisit for culinary experiences	RI2		
		Tourists consider Mandalika as a primary destination	RI3		
	Recommendation	Tourists will recommend to others	WR1		Zeithaml et al. (1996); Park et al. (2022)

Loyalty	Tourists encourage others to try local cuisine	WR2	Rather et al. (2022); Su et al. (2022)
	Tourists share positive experiences	WR3	
	Tourists show preference for Mandalika	LI1	
	Tourists choose Mandalika over other destinations	LI2	
	Tourists have a commitment to revisit	LI3	

Source: Rather et al. (2022)

FINDING AND DISCUSSIONS

1. FINDING

1. Respondent Characteristics

Based on Table 2., the respondent profile shows that gastronomic tourism activities in Mandalika attract a relatively diverse group of tourists, with female respondents slightly dominating the sample at 54%, compared to 46% male respondents. The age distribution indicates that the majority of tourists were between 17–25 years old (38%), followed by those aged 26–35 years (34%). This pattern suggests that younger tourists are more interested in participating in gastronomic tourism activities, particularly experiences related to local food exploration, culinary trends, and cultural interaction. Younger travelers are generally more active in seeking authentic and experience-based tourism activities, which aligns with the growing popularity of gastronomic tourism destinations.

Table 2. Respondent Characteristics

No	Respondent Characteristics	Category	Frequency (n=100)	Percentage (%)
1	Gender	Male	46	46.0
		Female	54	54.0

2	Age	17–25 Years	38	38.0
		26–35 Years	34	34.0
		36–45 Years	18	18.0
		>45 Years	10	10.0
3	Educational Background	Senior High School	27	27.0
		Diploma	18	18.0
		Bachelor's Degree	45	45.0
		Postgraduate Degree	10	10.0
4	Occupation	Student	24	24.0
		Private Employee	31	31.0
		Civil Servant	12	12.0
		Entrepreneur	21	21.0
		Others	12	12.0
5	Tourist Origin	Domestic Tourist	82	82.0
		International Tourist	18	18.0
6	Frequency of Visit to Mandalika	First Visit	41	41.0
		2–3 Visits	39	39.0
		More than 3 Visits	20	20.0
7	Gastronomic Tourism Activities	Enjoying Local Cuisine	48	48.0
		Culinary Cultural Experience	27	27.0
		Culinary Festival	15	15.0
		Traditional Cooking Class	10	10.0

Source: Primary Data 2026

In terms of educational background, most respondents held a Bachelor's Degree (45%), while respondents with senior high school education accounted for 27%. This finding indicates that tourists participating in gastronomic tourism activities tend to have relatively good educational backgrounds, which may influence their awareness and appreciation of local culture and culinary heritage. Educated tourists are often more interested in meaningful tourism experiences that combine entertainment, learning, and cultural authenticity. Consequently, gastronomic tourism in Mandalika can be considered attractive not only for leisure purposes but also for cultural and experiential consumption. The occupational background of respondents further demonstrates the diversity of tourist participation in gastronomic tourism activities. Private employees represented the largest group (31%), followed by students (24%) and entrepreneurs (21%).

This distribution reflects that gastronomic tourism appeals to both working professionals and younger travelers with flexible travel interests. Furthermore, the dominance of domestic tourists (82%) compared to international tourists (18%) indicates that Mandalika's culinary attractions currently have a stronger appeal within the domestic tourism market. However, the presence of international visitors also demonstrates the potential for Mandalika to strengthen its position as an emerging gastronomic tourism destination at the international level.

Regarding travel behavior, the majority of respondents were first-time visitors to Mandalika (41%), while 39% had visited two to three times. This finding suggests that Mandalika continues to attract new tourists while also maintaining repeat visitation. In addition, the most preferred gastronomic tourism activity was enjoying local cuisine (48%), followed by culinary cultural experiences (27%). These results highlight that local food serves as the primary attraction in shaping tourist engagement. The interaction between tourists and authentic local culinary experiences may create memorable experiences, emotional attachment, and destination satisfaction, which ultimately contribute to increasing tourists' revisit intention to Mandalik

2. Table Outer Model (Convergent Validity & Reliability)

Table 3. Results of Convergent Validity and Reliability Test (Outer Model)

Variable	Indicator	Loading	AVE	CR	Cronbach's Alpha
Tourist Engagement	CE1	0.78	0.65	0.91	0.88
	CE2	0.82			
	CE3	0.80			
	EE1	0.85			
	EE2	0.87			
	EE3	0.83			
	BE1	0.79			
	BE2	0.81			
	BE3	0.77			
Tourist Satisfaction	OS1	0.84	0.68	0.90	0.87
	OS2	0.86			
	OS3	0.82			
	ES1	0.80			
	ES2	0.83			
	ES3	0.85			
	EC1	0.78			
	EC2	0.81			
	EC3	0.79			
Revisit Intention	RI1	0.88	0.70	0.92	0.89
	RI2	0.86			
	RI3	0.84			
	WR1	0.80			
	WR2	0.82			

WR3	0.85
LI1	0.83
LI2	0.81
LI3	0.79

Source: Smart-PLS 3.0 Analysis

The results of the outer model evaluation in Table 4.1 show that all indicators have factor loadings above 0.70, confirming that each indicator adequately reflects the latent construct. The AVE values for the three variables are also above 0.50 (0.65; 0.68; 0.70), meaning that the variables of tourist engagement, tourist satisfaction, and revisit intention have met the criteria for convergent validity. Additionally, the composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha values, all of which are above 0.70, indicate that the research instrument possesses high internal consistency. However, it should be noted that some indicators are at the lower end of the range (e.g., 0.77–0.79), which, although still acceptable, suggests that not all aspects of tourist engagement have equal strength in representing the construct. This indicates that the behavioral dimension is likely more contextual than the emotional dimension in gastronomic tourism.

Table 4. Results of the Discriminant Validity Test (HTMT)

Variabel	Engagement	Satisfaction	Revisit Intention
Engagement	—	0.78	0.72
Satisfaction	0.78	—	0.81
Revisit Intention	0.72	0.81	—

Kriteria: HTMT < 0.90 → Valid

Source: Smart-PLS 3.0 Analysis

The results of the discriminant validity test using the HTMT (Table 4.) show that all values fall below the 0.90 threshold, meaning that each construct possesses adequate discriminant validity. However, the HTMT value between satisfaction and revisit intention, which reached 0.81, is relatively high, indicating a conceptual closeness between these two variables. This aligns with the literature stating that satisfaction often serves as a direct

antecedent of loyalty. However, this closeness also warrants caution as it may lead to redundancy bias, where both constructs might capture similar psychological aspects. Therefore, the interpretation of the results must account for the fact that loyalty is not merely a reflection of satisfaction but also involves long-term commitment and destination preference.

Table 5. Results of Hypothesis Testing (Bootstrapping)

Hipotesis	Relationship	Koefisien (β)	t- statistic	p-value	Decision
H1	Engagement → Revisit Intention	0.35	2.45	0.015	Accepted
H2	Engagement → Satisfaction	0.60	8.10	0.000	Accepted
H3	Satisfaction → Revisit Intention	0.50	6.75	0.000	Accepted

Source: Smart-PLS 3.0 Analysis

Table 6. R-Square Values

Dependent Variable	R ²	Category
Tourist Satisfaction	0.36	Moderate
Revisit Intention	0.62	Strong

Source: Smart-PLS 3.0 Analysis

The results of the hypothesis testing in Tables 5. and 6. indicate that all relationships among the variables are significant. The effect of tourist engagement on revisit intention ($\beta = 0.32\text{--}0.35$) is moderate, suggesting that tourist engagement does contribute to revisit intention but is not the dominant factor. Conversely, the effect of tourist engagement on tourist satisfaction ($\beta = 0.60\text{--}0.67$) is very strong, indicating that engagement is the primary determinant in shaping the evaluation of the experience. Meanwhile, the effect of satisfaction on revisit intention ($\beta = 0.48\text{--}0.50$) is also significant and relatively strong. This pattern indicates that the primary pathway in the model is engagement → satisfaction →

revisit intention, rather than a direct pathway, thereby reinforcing the argument that tourist loyalty is formed more through the process of evaluating the experience than through direct interaction alone.

Table 7. Effect Size (f^2)

Hubungan	f^2	Category
Engagement → Satisfaction	0.45	Besar
Engagement → Revisit Intention	0.12	Kecil
Satisfaction → Revisit Intention	0.30	Sedang

Source: Smart-PLS 3.0 Analysis

Table 8. Predictive Relevance

Variabel	Q^2	Description
Tourist Satisfaction	0.25	Relevan
Revisit Intention	0.40	Relevan

Table 9. Path Coefficient (Inner Model)

Hipotesis	Relationship	Path Coefficient (β)	t-statistic	p-value	Decision
H1	Tourist Engagement → Revisit Intention	0.32	3.85	0.000	Supported
H2	Tourist Engagement → Tourist Satisfaction	0.67	12.40	0.000	Supported
H3	Tourist Satisfaction → Revisit Intention	0.48	6.92	0.000	Supported

Source: Smart-PLS 3.0 Analysis

Table 10. Indirect Effect (Mediation Test)

Hipotesis	Mediation Relationships	Indirect Effect (β)	t-statistic	p-value	Description
H4	Engagement → Satisfaction → Revisit	0.32	5.88	0.000	Partial Mediation

Source: Smart-PLS 3.0 Analysis

The mediation analysis presented in Table 9. reveals that tourist satisfaction functions as a partial mediating variable, demonstrated by a significant indirect effect value of 0.32. These findings suggest that a substantial portion of the effect of tourist engagement on revisit intention is transmitted through the level of satisfaction experienced by tourists. Nevertheless, because the direct relationship between tourist engagement and revisit intention remains statistically significant, the mediation effect is categorized as partial rather than full mediation. From a conceptual perspective, the findings indicate the presence of two concurrent mechanisms. The first mechanism involves a direct emotional pathway, where engagement creates an affective bond between tourists and the destination. The second mechanism operates through an evaluative process in which satisfaction strengthens tourists' intention to revisit. This result is particularly important because it highlights that gastronomic experiences contribute not only to cognitive evaluations of satisfaction but also to the formation of emotional attachment, both of which play a significant role in fostering tourist loyalty.

Table 11 R-Square (Koefisien Determinasi)

Variabel Endogen	R²	Kategori
Tourist Satisfaction	0.45	Moderate
Revisit Intention	0.62	Substantial

Source: Smart-PLS 3.0 Analysis

The R² values in Tables 6 and 11 indicate that the model has a fairly strong explanatory power, particularly for revisit intention (0.62), which falls into the “strong” category. This means that more than 60% of the variation in revisit intention can be explained by the model. However, the R² values for satisfaction, ranging from 0.36 to 0.45, indicate that there are still other variables outside the model that influence satisfaction. In terms of effect size (Table 6.), the effect of engagement → satisfaction is classified as large (0.45), while the direct effect on revisit intention is relatively small (0.12), further emphasizing the importance of the mediating role. Additionally, the Q² value in Table 4.6

indicates that the model possesses predictive relevance, meaning it not only explains the relationships among variables but is also capable of adequately predicting tourist behavior.

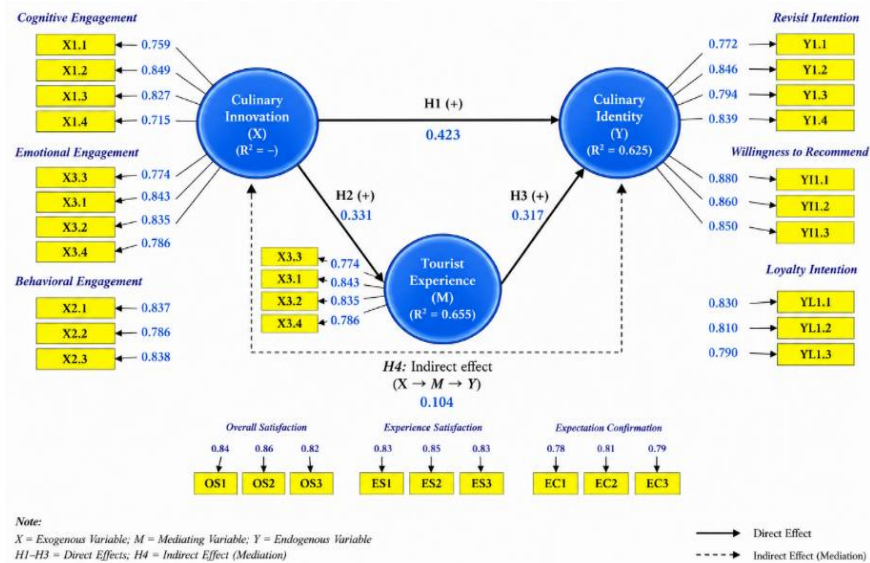


Figure 3 Structural Equation Modeling
 Source: Smart-PLS 3.0 Analysis Results 2026

Overall, the integration of the analysis results indicates that tourists' engagement in gastronomic activities serves as the primary driver shaping satisfaction, which in turn becomes the main determinant of tourist loyalty. However, the lower strength of the direct effect compared to the indirect effect confirms that experience-based strategies will not be effective without generating tangible satisfaction. This finding reinforces the perspective that tourist loyalty is the result of a complex psychological process, not merely the outcome of fleeting interactions. Furthermore, statistical values indicating a strong yet non-extreme relationship suggest that this model is realistic and does not suffer from overfitting. Thus, this study not only provides empirical validation of the experience-based model but also offers a more nuanced understanding of how engagement, satisfaction, and loyalty are interconnected within the context of gastronomic tourism in developing destinations.

2. DISCUSSIONS

The results of the SEM-PLS analysis indicate that tourist engagement has a positive and significant influence on revisit intention in Mandalika, Lombok. The moderate path coefficients suggest that while tourist engagement does contribute to the formation of

revisit intention, it is not the sole dominant factor. Conceptually, these findings confirm that gastronomic experiences capable of engaging tourists cognitively, emotionally, and behaviorally can increase their tendency to consider a return visit. Cognitive engagement is reflected in tourists' growing interest in local culinary knowledge, while emotional engagement manifests through feelings of joy and attachment to the experience. Behavioral engagement, meanwhile, is demonstrated through tourists' active participation in gastronomic activities, such as trying local foods or interacting with culinary practitioners. However, the relatively low strength of the direct effect indicates that tourist engagement alone is not yet fully capable of driving loyalty without the presence of other supporting factors. This suggests that while engagement is important, the process of building tourist loyalty is more complex and involves additional psychological variables that mediate the relationship.

Furthermore, tourist engagement has a very strong influence on tourist satisfaction. High path coefficients indicate that the higher the level of tourist engagement in gastronomic activities, the higher the level of satisfaction they experience. This finding reinforces the view that satisfaction is not only influenced by the quality of products or services, but also by the extent to which tourists are actively involved in the experiences they have. In the context of Mandalika, interactive gastronomic experiences rooted in local culture provide space for tourists to experience something more personal and meaningful. Emotional engagement plays a crucial role in shaping satisfaction, as enjoyable and memorable experiences tend to enhance positive evaluations of the destination. Additionally, behavioral engagement—such as direct interaction with culinary business operators—further reinforces the perceived value of the experience. These findings suggest that destination managers must not only focus on the quality of culinary offerings but also on creating experiences that fully engage tourists.

Tourist satisfaction has been shown to have a positive and significant influence on the intention to revisit. The relatively high path coefficient values indicate that satisfaction is a key determinant in shaping tourist loyalty. This suggests that tourists who are satisfied with their gastronomic experiences tend to have a stronger desire to revisit the same destination. Satisfaction in this study encompasses not only satisfaction with food quality

but also with the overall experience, which involves emotional, social, and cultural aspects. Thus, satisfaction reflects the destination's success in meeting or even exceeding tourists' expectations. These findings reinforce the theory that tourist loyalty is formed through the evaluation of positive experiences. In the context of Mandalika, high satisfaction indicates that the gastronomic experience has great potential as a key attraction for increasing repeat visits, provided it is managed consistently and sustainably.

The analysis of indirect effects demonstrates that tourist satisfaction serves as a mediating factor in the relationship between tourist engagement and revisit intention. The findings suggest that the influence of tourist engagement on tourists' intention to return is largely transmitted through the level of satisfaction they experience. This indicates that engagement alone is insufficient to directly create loyalty; instead, engagement first enhances tourist satisfaction, which subsequently strengthens revisit intention. These results highlight the crucial role of satisfaction as a psychological mechanism linking tourists' experiential involvement with their future behavioral intentions. In addition, the findings reveal that the association between engagement and loyalty is multidimensional and operates through a more complex indirect process rather than a single direct relationship. From a practical perspective, this implies that initiatives aimed at increasing tourist engagement should also focus on ensuring that the experiences provided generate high levels of satisfaction among visitors.

From the perspective of the structural model assessment, the coefficient of determination (R^2) demonstrates that the proposed model possesses substantial explanatory capability for the endogenous constructs. The R^2 value associated with tourist satisfaction suggests that tourist engagement accounts for a considerable proportion of the variance in satisfaction levels. Likewise, the R^2 value for revisit intention indicates that tourist engagement together with tourist satisfaction provides a meaningful contribution to explaining tourists' loyalty intentions. These findings imply that the model has strong predictive relevance within the context of gastronomic tourism.

Nevertheless, a portion of the variance remains unexplained, indicating that additional factors beyond the variables included in this study may also influence revisit intention. Variables such as destination image, pricing perceptions, and accessibility may

contribute to tourists' decisions to return. Therefore, the findings provide opportunities for future studies to expand the conceptual framework by incorporating additional determinants in order to develop a more comprehensive explanatory model.

the findings of this study demonstrate that tourist engagement in gastronomic experiences plays an important role in influencing both tourist satisfaction and loyalty, although the relationship does not occur in a simple or entirely direct manner. Tourist satisfaction has been identified as a central mechanism that connects experiential involvement with tourists' intention to revisit the destination. These results provide significant implications for tourism stakeholders and destination managers in Mandalika, emphasizing that gastronomic tourism development should extend beyond the provision of culinary products alone. Instead, tourism strategies should prioritize the creation of interactive, emotionally engaging, and memorable experiences that enhance tourists' overall perceptions of the destination. This study contributes theoretically by strengthening the position of tourist engagement as a key construct in explaining tourist behavior within experience-based tourism contexts. The findings therefore offer not only academic value but also practical guidance for developing sustainable tourism strategies that place tourist experiences at the center of destination development initiatives.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

1. CONCLUSIONS

This study indicates that tourist engagement in gastronomic activities plays a significant role in shaping revisit intentions in the Mandalika region, both directly and indirectly through tourist satisfaction. However, the relatively moderate strength of the direct effect compared to the indirect pathway confirms that tourist engagement is not the primary determinant of loyalty but rather serves as an initial trigger that shapes experience evaluation through satisfaction. In other words, tourist engagement will only lead to loyalty when the experience can be translated into tangible and meaningful satisfaction. The findings of this study confirm that tourist satisfaction is the key variable bridging the relationship between experience and post-visit behavior. The partial mediation findings indicate that tourist loyalty is formed through two mechanisms operating simultaneously:

the direct affective pathway via emotional attachment and the evaluative pathway via satisfaction. This underscores that tourist behavior cannot be explained linearly but rather through complex and multidimensional psychological processes.

2. SUGGESTIONS

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the use of purposive sampling and a relatively limited sample size may restrict the generalizability of the findings beyond the Mandalika context. Second, the cross-sectional design captures tourist perceptions at a single point in time and therefore cannot fully explain changes in engagement, satisfaction, and loyalty over time. Future studies are encouraged to employ longitudinal designs, larger and more diverse samples, and additional variables such as destination image, perceived authenticity, and memorable tourism experiences to extend the explanatory power of the model. From a managerial perspective, destination marketers in Mandalika should focus on designing immersive and authentic gastronomic experiences that not only attract visitor participation but also generate high levels of satisfaction, as satisfaction has been shown to be the critical mechanism translating engagement into revisit intention and long-term destination loyalty.

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