

TOURISM AND RECREATION PREFERENCES IN RIVER ENVIRONMENTS: EVALUATING GEN Z'S MOTIVATIONS AND ACTIVITY CHOICES

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Abstract

This study investigates the preference and motivations of Generation Z tourist in river environments, with focus on West Java, Indonesia. Using a structured survey approach targeting 140 respondents, the research findings indicate that recreational motivations and connection with nature are central to visitor satisfaction, complemented by infrastructure quality and tranquility. Statistical analysis revealed strong interconnections between the factors influencing activity choices and the quality of visitor experiences, providing deeper insight into what drives satisfaction in river environments. The study underscores the potential of river-based tourism to integrate environmental, cultural, and economic objectives while addressing sustainability challenges. The findings highlight the significant role of infrastructure and environmental integrity in shaping positive visitor experiences. Key managerial implications include prioritizing ecological conservation, enhancing facility availability, and diversifying activity offerings to attract repeat visits and broader demographics. While the study provides valuable insights, its limitations, including sample scope and potential response biases, suggest avenues for future research, such as exploring cultural variations and incorporating mixed-method approaches.

Keywords: Generation Z, river tourism, recreation preferences, sustainable tourism, visitor experience

A. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia, with its unparalleled natural and cultural diversity, is an archipelago comprising over 17,000 islands. Among its many geographical features, rivers play a crucial role, not only shaping landscapes but also acting as essential ecological and economic resources. As tourism becomes a key pillar of Indonesia's economy, rivers have emerged as vital components of the country's tourism portfolio, offering a range of recreational and cultural experiences. Particularly in regions like West Java Province, rivers such as the Citarum and Ciliwung not only provide a livelihood for local communities but also function as destinations for eco-tourism, adventure activities, and heritage tours (Wijaya & Rahman, 2021). These waterways offer visitors opportunities to engage in diverse activities, including kayaking, fishing, rafting, and wildlife observation, while fostering cultural exchanges and promoting environmental conservation (Smith & Jones, 2019).

In recent years, global tourism trends have shifted toward more experiential and nature-based activities. This change is reflected in the growth of river-based tourism, which generated \$42 billion globally in 2021 (Anderson et al., 2023). Rivers attract visitors by combining natural beauty, cultural significance, and recreational opportunities, making them a focal point for sustainable tourism development. Indonesia's rivers, particularly in West Java, exemplify this trend, showcasing how water-based tourism can integrate eco-tourism principles with economic growth and cultural preservation. However, these activities also raise critical challenges, including environmental degradation and overuse

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of natural resources. Balancing the economic benefits of tourism with the ecological health of rivers has become a pressing issue in the management of these resources (Wilson & Lee, 2017).

The role of rivers in tourism is particularly prominent in West Java, where they account for approximately 28% of the region's tourism revenue (Suharto & Purnomo, 2022). Rivers such as the Cisadane and Cikapundung support activities ranging from adventure tourism to educational programs centered on river conservation (Pranoto & Safitri, 2023). Despite this significance, the full potential of river-based tourism remains underutilized, and there is limited research on how visitor preferences influence the development of these destinations. Addressing this gap is essential for fostering a sustainable tourism framework that aligns with global trends and local development goals.

The study of river tourism aligns closely with broader research on nature-based tourism, an area that has grown substantially in the past two decades. Rivers, as unique ecosystems, offer a blend of ecological, recreational, and cultural attributes that cater to a wide range of tourist motivations and behaviors. However, their potential remains underexplored compared to other natural settings like forests and mountains.

The theoretical foundation for studying visitor preferences in river environments draws on several key frameworks. Push-pull theory, a cornerstone of tourism research, explains how tourists are motivated by internal "push" factors such as the desire for relaxation or adventure and external "pull" factors like scenic beauty and cultural attractions (Mehmetoglu, 2007). In river environments, these factors manifest in varied ways. For instance, adventure tourists may be drawn to the thrill of whitewater rafting, while others seek relaxation through activities like riverside picnicking and photography (Dowling & Newsome, 2017).

Another influential model is the Travel Career Pattern theory, which examines how tourist motivations evolve with experience. Research suggests that novice tourists often seek excitement and novelty, whereas experienced visitors are more likely to engage in activities that offer self-development and environmental learning (Pearce & Lee, 2005). Rivers, with their capacity to host both high-energy and contemplative activities, cater to this spectrum of tourist needs.

Despite these theoretical advances, research on river tourism remains relatively sparse, particularly in developing regions like Southeast Asia. Studies in Europe and North America highlight the ecological and economic benefits of river tourism but often lack contextual applicability to areas like Indonesia, where cultural and infrastructural factors differ significantly (Chen et al., 2023). In West Java, for example, rivers have both spiritual and utilitarian importance, serving as sources of water, transportation routes, and sites of cultural significance. These aspects add complexity to the management of river-based tourism, necessitating locally tailored approaches that consider the unique socio-cultural dynamics of the region (Wijaya & Rahman, 2021).

The current state of river tourism also underscores the growing importance of sustainability. As adventure and eco-tourism rise in popularity, there is increasing pressure to manage rivers in ways that preserve their ecological integrity while maximizing their recreational and economic value (Wilson & Chang, 2023). Innovative models such as community-based tourism, where local residents actively participate in managing and benefiting from tourism activities, have shown promise in addressing these challenges. In the Cisadane River region, for instance, community-driven initiatives have successfully merged traditional fishing practices with eco-tourism offerings, resulting in a 35% increase in visitor numbers between 2019 and 2022 (Pranoto & Safitri, 2023).

While the economic and ecological significance of river-based tourism is well established, there remain critical gaps in understanding visitor preferences and motivations, particularly among Generation Z tourists. This demographic, comprising individuals born roughly between 1997 and 2012, is poised to become a dominant force in the global tourism market. Generation Z is characterized by its digital nativity,

sustainability awareness, and preference for unique, meaningful travel experiences (Mandagi & Aseng, 2021). Their inclination toward activities that blend adventure, education, and environmental consciousness aligns well with the offerings of river environments. However, research exploring their specific preferences and how these intersect with river-based tourism is limited.

Moreover, existing studies often focus on isolated activities like rafting or fishing without examining the broader motivations and behaviors that influence tourists' overall experiences in river settings (Johnson et al., 2016). This fragmented understanding hampers the ability of tourism managers to design comprehensive strategies that cater to diverse visitor groups while ensuring the sustainability of river ecosystems.

The environmental challenges associated with river tourism further complicate its development. Activities such as kayaking and wildlife observation, while popular, can strain local ecosystems if not properly managed. Seasonal variations in water quality and flow add another layer of complexity, as some river segments may become unsuitable for tourism during certain periods (Permana & Yulianto, 2023). Addressing these issues requires a nuanced understanding of how tourists perceive and interact with river environments under varying conditions.

In West Java, inadequate infrastructure and inconsistent management practices present additional barriers to the development of sustainable river tourism. Research indicates significant disparities in the availability of facilities across different river systems. While the upper reaches of rivers like the Citarum are equipped with facilities for adventure tourism, downstream areas often lack basic amenities such as sanitation and waste management systems (Gunawan & Setiawan, 2022). Such inconsistencies not only diminish the quality of the visitor experience but also exacerbate environmental and social sustainability challenges.

This study aims to address the existing knowledge gaps by evaluating the preferences and motivations of Generation Z tourists in river environments, with a particular focus on West Java, Indonesia. By examining the factors that influence activity choices, the research seeks to provide actionable insights into how river tourism can be developed and managed to align with the values and behaviors of this emerging demographic. Additionally, the study will explore how these preferences intersect with broader sustainability goals, contributing to a more integrated approach to river tourism planning.

B. RESEARCH METHOD

This study will adopt a deductive research approach, moving from general theories and concepts to specific observations (Bryman & Bell, 2015). This approach allows for the testing of existing theories on tourist behavior and recreation preferences. The study will begin with a comprehensive literature review to identify relevant theories and develop hypotheses, which will then be tested through data collection and analysis.

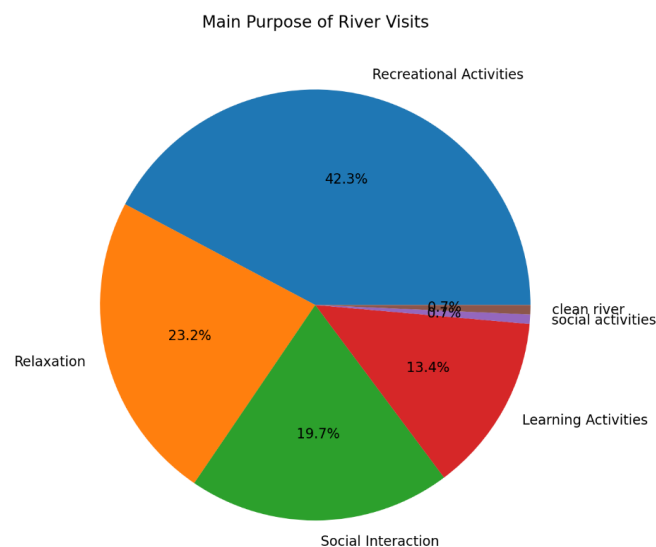
Quantitative methods will be used to collect and analyze numerical data related to visitor motivations and activity choices in river environments. The primary research strategy will be a survey, which is an efficient method for collecting data from a large number of participants (Fowler, 2014). A structured questionnaire will be developed to gather information on demographic characteristics, motivations for visiting river environments, preferred activities, and satisfaction levels. The survey will include a combination of closed-ended questions using Likert scales and multiple-choice options, as well as a few open-ended questions to capture additional insights.

The target population for this study consists of tourists and visitors from Gen Z who engage in recreational activities in river environments. A purposive sampling technique will be employed, and the target sample size of 140 respondents is proposed to allow for robust statistical analysis. Moreover, descriptive statistics to summarize demographic characteristics and overall preferences. These analyses

will provide insights into the patterns and relationships within the data, allowing for the testing of hypotheses and the development of a comprehensive understanding of tourism and recreation preferences in river environments. The survey data will be analyzed using descriptive statistics to gather feedback on their preferences and regression analysis in order to seek the influence of activity choice on the visiting experience.

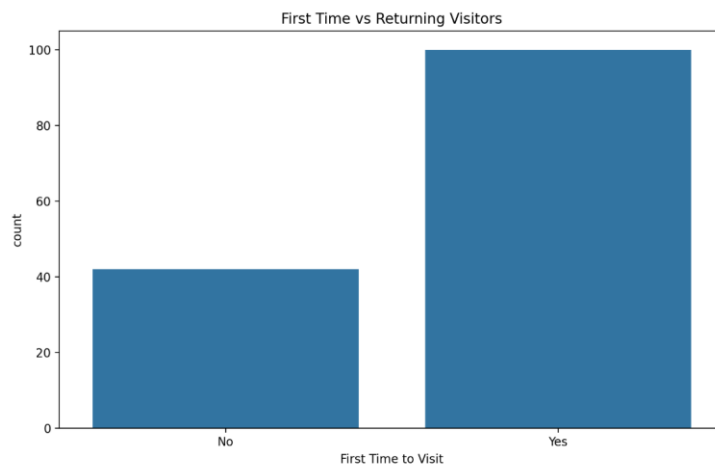
C. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The survey conducted with the gender composition of the visitors shows a clear predominance of women (87 participants) compared to men (55 participants). Regarding group dynamics, most visitors traveled with groups (61 participants) or friends (56 participants). This indicates that river-based tourism is largely seen as a social activity, offering opportunities for bonding and shared experiences. Visits with family or alone are less common, suggesting a more communal approach to river tourism. In addition, regarding the skill level of chosen river activities, it is predominantly beginner (103 participants). This highlights the accessibility of river activities to a broad audience, catering mainly to those without prior experience. Advanced-level activities are less common, suggesting that most river destinations are more focused on inclusive, entry-level experiences rather than niche or expert-level activities.



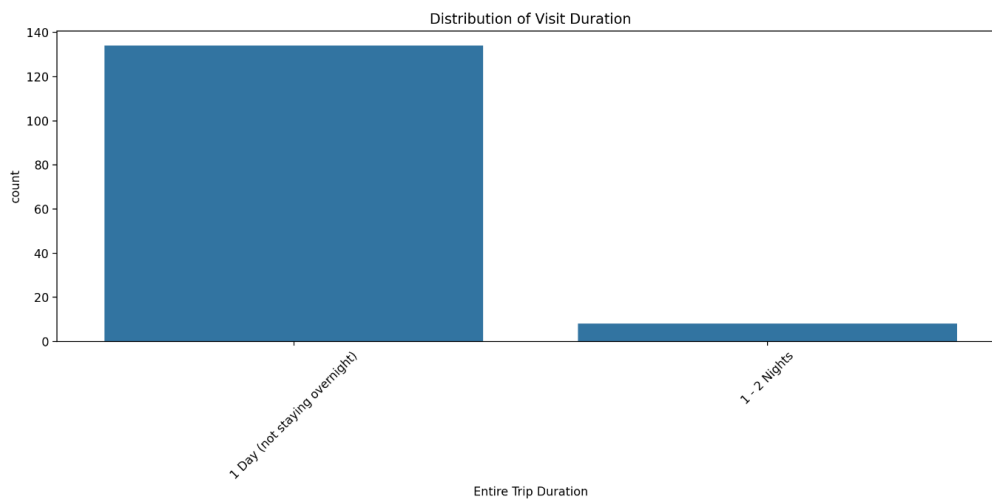
Source: analysis results (2024)
Figure 1. Main Purpose of River Visits

The main purpose for visiting the river is overwhelmingly recreational activities, with 60 respondents citing this motivation. Recreational activities likely serve as the primary draw for river tourism, underscoring their importance in shaping tourism offerings. Other purposes, such as relaxation or social interaction, appear less dominant but may play a complementary role in visitor engagement.



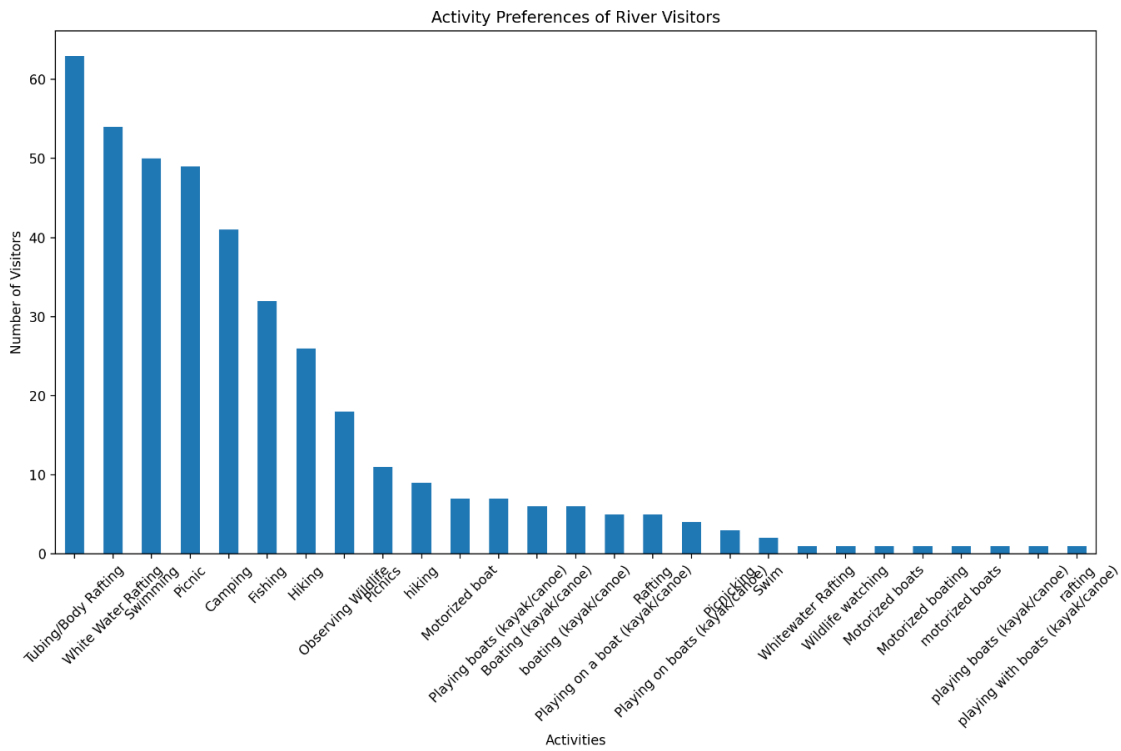
Source: analysis results (2024)
Figure 2. Frequency of Visits

A significant majority of participants are first-time visitors, accounting for 100 individuals. This suggests that river destinations hold strong appeal for newcomers, potentially due to effective promotional strategies or the novelty of such activities. However, it also indicates room for improving repeat visitation rates through enhanced visitor experiences.



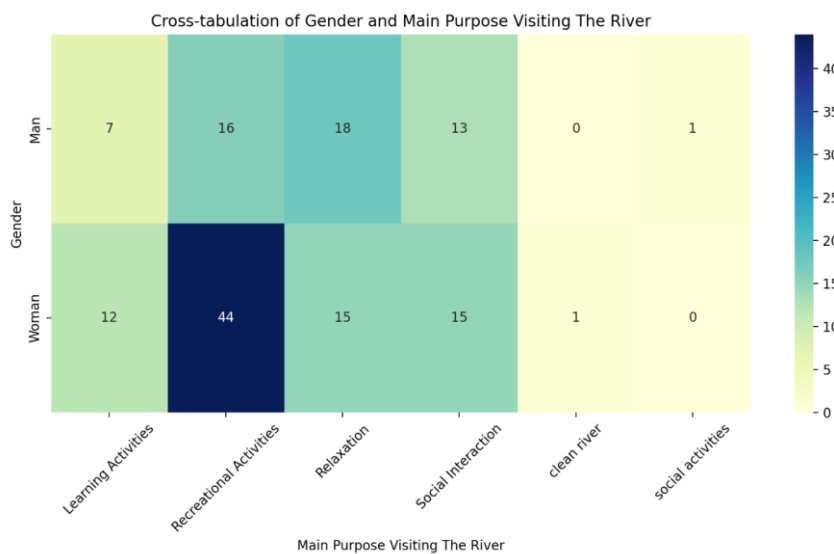
Source: analysis results (2024)
Figure 3. Visit Duration

The majority of visits are single-day trips, with 134 participants opting for this duration. This pattern reflects the accessibility and convenience of river destinations as short-term getaways. It suggests that river sites may primarily serve as day-trip destinations for nearby populations rather than long-term travel hubs.



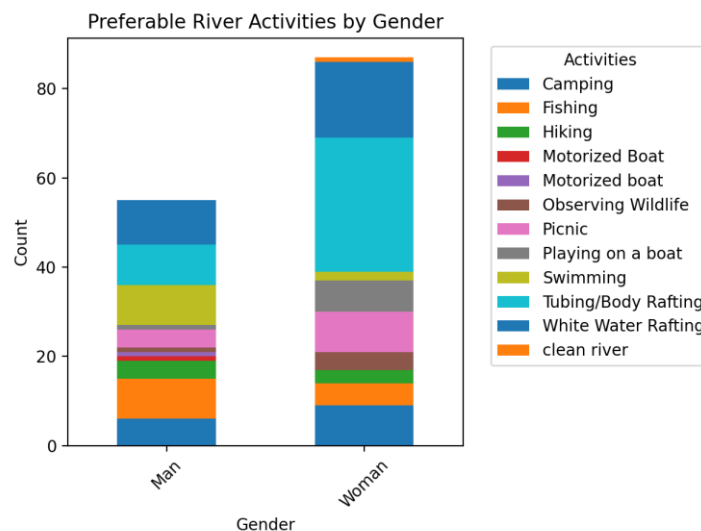
Source: analysis results (2024)
 Figure 4. Activity Preferences of River Visitors

The Activity Preferences diagram shows tubing/body rafting and white-water rafting as core attractions for river-based tourism. The overall data indicate that river tourism primarily attracts first-time visitors, women, and beginner-level participants engaging in recreational activities during short, socially oriented trips. These trends suggest opportunities for further development, such as offering more advanced or diverse activities to encourage repeat visitation or tailoring experiences to specific demographic groups, such as families or solo travelers.



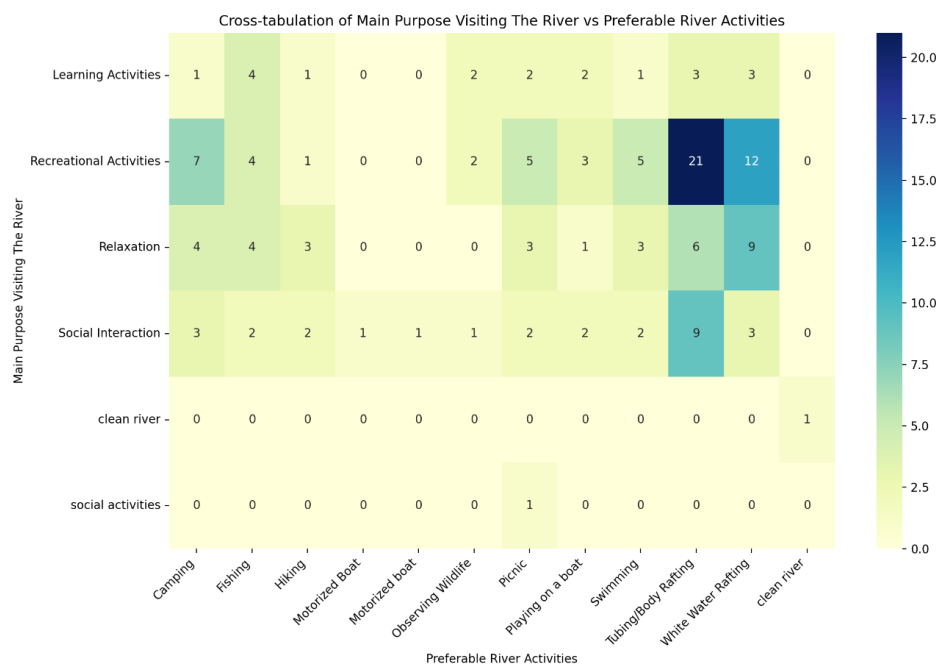
Source: analysis results (2024)
 Figure 5. Cross-Tabulation of Gender and Main Purpose Visiting

Regarding gender-specific preferences, Men showed a relatively even distribution of purposes compared to women. After recreational activities, men were more likely to visit the river for relaxation (18 times) and social interaction (13 times). Differently, women focused primarily on recreational activities, with smaller yet equal interests in relaxation (15 times) and social interaction (15 times). Recreational activities are the primary driver for visiting river environments across both genders, especially for women. This indicates that rivers serve as hubs for leisure and casual engagement, particularly for activities like picnics, walks, or outdoor sports. Moreover, relaxation and social interaction follow as secondary motivations, showing a gendered variance. Men may seek river environments for individual or group relaxation, whereas women are more inclined to combine relaxation with recreational purposes.



Source: analysis results (2024)
Figure 6. Preferable River Activities by Gender

The diagram shows that women dominate the majority of activity categories, particularly those involving social and group-oriented settings, such as picnicking and tubing/body rafting. Men show more even distribution across activities but are less engaged overall compared to women. Furthermore, the findings suggest that women are more active participants in river-based recreational activities, particularly those that are relaxing, group-friendly, or moderately adventurous. Tubing/body rafting stands out as a universally popular activity, potentially because it combines thrill with accessibility. In addition, men's relatively balanced but lower participation may reflect different priorities or barriers to engaging with river environments.



Source: analysis results (2024)

Figure 7. Cross-tabulation of Main Purpose Visiting and Preferable River Activities

The heatmap illustrates the cross-tabulation of the main purpose of visiting the river versus preferable river activities. It provides a detailed comparison of how individuals' primary motivations align with specific activities at the river. The most significant intersection is between individuals whose primary purpose is recreational activities and their preference for tubing/body rafting, with a count of 21 responses. This highlights tubing/body rafting as a central activity for recreation-focused visitors. The heatmap reveals a strong alignment between recreational motivations and activities like tubing/body rafting and white-water rafting, underscoring these as core attractions for river-based tourism. Moreover, learning-focused visitors prefer low-intensity activities such as wildlife observation or picnicking, while relaxation seekers often balance between calm and adventurous pursuits, community-oriented or environmental initiatives.

Factors in Choosing River Activities & Visiting Experiences

The results of this study highlight significant patterns and preferences among Generation Z visitors to river environments, aligning with the research objectives outlined in the introduction. The analysis combined descriptive statistics, correlation tests, and regression modeling to explore the relationship between factors influencing activity choices and overall visitor experiences.

Visitor Experience Ratings

The overall visitor experience at the river sites received consistently high ratings across five main categories, reflecting the multi-dimensional appeal of these environments. Among the aspects evaluated, 'connection with nature' stood out as the most highly rated category, achieving an impressive mean score of 4.46 out of 5. This underscores the critical role that natural surroundings play in shaping visitor satisfaction, as participants deeply value the opportunity to immerse themselves in the natural beauty of the river environment. Moreover, 'Relaxation and stress relief' closely followed with a mean score of 4.42 out of 5, highlighting the importance of the serene and tranquil ambiance offered by these destinations. This aligns with visitor preferences for spaces that provide an escape from the pressures of daily life, offering peace and rejuvenation.

The third-highest rating, 4.41 out of 5, was attributed to the dimension of 'excitement', emphasizing the value visitors place on engaging, adventurous activities. This reflects the versatility of river environments in catering to those seeking thrilling and dynamic experiences, alongside the calm and relaxation they provide. Furthermore, 'Learning and exploration', with a mean score of 4.37 out of 5, further demonstrates the appeal of opportunities for education and discovery in river settings. This suggests that visitors appreciate the chance to engage in activities that promote curiosity and a deeper understanding of their surroundings. While still receiving a high score, 'social ties with family and friends' had the relatively lowest mean of 4.28 out of 5. This indicates that while social factors contribute to the visitor experience, they are slightly less significant than individual or personal connections with nature, relaxation, and discovery.

These consistently high scores highlight the diverse appeal of river environments, with natural qualities emerging as a central theme in visitor satisfaction. The balance between serenity, adventure, and opportunities for learning ensures that these destinations meet a wide array of visitor preferences and motivations.

Factors Influencing Activity Choice

Several significant factors shaped visitor preferences for river activities, each contributing to the overall appeal of these destinations. Among these, 'natural qualities' emerged as the most influential factor, receiving the highest mean rating of 4.54 out of 5. This finding reinforces the strong value that visitors place on connecting with nature, which consistently ranks as a key component of satisfaction in river environments. Following natural qualities, 'tranquility and the ability to escape crowds' were rated highly, with a mean score of 4.30 out of 5. This highlights the importance of serene and less crowded settings in enhancing the visitor experience. Similarly, 'facility availability' also scored prominently, with a mean of 4.27 out of 5, indicating that while visitors are drawn to natural settings, well-maintained infrastructure is a critical complement to their enjoyment.

Other factors, such as 'ease of access', received a respectable mean score of 4.20 out of 5, showing that convenience in reaching these destinations plays a role in shaping preferences. Meanwhile, 'challenge opportunities' scored 3.91 out of 5, suggesting a moderate interest in adventurous and skill-testing activities but not as a primary driver. At the lower end of significance, 'tour or guide availability' had the lowest mean rating of 3.58 out of 5, indicating that many visitors prefer self-guided exploration rather than relying on structured tours. This trend points to a desire for autonomy and personalization in their activities.

These findings illustrate that while natural features are the primary draw for river visitors, elements of infrastructure, accessibility, and convenience serve as essential supporting factors, ensuring a well-rounded and satisfying experience.

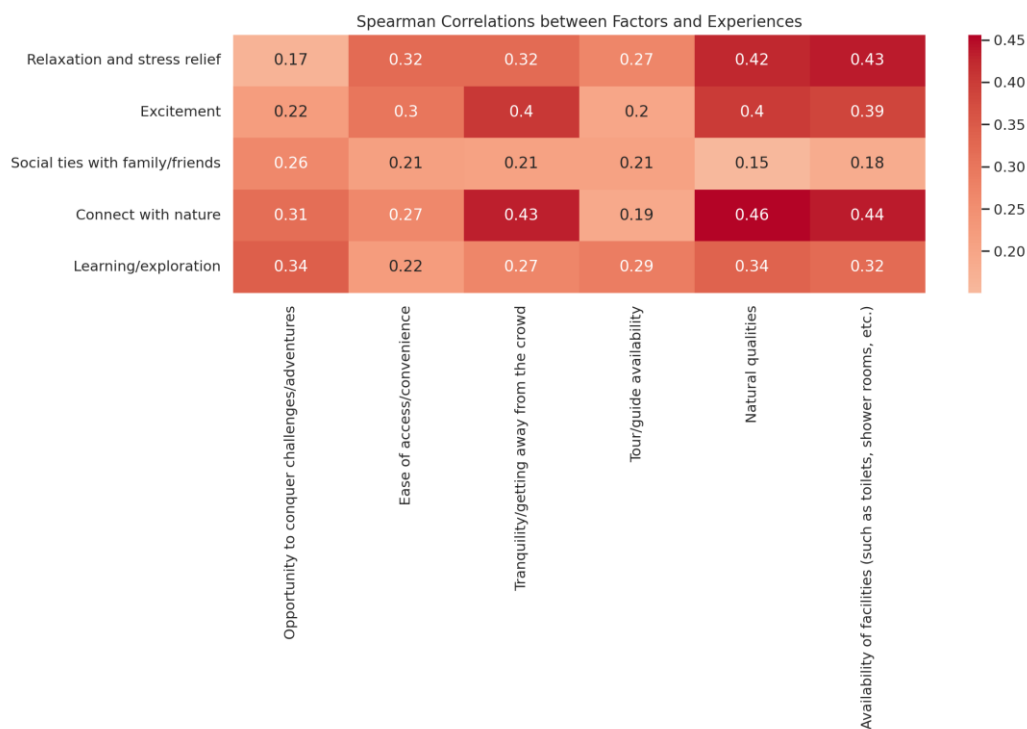
Relationships Between Factors and Experiences

Statistical analysis revealed strong interconnections between the factors influencing activity choices and the quality of visitor experiences, providing deeper insight into what drives satisfaction in river environments. Among the factors examined, 'natural qualities' had the strongest overall influence on the visitor experience, particularly in fostering a sense of connection with nature, as evidenced by a robust correlation coefficient of $r = 0.456$. This finding reinforces the centrality of natural surroundings in shaping meaningful and fulfilling experiences. Moreover, the 'availability of facilities' also emerged as a key factor, showing significant correlations with both 'relaxation' ($r = 0.435$) and 'connection with nature' ($r = 0.437$). These results suggest that well-maintained infrastructure not only enhances convenience but also complements the natural setting, allowing visitors to fully immerse themselves in their environment and unwind. Additionally, 'challenge

opportunities', while moderately impactful, demonstrated a meaningful correlation with 'learning and exploration' ($r = 0.207$). This indicates that activities involving skill-building or adventure can enrich the educational and discovery-oriented aspects of the visitor experience, adding another layer of value to river-based recreation.

Regression analyses further confirmed these relationships, explaining up to 29% of the variance in the quality of experiences reported by visitors. Among the dimensions analyzed, the highest predictive power was observed for the factor of 'connecting with nature', with a coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.288. This result highlights the dominant role that natural features play in shaping overall satisfaction, reinforcing their status as a cornerstone of visitor preferences. These findings underscore the interplay between natural and infrastructural elements in delivering a well-rounded visitor experience, with nature serving as the foundation upon which other supporting factors, such as facilities and adventurous opportunities, build to enhance satisfaction.

The regression analysis and correlation heatmap reveal significant relationships between factors in choosing river activities and visiting experiences, with 'natural qualities' and 'availability of facilities' showing strong correlations with 'connect with nature' and 'relaxation and stress relief'. This suggests that these factors significantly influence the visiting experiences.



Source: analysis results (2024)

Figure 8. Spearman Correlations between Factors and Experiences

The heatmap illustrates the relationships between factors influencing activity choices and categories of visitor experiences. Based on the heatmap, strong correlations exist between 'natural qualities' and 'connection with nature' ($r = 0.456$), and between 'facility availability' and 'relaxation' ($r = 0.435$). Furthermore, moderate correlations are seen between 'challenge opportunities' and 'learning/exploration' ($r = 0.207$), as well as between 'tranquility' and 'connection with nature' ($r = 0.432$). In addition, Lower correlations are noted for 'social ties' compared to other experiences, indicating it is influenced by factors not directly measured in the study.

Natural features and supporting infrastructure are key drivers of satisfaction, particularly for experiences focused on nature and relaxation. However, social connections seem to rely more on interpersonal dynamics than environmental or logistical factors.

Top 5 Strongest Factor-Experience Relationships

The statistical analyses provide insightful interpretations of the relationships between key factors and visitor experiences, shedding light on river tourism preferences and satisfaction.

Factor-Experience Relationships

The analysis confirms that 'natural qualities' play a pivotal role in shaping all dimensions of visitor experiences, with a mean influence of 0.130 across experiences. The strongest observed correlation is between 'natural qualities' and 'connecting with nature' ($r = 0.456$), underscoring the central role of pristine natural environments in visitor satisfaction. Meanwhile, 'facility availability' also emerges as a significant driver, correlating strongly with 'relaxation' ($r = 0.435$) and 'connection with nature' ($r = 0.437$), indicating that infrastructure enhances both comfort and immersion in natural settings.

Experience Quality Drivers

Specific drivers differ across the types of visitor experiences. For 'relaxation', 'facilities' (mean influence: 0.162) and 'natural qualities' (0.135) are the most significant contributors, suggesting that visitors prioritize comfort and scenic beauty when seeking stress relief. In contrast, 'connecting with nature' is primarily driven by 'natural qualities' (0.181) and 'opportunities for challenges' (0.162), emphasizing the value of unspoiled landscapes combined with adventurous activities. For 'learning and exploration', 'natural qualities' (0.235) and 'challenges' (0.207) play leading roles, indicating that visitors seek discovery-oriented experiences enhanced by engaging physical or mental activities.

Model Performance

Regression models provide additional clarity by explaining 10-29% of the variance in visitor experiences. Among these, the model predicting 'connection with nature' achieved the highest explanatory power ($R^2 = 0.288$), demonstrating that the analyzed factors effectively predict this experience. On the other hand, 'social ties' showed the lowest predictive power ($R^2 = 0.100$), indicating the potential importance of unmeasured social or cultural factors in influencing this dimension.

Hierarchical Importance

A hierarchy of importance emerges from the findings, with 'natural qualities' consistently ranking as the most influential factor across all experiences. 'Facility availability' and 'opportunities for challenges' form a secondary tier, reinforcing their roles in enhancing the overall visitor experience. Conversely, 'tour/guide availability' and 'ease of access' exhibit relatively lower levels of influence, suggesting that while valued, these aspects are less critical compared to the natural and infrastructural elements.

Experience Interconnections

The analysis also highlights significant relationships between different types of visitor experiences. For example, there is a strong correlation between 'relaxation' and 'excitement' ($r = 0.681$), suggesting that calm and adventurous experiences are not mutually exclusive and may enhance one another. 'Learning and exploration' exhibit moderate correlations with all other experiences, reinforcing the broad appeal of discovery-oriented activities. However, 'social ties' show weaker correlations with other experiences, indicating that social aspects are distinct from individual or environmental factors.

Discussion

Relation to Research Objectives

The results directly address the objectives of identifying Generation Z's preferences and motivations in river environments. The findings confirm that natural qualities and infrastructure are critical to their experiences, aligning with the hypotheses outlined in the introduction. Additionally, the strong emphasis on relaxation and connection with nature suggests that river tourism aligns well with Gen Z's inclination toward meaningful and restorative travel experiences.

Scientific Interpretation of Findings

The high ratings for natural qualities reinforce established theories in nature-based tourism, such as push-pull theory, which highlights the allure of unique and pristine environments (Mehmetoglu, 2007). Similarly, the role of infrastructure supports findings by Kil et al. (2014), which emphasize the interplay between environmental and service quality in enhancing visitor satisfaction. The strong correlations between factors and experiences suggest that well-maintained natural and man-made features can jointly optimize visitor outcomes.

Comparison with Existing Research

The findings align with previous studies, such as Wijaya and Rahman (2021), which emphasize the dual importance of ecological integrity and infrastructural support in river tourism. However, the relatively low influence of tour/guide availability diverges from studies in more complex natural settings, where guided experiences are often essential (Wilson & Lee, 2017). This may reflect the greater independence and self-reliance characteristic of Generation Z visitors.

Implications

The findings from this study have several important implications for river tourism management and development:

Emphasis on Natural Qualities: The strong influence of natural qualities on visitor experiences underscores the need for conservation and enhancement of natural environments. River tourism strategies should prioritize maintaining the ecological integrity and aesthetic appeal of natural sites to attract and satisfy visitors.

Infrastructure Development: The significant role of facility availability in enhancing relaxation and connection with nature suggests that investments in infrastructure, such as restrooms and visitor centers, can improve visitor satisfaction. Ensuring that these facilities are well-maintained and accessible is crucial for enhancing the overall visitor experience.

Diverse Activity Offerings: The importance of opportunities for challenges and exploration indicates a demand for diverse activity offerings. River tourism operators should consider developing a range of activities that cater to different interests, from adventure sports to educational tours, to attract a broader audience.

Holistic Experience Design: The interconnectedness of different experience categories (e.g., relaxation, excitement, learning) suggests that a holistic approach to experience design can enhance visitor satisfaction. Integrating elements that promote relaxation, excitement, and learning within a single visit can create a more enriching experience for visitors.

Limitations

Despite the valuable insights gained, this study has several limitations:

Non-Normal Data Distribution: The non-normal distribution of the data limited the use of parametric statistical tests, potentially affecting the robustness of the findings. Future studies could explore alternative data collection methods or transformations to address this issue.

Limited Scope of Factors: The study focused on a specific set of factors influencing river tourism preferences. Other potentially influential factors, such as cultural or historical significance, were not considered. Expanding the scope of factors in future research could provide a more comprehensive understanding of visitor preferences.

Potential Response Bias: The reliance on self-reported data introduces the possibility of response bias, where participants may overstate or understate their preferences and experiences. Employing mixed-method approaches, such as combining surveys with observational studies, could mitigate this bias.

Generalizability: The findings are based on a specific sample and may not be generalizable to all river tourism contexts. Future research could replicate the study across different geographical locations and cultural settings to validate the findings.

In conclusion, while the study provides valuable insights into river tourism preferences and experiences, addressing these limitations in future research could enhance the understanding and applicability of the findings.

D. CONCLUSION

The study successfully identifies the primary preferences and motivations of Generation Z in river-based tourism, emphasizing the appeal of natural qualities and beginner-friendly activities. The findings highlight the significant role of infrastructure and environmental integrity in shaping positive visitor experiences. Key managerial implications include prioritizing ecological conservation, enhancing facility availability, and diversifying activity offerings to attract repeat visits and broader demographics. While the study provides valuable insights, its limitations, including sample scope and potential response biases, suggest avenues for future research, such as exploring cultural variations and incorporating mixed-method approaches. Addressing these aspects will enhance the application of sustainable tourism frameworks in river environments globally.

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