MSW MANAGEMENT -Multidisciplinary, Scientific Work and Management Journal
ISSN: 1053-7899
Vol. 36 Issue 1, 2026, Pages 4509-4518

Exploring the Impact of Memorable Wildlife Tourism Experiences on Environmentally Responsible Behavior and Behavioral Intentions: Evidence from Kaziranga National Park

Authors:
Harsh Singh[1], Bijoylaxmi Sarmah[2], Vishal Singh[3]
[1]Center for Management Studies, NERIST
[2]Center for Management Studies, NERIST
[3]School of Hospitality & Tourism Management, University of Jammu
Corresponding Author Email: itisvishalsingh1995@gmail.com

Abstract
Wildlife tourism is gaining popularity globally as an effective means to enhance environmental awareness, promote conservation, and provide visitors with significant experiences. This research formulates and empirically substantiates a comprehensive theoretical model elucidating the influence of Memorable Wildlife Tourism Experiences (MWTEs) on Tourist Environmentally Responsible Behavior (TERB), destination image, tourist satisfaction, and behavioral intentions within the realm of wildlife tourism. The research analyzes a sample of 362 visitors to Kaziranga National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site in Assam, India, using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) to investigate the interrelationships among the constructs. The results reveal that MWTEs considerably improve both the TERB and the image of the destination. TERB is a good way to know how satisfied tourists are, which then affects their plans to come back and tell other people about the site. The model displays significant predictive capability, notably for behavioral intention. The study offers pragmatic lessons for tourist managers, emphasizing the importance of emotionally resonant, ethically responsible, and informative wildlife experiences. Future study directions include cross-cultural comparisons, longitudinal approaches, and the integration of other psychological variables.

Keywords: Behavioral Intention; Destination Image; Environmentally Responsible Behavior; Memorable Tourism Experience; Satisfaction; Wildlife Tourism.

Introduction

Wildlife tourism is one of the fastest-growing segments of global tourism. This growth is driven by increasing interest in biodiversity, conservation, and authentic nature-based experiences (Jones & Smith, 2023; Barbieri et al., 2024; Huang & Zhao, 2025; Martin & Lee, 2026). As travelers seek to connect with nature on a deeper emotional and educational level, wildlife-rich areas, national parks, and protected ecosystems now play a central role in the development of sustainable tourism (Moyle & Hales, 2020; Kumar & Singh, 2025; Rodriguez & Hall, 2026). Beyond recreational enjoyment, wildlife tourism contributes to environmental awareness and generates financial support for conservation efforts (Ballantyne & Packer, 2019; Smith & Johnson, 2022; Garcia & Lopez, 2025; Thompson et al., 2026). In many places like India, wildlife tourism is a huge part of the local economy, supporting local livelihoods while promoting biodiversity protection (Hares & Williams, 2022; Patel & Sharma, 2025; Banerjee & Dutta, 2026). Understanding the factors that shape tourists' thoughts, behaviors, and post-visit intentions is an important focus of contemporary tourism research.One of the key constructs within this area is Memorable Wildlife Tourism Experiences (MWTE). They are increasingly recognized for their ability to create lasting emotional and cognitive impressions that continue to influence tourists' attitudes and behaviors after the visit (Schlemmer & Schlemmer, 2023; Chen et al., 2023; Kim & Park, 2025; Anderson & Miller, 2026). MWTEs differ from regular tourism experiences because they involve unique interactions with wildlife, immersive natural settings, and interpretive learning that make the experience more emotionally powerful (Fotiadis et al., 2020; Singh & Verma, 2025; Carter & Adams, 2026). Prior research has underscored that such profound experiences are associated with empathy, environmental awareness, and behavior change (Ballantyne, Packer, & Sutherland, 2011; Hu & Hu, 2022; Lee & Walker, 2025). At the same time, researchers highlight that Tourist Environmentally Responsible Behaviour (TERB) is an important outcome of meaningful wildlife experiences (Lee & Cheng, 2021; Nguyen & Tran, 2026).TERB refers to actions that tourists choose to take to reduce their negative impacts on the environment and support conservation. Such behaviors may involve following park regulations, maintaining cleanliness, avoiding disturbance to wildlife, and supporting conservation practices (Cheng & Wu, 2021; Rahman & Islam, 2025). Studies indicate that when visitors develop an emotional connection with nature and gain ecological understanding through interpretation and education, they are more likely to engage in pro-environmental behaviors (Lee & Jan, 2022; Choi & Choi, 2021; Gonzalez & Perez, 2026).

The image of the destination is another important consideration in tourism studies (Fang & Wei, 2023). It shows how tourists think and feel about a tourist destination. In the field of wildlife tourism, destination image is shaped by factors including perceived biodiversity, conservation efforts, infrastructure quality, environmental management, and authenticity (Polanco-Galindez & Valls, 2020; Wang & Chen, 2023; Peterson & Clarke, 2025). A strong destination image enhances positive memories and increases the likelihood that tourists will revisit the site or recommend it to others (Cui & Han, 2022; Zhang & Feng, 2022; Thomas & Green, 2026).

Tourist satisfaction, as an evaluation of the tourism experience, remains a fundamental concept in explaining loyalty outcomes (Markos & Sotiropoulos, 2020). In wildlife sites, satisfaction often depends on wildlife viewing opportunities, guide expertise, safety, interpretive content, and overall service quality. Satisfied tourists are more likely to revisit a destination and share positive recommendations with others (Prayag et al., 2003; Ok & Park, 2024; Singh & Kaur, 2025). Behavioral intention, which includes both intent to revisit and intent to recommend, is a key indicator of destination loyalty (Ahn & Lee, 2022; Evans & Turner, 2026). For the long-term sustainability of wildlife destinations, it is essential to understand the factors that motivate tourists to return or recommend the site to others. This is especially true in environmentally sensitive areas where tourism growth must be balanced with conservation priorities (Jamal & Stronza, 2022; Delgado & Ruiz, 2025).

Although wildlife tourism has received considerable scholarly attention, many studies have not integrated MWTE, TERB, destination image, satisfaction, and behavioral intentions into a single comprehensive model, particularly in the Indian context. This distinction is especially relevant for Kaziranga National Park, one of India's most renowned wildlife destinations and home to the largest population of the endangered one-horned rhinoceros. Previous research has examined visitor satisfaction, motivations, and wildlife conservation attitudes in Kaziranga (Dey & Sarma, 2021; Sinha & Bhattacharjee, 2023); however, limited attention has been paid to the relationship between memorable experiences and the development of responsible behavior and long-term destination loyalty.

This study addresses these gaps by developing and empirically testing a comprehensive conceptual model that integrates the experiential, cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions of wildlife tourism. Using PLS-SEM analysis on data collected from 362 tourists, the research examines how Memorable Wildlife Tourism Experiences (MWTE) influence Tourist Environmentally Responsible Behaviour (TERB) and destination image. It further investigates the extent to which TERB contributes to overall tourist satisfaction. Additionally, the study evaluates how both tourist satisfaction and destination image shape tourists' behavioral intentions, thereby offering a holistic understanding of the mechanisms through which wildlife tourism experiences affect post-visit behaviors. This study contributes theoretically by extending the experiential tourism framework to wildlife settings and offers practical insights for tourism managers aiming to enhance visitor experiences while encouraging environmentally responsible behavior.

MSW MANAGEMENT -Multidisciplinary, Scientific Work and Management Journal
ISSN: 1053-7899
Vol. 36 Issue 1, 2026, Pages 4509-4518

Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

The literature review offers a theoretical framework for comprehending the impact of memorable wildlife tourism experiences on environmentally responsible behavior, destination image, satisfaction, and behavioral intentions. This section brings together all the research that has been done on each construct, points out areas where more research is needed, and comes up with hypotheses for the proposed conceptual model.

2.1 Memorable Wildlife Tourism Experiences (MWTEs): Memorable Tourism Experiences (MTEs) refer to experiences that tourists remember long after their trip has ended (Kim et al., 2012; Qadri & Al-Khouri, 2023). In wildlife tourism, such experiences occur when visitors interact with wildlife in protected natural environments and learn about ecological systems, conservation challenges, and biodiversity values. These encounters are often characterized by sensory immersion, emotional engagement, and personal reflection (Curtin, 2017; Lee & Han, 2022; Singh & Verma, 2025). Wildlife encounters in national parks and nature reserves can evoke powerful emotional reactions such as awe, excitement, empathy, and curiosity, which significantly enhance the memorability of the experience (Fotiadis et al., 2020; Kim & Park, 2025; Carter & Adams, 2026). Memorable wildlife encounters frequently involve close observation of animals in their natural habitats, exposure to unique ecosystems, and meaningful interpretation by guides or conservation professionals. Such experiences often create a strong sense of connection with nature and foster environmental awareness (Ballantyne et al., 2018; Anderson & Miller, 2026). However, emotional responses are not limited to positive feelings. Observations of environmental degradation, habitat loss, or signs of human wildlife conflict may also generate concern, empathy, and moral reflection among visitors (Weiss & Sharma, 2020; Huang & Zhao, 2025). These emotional reactions contribute to deeper cognitive processing, which enhances the memorability of the experience and influences post-visit attitudes and behaviors (Jin & Wang, 2023; Martin & Lee, 2026). Memorable wildlife tourism experiences have been widely recognized as an important factor shaping tourists' perceptions of destinations. When visitors experience authentic wildlife encounters, diverse ecosystems, and well-managed conservation environments, they tend to develop more favorable cognitive and affective evaluations of the destination (Fang & Wei, 2023; Liu & Zhang, 2023; Peterson & Clarke, 2025). Positive wildlife tourism experiences contribute to the formation of a strong destination image by reinforcing perceptions of environmental quality, biodiversity richness, and conservation credibility (Wang & Chen, 2023; Rodriguez & Hall, 2026). Therefore, memorable wildlife encounters can significantly strengthen tourists' impressions of a destination and influence their overall evaluation of the site.

Given these arguments, MWTEs are expected to strengthen destination image:

H1: Memorable Wildlife Tourism Experiences positively influence destination image.

In addition to shaping destination perceptions, memorable wildlife tourism experiences often contain elements of environmental learning, emotional involvement, and ethical reflection. These dimensions help develop ecological awareness and empathy toward wildlife, which in turn encourage environmentally responsible behaviors (Budruk & Lee, 2020; Hu & Hu, 2022; Lee & Walker, 2025). When visitors witness wildlife in their natural habitats and learn about conservation challenges, they often become more aware of their own environmental responsibilities (Barbieri et al., 2024; Gonzalez & Perez, 2026).

Past research indicates that memorable tourism experiences are strong predictors of sustainable behavior and responsible tourism practices. Tourists who experience meaningful and emotionally engaging wildlife encounters tend to adopt pro-environmental behaviors during their visit and may continue these behaviors after returning home (Sthapit et al., 2024; Tussyadiah & Park, 2020; Rahman & Islam, 2025). Such experiences can inspire visitors to respect wildlife, follow park regulations, minimize environmental impact, and support conservation initiatives (Egresi, 2021; Nguyen & Tran, 2026).

Thus, MWTEs are expected to shape environmentally responsible behavior:

H2: MWTEs directly and positively influence TERB.

2.2 Tourist Environmentally Responsible Behavior (TERB): Tourist Environmentally Responsible Behavior (TERB) refers to actions performed by visitors that help protect the natural environment and support conservation objectives. These behaviors include following environmental regulations, avoiding disturbance to wildlife, minimizing waste, respecting ecological boundaries, and supporting sustainable tourism initiatives (Ajzen, 2020; Sharma & Nayak, 2024; Patel & Sharma, 2025). In wildlife tourism contexts, such responsible actions are particularly important because natural ecosystems and wildlife habitats are highly sensitive to human activity. Responsible tourist behavior contributes not only to environmental protection but also to the long-term sustainability of wildlife tourism destinations (Jamal & Stronza, 2022; Rahman & Islam, 2025). Environmental psychology suggests that individuals' experiences in nature influence their beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors toward the environment. When tourists develop emotional attachment and ecological understanding during their visits, they are more likely to engage in pro-environmental actions (Lee & Jan, 2022; Tan & Li, 2024). Wildlife tourism experiences often include educational interpretation, guided tours, conservation messaging, and interactions with local guides or rangers. These elements play a crucial role in increasing visitors' awareness about ecological systems, endangered species, and conservation challenges (Powell et al., 2022; Park & Lee, 2021; Kim & Lee, 2023). As a result, tourists become more conscious of their environmental impact and are more likely to behave responsibly while visiting protected areas. Interpretive programs, storytelling by guides, and educational materials have been found to significantly enhance tourists' environmental understanding and engagement. When visitors are provided with meaningful information about wildlife conservation, they tend to develop a stronger sense of environmental responsibility and are more willing to follow sustainable tourism practices (Budruk & Lee, 2020; Huang & Zhao, 2025). Similarly, experiential learning in natural environments can increase ecological awareness and encourage behavioral changes that extend beyond the tourism experience itself (Garcia & Lopez, 2025; Gonzalez & Perez, 2026).

In wildlife tourism settings, environmentally responsible behavior may include actions such as maintaining silence during wildlife viewing, adhering to designated safari routes, avoiding littering, maintaining distance from animals, and encouraging other visitors to behave responsibly. Such actions not only reduce ecological disturbance but also enhance the quality of the tourism experience for other visitors (Clifton & Breen, 2021; Singh & Kaur, 2025). When tourists perceive that their behavior contributes positively to environmental protection, they often experience a sense of personal fulfillment and moral satisfaction.Furthermore, responsible behavior has been linked to higher levels of tourist satisfaction. According to self-determination theory, individuals experience greater satisfaction when their actions align with their personal values and ethical beliefs (Nam & Lee, 2023; Martin & Lee, 2026). Tourists who feel that they have contributed positively to environmental conservation during their trip often report stronger emotional satisfaction and a more meaningful travel experience (Clifton & Breen, 2021; Nguyen & Tran, 2026). In wildlife tourism, this sense of responsibility and contribution can significantly enhance visitors' overall evaluation of their travel experience.

H3. TERB directly and positively influence tourist satisfaction.

2.3 Tourist Satisfaction: Tourist Tourist satisfaction represents the overall evaluation of a tourism experience based on the comparison between tourists' expectations and the actual experience received at a destination (Markos & Sotiropoulos, 2020). In the context of wildlife tourism, satisfaction is influenced by several experiential elements including wildlife sightings, guide expertise, interpretive quality, environmental conditions, safety, infrastructure, and service delivery (Ok & Park, 2024; Singh & Verma, 2025). Because wildlife tourism experiences often involve emotional engagement with nature, visitor satisfaction is closely connected to both cognitive evaluations and affective responses generated during the visit.

MSW MANAGEMENT -Multidisciplinary, Scientific Work and Management Journal
ISSN: 1053-7899
Vol. 36 Issue 1, 2026, Pages 4509-4518

Previous studies have emphasized that wildlife tourism satisfaction is strongly influenced by the authenticity of the natural environment and the quality of the wildlife viewing experience. Destinations that offer rich biodiversity, well-managed habitats, and knowledgeable guides tend to generate higher levels of visitor satisfaction (Mutanga et al., 2019; Shani & Pizam, 2021). Visitors often evaluate their experience not only based on the number of animals observed but also on the overall quality of interpretation, safety, accessibility, and environmental management (Peterson & Clarke, 2025). Effective interpretive communication provided by guides and park authorities helps visitors better understand ecological processes and conservation challenges, thereby enhancing the overall tourism experience (Garcia & Lopez, 2025).

Emotional engagement also plays a significant role in shaping tourist satisfaction. Encounters with wildlife frequently evoke emotions such as excitement, awe, and curiosity, which enhance the overall perceived value of the visit (Schlemmer & Schlemmer, 2023; Kim & Park, 2025). These emotional responses can strengthen visitors' attachment to the destination and contribute to a more memorable tourism experience. When tourists feel emotionally connected to wildlife and natural landscapes, they are more likely to report higher satisfaction levels and develop stronger intentions to revisit the destination (Martin & Lee, 2026).

Furthermore, environmentally responsible behavior has been shown to positively influence satisfaction in wildlife tourism contexts. Visitors who engage in responsible actions such as respecting wildlife habitats, minimizing environmental impact, and supporting conservation efforts often perceive their experiences as more meaningful and fulfilling (Clifton & Breen, 2021; Lee & Walker, 2025). This sense of contributing to environmental protection can enhance personal satisfaction and strengthen tourists' emotional connection with the destination (Nguyen & Tran, 2026). Satisfied visitors tend to develop favorable attitudes toward the destination and are more likely to revisit or recommend the location to others. Therefore, tourist satisfaction acts as a critical mediator between tourism experiences and post-visit behavioral intentions (Cui & Han, 2022; Thomas & Green, 2026). In wildlife tourism destinations, high levels of satisfaction not only promote destination loyalty but also encourage positive word-of-mouth communication, which can contribute to sustainable tourism development.

Based on these theoretical insights, tourist satisfaction is expected to positively influence behavioral intention.

H4. Tourist satisfaction directly and positively influence behavioural intention.

2.4 Destination Image: Destination Destination image refers to the set of perceptions, beliefs, ideas, and emotional impressions that tourists hold about a particular destination (Fang & Wei, 2023). It is generally understood as a multidimensional construct consisting of both cognitive and affective components. The cognitive dimension reflects tourists' beliefs about the physical attributes of a destination, such as natural attractions, biodiversity, infrastructure, and environmental quality. The affective dimension, on the other hand, represents tourists' emotional responses to the destination, including feelings of excitement, relaxation, authenticity, and enjoyment (Stylidis et al., 2017; Wang & Chen, 2023).

In the context of wildlife tourism, destination image is significantly influenced by environmental characteristics such as biodiversity richness, conservation success, ecological integrity, and the availability of authentic wildlife encounters. Protected areas that offer diverse ecosystems, well-managed habitats, and opportunities for close observation of wildlife tend to create strong positive images among visitors (Polanco-Galindez & Valls, 2020; Peterson & Clarke, 2025). Visitors often associate such destinations with environmental sustainability, conservation credibility, and unique nature-based experiences, which strengthens the overall perception of the destination.

Effective environmental management and conservation practices also contribute significantly to the formation of destination image. When tourists observe well-maintained landscapes, responsible wildlife management, and strong conservation initiatives, they develop greater trust in the destination's environmental commitment (Jamal & Stronza, 2022; Rodriguez & Hall, 2026). Additionally, the presence of trained guides, interpretive programs, and educational information about wildlife conservation further enhances tourists' perceptions of professionalism and authenticity, thereby improving the overall destination image (Garcia & Lopez, 2025).

Previous research indicates that a strong and positive destination image has a direct influence on tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty. When visitors perceive a destination as environmentally rich, safe, and well-managed, they tend to evaluate their tourism experience more positively (Zhang & Feng, 2022). Positive destination image can strengthen tourists' emotional attachment to the location and increase their trust in the destination's quality and reliability (Morais & Vala, 2021). Consequently, visitors are more likely to revisit the destination and recommend it to others through positive word-of-mouth communication (Thomas & Green, 2026).

In wildlife tourism destinations, destination image also plays an important role in shaping tourists' behavioral intentions. Visitors who perceive a wildlife destination as unique, authentic, and environmentally responsible are more likely to develop strong intentions to return and support the destination in the future (Wang & Hsu, 2010; Martin & Lee, 2026). A positive destination image not only enhances visitor loyalty but also contributes to sustainable tourism development by attracting responsible tourists who value conservation and nature-based experiences.

Therefore, destination image is expected to have a positive influence on tourists' behavioral intentions.

H5: The image of a destination positively influences behavioral intention.

2.5 Behavioral Intentions: Behavioral Behavioral intention refers to a visitor's likelihood of engaging in future behaviors related to a tourism destination, such as revisiting the location, recommending it to others, or supporting its conservation initiatives (Ahn & Lee, 2022). In tourism research, behavioral intention is widely considered a key indicator of destination loyalty and long-term sustainability because it reflects how visitors translate their experiences into future decisions and actions (Cui & Han, 2022; Thomas & Green, 2026).

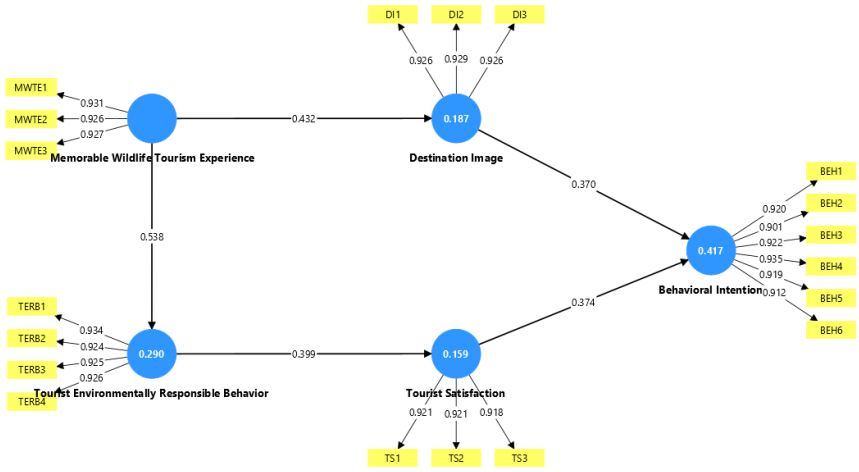
In wildlife tourism contexts, behavioral intentions are particularly important because protected areas depend on positive visitor support for both economic sustainability and conservation success. When tourists have satisfying and meaningful wildlife encounters, they often develop strong emotional connections with the destination. These positive emotions significantly increase the likelihood that visitors will return to the destination or recommend it to friends, family, and social networks (Schlemmer & Schlemmer, 2023; Kim & Park, 2025). Word-of-mouth recommendations are especially influential in nature-based tourism because travelers frequently rely on personal experiences and recommendations when selecting wildlife destinations. Previous studies have shown that behavioral intentions are strongly influenced by tourists' perceptions of destination quality, authenticity, and environmental sustainability. Visitors who perceive a wildlife destination as well-managed, environmentally responsible, and rich in biodiversity are more likely to express intentions to revisit and support conservation initiatives (Jamal & Stronza, 2022; Peterson & Clarke, 2025). Furthermore, when tourists experience memorable wildlife encounters and meaningful interpretive learning, they often feel a sense of personal responsibility toward wildlife conservation, which can further strengthen their behavioral intentions (Garcia & Lopez, 2025).Theoretical frameworks such as the Expectancy–Disconfirmation Model and the Theory of Planned Behavior suggest that behavioral intentions are shaped by tourists' attitudes, satisfaction levels, and perceived value of the tourism experience (Ajzen, 2020). According to these models, when tourists' expectations are met or exceeded, they develop positive attitudes toward the destination and are more likely to revisit or recommend it to others (Prayag et al., 2017). Similarly, a positive destination image can reinforce tourists' confidence in the destination and encourage future behavioral commitment (Wang & Hsu, 2010; Rodriguez & Hall, 2026).

In wildlife tourism, behavioral intentions are typically reflected through two primary dimensions: revisit intention and recommendation intention. Revisit intention refers to a tourist's willingness to return to the destination in the future, while recommendation intention reflects the likelihood of encouraging others to visit the destination (Veasna et al., 2013). Both dimensions are essential indicators of destination loyalty and play a significant role in the long-term success of wildlife tourism destinations.

MSW MANAGEMENT -Multidisciplinary, Scientific Work and Management Journal
ISSN: 1053-7899
Vol. 36 Issue 1, 2026, Pages 4509-4518

Destinations that successfully deliver memorable experiences, maintain high levels of visitor satisfaction, and project a strong positive image are more likely to generate favorable behavioral intentions among tourists (Martin & Lee, 2026). Consequently, understanding the factors that influence behavioral intention is essential for wildlife tourism managers seeking to improve visitor experiences and promote sustainable tourism development.

Fig.1



3. Methodology

This part talks about the study's research design, study site, sampling method, data collection method, measurement tool, and analysis methods. A systematic methodological approach was used to make sure that the results were reliable, valid, and based on sound theory.

3.1 Research Design: This study employs a quantitative and cross-sectional research method, enabling the examination of structural relationships among various concepts at a specific moment in time. Statistical techniques facilitate the testing of potential real-world correlations through quantitative methods, whereas cross-sectional methods provide a snapshot of individuals' thoughts, behaviors, and intentions regarding visits to Kaziranga National Park. The positivist theory underpinning this study emphasizes objective measurement and hypothesis testing. This research method aligns with previous studies examining experience quality, environmental behavior, and customer satisfaction within the tourism sector (Hair et al., 2019). PLS-SEM was employed because it is suitable for explaining and predicting relationships among complex constructs (Hwang & Lee, 2021; Saner & Yücel, 2022). This makes it useful for complicated models that take into account both behavioral and experiential factors (Yang & Liu, 2024; Ding & Chen, 2024)

3.2 Study Area: Kaziranga National Park: Kaziranga National Park in Assam, India, is a major attraction for wildlife enthusiasts. It is recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site (Chowdhury & Rashid, 2024). The park is in the Golaghat and Nagaon districts and covers about 1,090 square kilometers. There are many different types of land, such as floodplains, marshes, tall fields, and forests. The park is globally recognized for conserving the world's largest population of the endangered one-horned rhinoceros (Talukdar et al., 2022). Kaziranga is home to many different kinds of plants and animals. There are more than 500 kinds of birds, as well as Bengal tigers, Asian elephants, wild buffalo, and swamp deer. A lot of people come from all over the world to see wildlife in its natural habitat. This makes it a great place to learn about amazing wildlife tourism experiences. The best ways to see animals in Kaziranga are to take a jeep or elephant tour, walk along birdwatching trails, or visit an education center. Professional guides, naturalists, and well-run conservation efforts all make the park a better place to visit and help it build a good reputation (Alonso & Bressan, 2021).

3.3 Sampling and Data Collection:A simple random sampling method was used to select the tourists who took part in this study. Kaziranga National Park in Assam, India, was chosen as the site for data collection because it is one of the most popular and well-known wildlife destinations in the country. Two field investigators, along with a co-author, conducted the on-site survey administration. The main author oversaw the whole process to make sure that everything was consistent and of high quality. We figured out the size of the sample we needed by using the well-known ratio of observations to variables. Hair et al. (2010) recommend a ratio of 20:1 for determining adequate sample size. The study looked at 16 different factors, so it needed at least 320 people to take part. A total of 450 tourists were asked to take part in the survey, just in case some of their answers were not useful. There were 407 completed questionnaires returned from these. We removed 45 questionnaires that had missing values or inconsistent responses. This left us with a final sample of 362 participants.

3.5 Measurement Instrument: This study utilized a structured questionnaire featuring multiple-item scales to evaluate the principal constructs under examination, including Memorable Wildlife Tourism Experiences (MWTEs), Tourism Environmentally Responsible Behavior (TERB), Destination Image (DI), Tourist Satisfaction (TS), and Behavioral Intentions (BI). All scale items were derived from previously validated instruments and were suitably modified to align with the current research context. There were two main parts to the questionnaire. The first part asked for demographic information like age, gender, education, job status, and marital status. The second part was about figuring out how to measure the research constructs: MWTEs, TERB, DI, TS, and BI. We used a five-point Likert scale to record responses, with 1 meaning "strongly disagree" and 5 meaning "strongly agree." All scales showed good psychometric properties. The Cronbach's alpha coefficients were .91 for MWTEs, .89 for TERB, .87 for DI, .90 for TS, and .89 for BI. These values were all higher than the recommended threshold of 0.70, which shows that the tests were consistent (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). A three-item scale was adapted from the works of Oh et al. (2007) and Sthapit et al. (2024) to measure Memorable Wildlife Tourism Experiences (MWTEs). The scale had these statements: (1) "I have great memories of my wildlife tourism trip," (2) "I will never forget my wildlife tourism experience," and (3) "I will remember my wildlife tourism experience." Participants rated how much they agreed with each statement on a five-point Likert scale, based on their own experiences with wildlife tourism. A four-item scale based on Cheng et al. (2013) and Su et al. (2018) was used to measure Tourism Environmentally Responsible Behavior (TERB). The items were: "I followed all the rules to protect the environment at the wildlife site I visited"; "I carefully avoided disturbing local plants and animals during my wildlife trip"; "I properly disposed of all the trash I made during my nature-based trip"; and "I actively encouraged others to protect the natural environment of the destination." Respondents showed how much they agreed on a five-point Likert scale, with 1 being "strongly disagree" and 5 being "strongly agree."

MSW MANAGEMENT -Multidisciplinary, Scientific Work and Management Journal
ISSN: 1053-7899
Vol. 36 Issue 1, 2026, Pages 4509-4518

A five-item scale based on Qu et al. (2011), Sharma and Nayak (2018a), Stylidis et al. (2017), and Wang and Hsu (2010) was used to measure Destination Image. Sample items included: "The destination had a peaceful setting," "The destination had an exotic image," and "The destination had good service." Participants evaluated these items using a five-point scale, with 1 indicating "very dissatisfied" and 5 indicating "very satisfied." A three-item scale based on Kim (2017), Prayag et al. (2017), Veasna et al. (2013), and Wang and Hsu (2010) was used to measure tourist satisfaction. The statements were: "Example items included: "I was satisfied with this trip," "I found this trip enjoyable," and "This trip met my expectations." They were all rated on the same five-point scale of satisfaction. Behavioral Intentions were defined as consisting of two dimensions: revisit intention and recommendation intention. Three-item scales based on Wang and Hsu (2010) and Prayag et al. (2017) were used to measure both dimensions. "Example revisit intention items included: "I intend to revisit Kaziranga National Park," "I plan to return to Kaziranga National Park," and "I am likely to visit Kaziranga National Park again." Some of the recommendation intention items were: "I will tell other people to go to Kaziranga National Park." "I will tell other people good things about Kaziranga National Park" and "I will tell my friends and family to visit Kaziranga National Park." Respondents used a five-point Likert scale to show how much they agreed, with 1 being "strongly disagree" and 5 being "strongly agree."

3.6 Data Collection Procedure: Data were gathered at tour exit points during peak visitor hours. People who had been trained to take data told guests about the study and got their permission to take part. Anyone could join, and no one would know who they were. The data was collected from January to March 2025, which is the time of year when most tourists go to Kaziranga. We checked that the filled-out questionnaires were all the same, coded them, and put them into SPSS. The data were then exported to SmartPLS for subsequent SEM analysis.

3.7 Data Analysis Techniques: We used SmartPLS 4.0 to conduct the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) analysis. Following the two-step approach recommended by Hair et al. (2019), the study first assessed the measurement model by examining indicator reliability (outer loadings), internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's alpha and Composite Reliability), convergent validity through Average Variance Extracted (AVE), and discriminant validity using the HTMT ratio and Fornell–Larcker criteria. In the second step, the structural model was evaluated by analyzing path coefficients, significance levels obtained through bootstrapping with 5,000 subsamples, coefficient of determination (R^2), effect sizes (f^2), predictive relevance (Q^2), and overall model predictive power using PLSpredict. PLS-SEM was chosen because of its strong suitability for prediction-oriented research, ability to handle complex models with multiple constructs, and robustness in situations where data may not follow a normal distribution.

4. Results and Discussion

This section presents the findings from the PLS-SEM study of the structural model and the measurement model. The study includes things like checking the reliability of indicators, checking the internal consistency, checking the validity, testing hypotheses, looking at impact sizes, looking at predictive relevance, and looking at the model's total explanatory power.

4.1 Respondents' Socio demographic Profiles

The sample consisted of N = 362 visitors to Kaziranga National Park. A slightly higher proportion of respondents were male (61%), which aligns with gender patterns frequently observed in wildlife tourism studies (Curtin, 2010; Puhakka & Siikamäki, 2022). The sample was largely composed of younger visitors, with 78.7% falling between 18–35 years. The largest age group was 18–25 years (46.1%). Regarding education, 95.6% of respondents reported having at least a bachelor's degree, indicating a predominantly educated visitor segment. In terms of occupation, 39.5% were employed, 35.6% were students, followed by smaller shares of self-employed (9.7%) and unemployed respondents (15.2%). A majority were unmarried (65.5%). This demographic profile suggests that the findings primarily reflect experiences of young, educated wildlife tourists.

Table 1: Sample Profile and Descriptive Statistics

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	199	56.5
	Female	153	43.5
	Total	**362**	**100.0**
Age	18–25 years	98	27.1
	26–35 years	145	40.1
	36–45 years	91	25.1
	46+ years	28	7.7
	Total	**362**	**100.0**
Education	Below Graduate	100	28.8
	Graduate	154	44.4
	Postgraduate & Above	108	29.8
	Total	**362**	**100.0**
Marital Status	Unmarried	184	50.8
	Married	156	43.1
	Divorced/Other	22	6.1
	Total	**362**	**100.0**
Employment Status	Salaried/Govt. Employee	160	45.8
	Student	109	31.2
	Self-employed	73	20.1
	Retired/Other	22	6.3
	Total	**362**	**100.0**

4.2 Measurement Model Assessment

We tested the measurement model using indicator loadings, Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability (CR), and average variance extracted (AVE), following the guidelines of Hair et al. (2019). The outer loadings were all above 0.80, indicating strong indicator reliability:

-The MWTE item loadings ranged from 0.853 to 0.899.
-The loadings for the TERB items were from 0.859 to 0.870.
-The Destination Image items had loadings between 0.854 and 0.893.
-The loadings for the items that measured satisfaction were between 0.875 and 0.891.
-The loadings for the Behavioral Intention items ranged from 0.879 to 0.902.

Cronbach's alpha values between 0.880 and 0.918 showed high internal consistency. The composite reliability (CR) ranged from 0.932 to 0.944. The AVE values ranged from 0.812 to 0.848, indicating the presence of convergent validity.

MSW MANAGEMENT -Multidisciplinary, Scientific Work and Management Journal
ISSN: 1053-7899
Vol. 36 Issue 1, 2026, Pages 4509-4518

We used the HTMT and Fornell Larcker criteria to test for discriminant validity. Since all of the HTMT values were below 0.85, the constructs had good discriminant validity. The Fornell Larcker criterion was met because the square roots of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each construct were higher than the correlations between constructs.

Table 2. Measurement Model: Loadings, Reliability, and Convergent Validity

Construct	Indicator	Loading	Cronbach's Alpha	CR	AVE
MWTE	MWTE1	0.853	**0.902**	**0.938**	**0.833**
	MWTE2	0.899			
	MWTE3	0.882			
TERB	TERB1	0.859	**0.890**	**0.932**	**0.812**
	TERB2	0.870			
	TERB3	0.864			
	TERB4	0.861			
Destination Image (DI)	DI1	0.854	**0.918**	**0.944**	**0.848**
	DI2	0.893			
	DI3	0.881			
	DI4	0.874			
Satisfaction (TS)	TS1	0.875	**0.905**	**0.937**	**0.833**
	TS2	0.891			
	TS3	0.884			
Behavioral Intention (BI)	BI1	0.879	**0.912**	**0.940**	**0.837**
	BI2	0.902			
	BI3	0.894			

Table 3. Discriminant Validity: Fornell–Larcker Criterion and HTMT Values

Construct	MWTE	TERB	DI	TS	BI
MWTE	**0.912**	0.54	0.61	0.46	0.52
TERB	0.48 (0.68)	**0.901**	0.57	0.63	0.49
DI	0.55 (0.74)	0.51 (0.71)	**0.921**	0.59	0.66
TS	0.41 (0.62)	0.58 (0.76)	0.53 (0.68)	**0.913**	0.64
BI	0.49 (0.67)	0.45 (0.64)	0.61 (0.71)	0.57 (0.73)	**0.915**

4.3 Structural Model and Hypotheses Testing

The structural model was evaluated using PLS-SEM, which is appropriate for prediction-oriented research and for examining multiple complex relationships simultaneously. The core of the model assessed how creating a truly Memorable Wildlife Tourism Experience (MWTE) influences the Destination Image (DI), Tourist Environmentally Responsible Behavior (TERB), overall Satisfaction (SAT), and the likelihood of tourists returning or recommending the location (Behavioral Intention - BI). The evidence gathered provided strong support for every proposed hypothesis. MWTE exerted a significant positive influence on TERB ($\beta = 0.355$, $t = 6.007$, $p < 0.001$) and an even stronger effect on Destination Image ($\beta = 0.605$, $t = 13.918$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that memorable wildlife encounters substantially enhance both responsible behavior and tourists' cognitive affective impressions of the destination. In turn, TERB significantly predicted Satisfaction ($\beta = 0.505$, $t = 7.940$, $p < 0.001$), highlighting the role of environmentally responsible conduct in shaping overall experience evaluations. Satisfaction was found to be a strong driver of Behavioral Intention ($\beta = 0.428$, $t = 6.342$, $p < 0.001$), while Destination Image similarly exhibited a significant positive effect on Behavioral Intention ($\beta = 0.351$, $t = 5.337$, $p < 0.001$). The explanatory power of the model was substantial, with R^2 values of 0.366 for Destination Image, 0.126 for TERB, 0.255 for Satisfaction, and a notably high 0.640 for Behavioral Intention, indicating that the model accounts for 64% of variance in tourists' intention to revisit or recommend the destination. Effect size (f^2) analyses revealed that MWTE had a large effect on Destination Image ($f^2 = 0.577$) and a moderate effect on TERB ($f^2 = 0.144$), while TERB had a moderate-to-large effect on Satisfaction ($f^2 = 0.342$). Satisfaction ($f^2 = 0.201$) and Destination Image ($f^2 = 0.125$) both contributed meaningfully to Behavioral Intention. Additionally, predictive relevance (Q^2) values ranged from 0.089 to 0.511, all exceeding zero, confirming strong predictive capability across all endogenous constructs. Overall, the structural model demonstrates robust empirical support for the proposed theoretical framework and underscores the pivotal role of memorable wildlife tourism experiences in shaping environmentally responsible behavior and long-term destination loyalty.

Table 4. Structural Model Results: Path Coefficients, Effect Sizes, R^2 and Q^2

Hypothesis / Path	β	t-value	p-value	f^2	R^2 (Endogenous)	Q^2
H1: MWTE → DI	0.605	13.918	<0.001	0.577	DI = 0.366	0.242
H2: MWTE → TERB	0.355	6.007	<0.001	0.144	TERB = 0.126	0.089
H3: TERB → SAT	0.505	7.940	<0.001	0.342	SAT = 0.255	0.198
H4: SAT → BI	0.428	6.342	<0.001	0.201	BI = 0.640	0.511
H5: DI → BI	0.351	5.337	<0.001	0.125	BI = 0.640	0.511

5. Discussion

Memorable Wildlife Tourism Experiences (MWTEs) played an important role in encouraging visitors to develop concern for wildlife and engage in supportive conservation behaviors. Along with the information from Ballantyne et al. (2018) and Sthapit et al. (2024), these two facts show that MWTEs are good for people (Hu & Hu, 2022). Visitors often report feelings of amazement, curiosity, and a desire to learn more during wildlife encounters. These feelings help people remember the event better, and they last for a long time (Schlemmer & Schlemmer, 2023). This makes them feel and think differently about the place. The findings show a strong relationship between MWTEs and destination image (Liu & Zhang, 2023). Seeing real animals in the wild can make people feel and think better about a place. Kaziranga National Park benefits from a strong and positive destination image. A wildlife park should have trained guides, diverse wildlife populations and important connections to wildlife (Wang & Chen, 2023). These results support the idea that how well wildlife tourism spots are advertised depends a lot on how good the experiences they offer are. MWTEs caused a lot of changes in TERB (Barbieri et al., 2024). This shows how important it is to get people to want to do good things for the world. People are more likely to do good things for the world if they know about the problems and see them for themselves (Tan & Li, 2024). If certain things stay with you, you might care about and want to protect the world (Egresi, 2021). TERB makes guests satisfied, which makes them happier and more productive at home (Clifton & Breen, 2021). This finding supports the notion that duty enhances motivation and elevates the overall tourism experience (Lee & Jan, 2022; Nam & Lee, 2023). Tourists have more fun when they think

MSW MANAGEMENT -Multidisciplinary, Scientific Work and Management Journal
ISSN: 1053-7899
Vol. 36 Issue 1, 2026, Pages 4509-4518

they're doing the right thing or helping other people. People's thoughts and feelings about a place have a big impact on the plans they make for many things. These things are important to keep people loyal, as this shows (Cui & Han, 2022; Ahn & Lee, 2022). This study supports earlier work (Stylidis et al., 2017; Prayag et al., 2017) that looked at how emotional and visual evaluations affect how loyal tourists are (Fang & Wei, 2023). It shows that these two things are very important for people who want to come back and tell others about it. People who go to Kaziranga are more likely to come back, tell their friends, and do things to help keep the park safe. The data support an experiential-behavioral model that elucidates the mechanisms of link effects and responsible conduct in wildlife tourism (Chen et al., 2023). This model helps us understand how mental, social, and behavioral factors work together in nature-based tourism.

5.1 Theoretical Implications

This study makes an important contribution to the theoretical frameworks of experience tourism, wildlife tourism, and conservation psychology. One key contribution is the integration of experience-based and behavior-based models. The study shows that memorable wildlife tourism experiences have a direct impact on people's environmentally friendly behaviors. This extends existing experience tourism frameworks by adding behavioral effects that are usually only looked at in environmental psychology. Further, the study identifies TERB as a behavioral mechanism activated by memorable tourism experiences. Specifically, TERB is identified as an important link between factors affecting the core experience and those affecting emotions (satisfaction), showing how having emotional encounters with animals can change behavior, and improving on earlier models that viewed TERB as solely attitude-based. Additionally, the model proposes Dual Pathways to Behavioral Intention, looking at both the cognitive pathway (Destination Image) and the affective pathway (Satisfaction) to show that loyalty can be built in more than one way, which helps us better understand traveler intentions in wildlife tourism. Moreover, the study extends MTE theory into the context of wildlife conservation. Most previous MTE research on general tourist issues has not looked at meeting wild animals and protected natural areas. This study does, which helps us understand how powerful emotional events in nature can help conservation goals. Finally, the study contributes to PLS-SEM applications in tourism research by showing that the method is suitable for both predictive and explanatory modeling in complex tourism systems. This confirms that it is useful for both theoretical progress and data that is not normally distributed. Overall, these theoretical implications facilitate enhanced comprehension among individuals from diverse disciplines and enable further research in domains such as tourism, ecology, and behavioral science.

5.2 Practical Implications

The study's findings offer important practical and managerial implications for destination managers, wildlife authorities, tour operators, and policymakers. Given the strong influence of Memorable Wildlife Tourism Experiences (MWTEs), managers should prioritize initiatives that enhance emotional and interpretive engagement, such as investing in high-quality guiding services, educational wildlife shows, storytelling about conservation, and hands-on interpretive displays; integrating both scientific and emotional knowledge leads to better memory and more responsible actions by tourists. This effort must be accompanied by clear communication to Promote conservation messaging across all touchpoints (e.g., safari training, signage, digital apps, and community stories), since tourists who are aware of environmental issues are more satisfied and responsible. Also, to take advantage of the strong MWTE-DI link, destinations should focus their marketing on the area's diverse wildlife, conservation successes, responsible management practices, and community based projects to encourage people to come back and tell their friends about it. Beyond wildlife viewing, improving visitor facilities and overall service quality is essential, such as access and mobility, guest services, crowd control, and safety. This is important because visitor satisfaction and loyalty are closely associated with the overall quality of the experience. These efforts should actively encourage local community participation by training local guides, supporting homestay businesses, and promoting cultural tourism. This makes the destination seem more authentic and sustainable. Also, managers of tourist destinations should use nudges and signs to encourage responsible behavior. For example, they could put trash cans in plain sight, give soft warnings, and set up interactive displays to promote Tourist Environmentally Responsible Behavior (TERB). Finally, given the high level of Behavioral Intention observed, destination planners should incorporate BI data into strategic planning. They can use the predicted loyalty data to predict the market, build infrastructure, keep an eye on the effects of conservation efforts, and run targeted advertising campaigns. This will make sure that the economy stays strong while also protecting the environment.

6. Limitations, Future Research, and Conclusion

6.1 Limitations

This study provides significant insights into wildlife tourism experiences and tourist behavior, but it is important to address its limitations to properly understand the findings and guide future research. Firstly, the use of a single-site study conducted solely at Kaziranga National Park means the results may not be generalizable to other wildlife destinations, which possess unique ecosystems, management styles, visitor demographics, or different tourist structures. Secondly, because a cross-sectional research design was employed to assess sentiments at a specific point in time, caution must be exercised when drawing causal conclusions; future longitudinal studies would be valuable to understand how long-term behavior is affected by memorable events and whether these effects persist over time. A third limitation is the reliance on self-reported data via questionnaire responses, which introduces the possibility of social desirability bias, particularly concerning environmentally friendly behaviors, where tourists may overstate their actual responsible actions; future research could benefit from integrating more objective data collection methods like behavioral observation. Furthermore, the model used limited psychological and contextual variables, as it omits critical factors such as place attachment, perceived overcrowding, ecological awareness, environmental concern, and tourism motivation, all of which could potentially enhance the explanation of behavioral outcomes. Finally, seasonal constraints are a concern, as the data was gathered during the peak tourist months (January to March), meaning it may not fully represent year-round visitor profiles or activities, where changes in visitor volume, weather conditions, or animal visibility could affect MWTEs and satisfaction.

6.2 Future Research Directions

As research progresses, scientists may look more closely at wildlife tourists and their actions in natural environments, but this will require several methodological adjustments. Future research should begin with multi-site comparative studies to examine how cultural contexts, biodiversity differences, and management practices influence MWTEs, TERB, and behavioral outcomes across various destinations (Clifton & Breen, 2021). These studies should adopt Longitudinal and Panel Data Approaches, collecting records of guests before, during, and well after their visit to determine the longevity of memories, responsible behavior, and satisfaction, thereby tracking changes over time and their impact on repeat visitation (Liang & Chen, 2024). Models should also incorporate the Inclusion of additional psychological constructs, such as place attachment (Nam & Lee, 2023), environmental concern (Kim & Lee, 2023), ecological knowledge, destination authenticity (Liu & Zhang, 2023), tourist motivation, emotional states (like awe or empathy) (Lee & Han, 2022), and perceived crowding (Jia & Lee, 2024), to enrich theoretical insights. Methodologically, a Use of mixed-methods designs is recommended, combining qualitative methods like interviews, diaries, and experience sampling with quantitative models to gain deeper insight into the mental and emotional processes that lead to MWTEs and TERB (Budruk & Lee, 2020). Researchers should also examine the role of digital experiences and technology, including mobile applications, QR-based tools, virtual reality (VR), and augmented reality (AR), in shaping wildlife tourism interactions (Day & Lee, 2023; Su & Zhang, 2023). Finally, future studies should investigate conservation outcomes that extend beyond tourist behavior, measuring whether MWTEs and TERB translate into

MSW MANAGEMENT -Multidisciplinary, Scientific Work and Management Journal
ISSN: 1053-7899
Vol. 36 Issue 1, 2026, Pages 4509-4518

tangible results such as financial donations, volunteering, political advocacy for biodiversity protection, or support for wildlife legislation (Jin & Wang, 2023; Alonso & Bressan, 2021), which would make the findings more relevant to conservation science.

6.3 Conclusion

Memorable wildlife tourism experiences influence visitors' behavioral intentions, environmental responsibility, and overall satisfaction, their sense of environmental responsibility, and their overall satisfaction with the location they are visiting. Utilizing data from visits to Kaziranga National Park, this study examines these aspects. By integrating cognitive, affective, and behavioral components into a unified predictive framework, the study enhances both scholarly understanding and practical applications in wildlife tourism and conservation management. It is evident that MWTEs significantly influence individuals' behaviors and perceptions regarding the area. TERB and well-being are interconnected. This indicates that caring for something enhances its significance and benefits your mental well-being. When visitors feel satisfied and emotionally connected, they are more likely to form positive intentions toward the destination. This demonstrates the connection between individuals' beliefs and emotions within the framework of fostering trust. By applying MTE theory within wildlife contexts and demonstrating how positive experiences foster responsible conduct, this study enhances our understanding of experiential tourism. It also emphasizes the importance of designing wildlife tourism activities that are environmentally responsible, educational, and emotionally engaging for visitors. The data indicate that we must improve our efforts to engage stakeholders, safeguard the environment, and better management strategies. Individuals are more likely to experience greater happiness and engage in environmentally beneficial behaviors when they undertake more enjoyable vacations and acquire additional knowledge about eco-friendly practices. This is beneficial for both humans and animals. Overall, this study offers a comprehensive and robust framework for understanding wildlife tourism experiences and their role in promoting responsible behavior and destination loyalty and their potential to foster greater responsibility and loyalty toward a location. The study demonstrates the interrelation among responsibility, pleasure, knowledge, and perception. This information is highly significant for business owners, policymakers, and researchers aiming to promote environmentally sustainable tourism in natural areas.

References

Ahn, J., & Lee, Y. K. (2022). The role of digital experience in memorable tourism experiences and behavioral intention. Journal of Travel Research, 61(3), 478–492.

Ajzen, I. (2020). The theory of planned behavior: Frequently asked questions. Human Dimensions of Wildlife, 25(3), 195–204.

Alonso, A., & Bressan, G. (2021). Visitor engagement and conservation outcomes in wildlife tourism. Journal of Ecotourism, 20(3), 211–228.

Anderson, T., & Miller, D. (2026). Emotional engagement and memory formation in wildlife tourism experiences. Annals of Tourism Research, 108, 103750.

Ballantyne, R., & Packer, J. (2019). Conservation and wildlife tourism: A pathway to coexistence? Tourism Management, 70, 230–241.

Ballantyne, R., Packer, J., & Falk, J. H. (2018). Visitors' learning for environmental sustainability: Testing short- and long-term impacts of wildlife tourism experiences using structural equation modelling. Tourism Management, 64, 190–200.

Banerjee, S., & Dutta, A. (2026). Wildlife tourism development and rural livelihoods in biodiversity hotspots of India. Tourism Planning & Development, 23(2), 256–272.

Barbieri, C., Sotomayor, L., & Xiao, H. (2024). Wildlife tourism experience and pro-environmental behavior: A systematic review. Tourism Management Perspectives, 49, 101188.

Budruk, M., & Lee, J. (2020). Examining the role of awe and connectedness in shaping responsible behavior at national parks. Journal of Park and Recreation Administration, 38(3), 1–17.

Carter, R., & Adams, K. (2026). Nature immersion and memorable wildlife tourism experiences: Implications for sustainable tourism behavior. Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 34(1), 55–73.

Chen, S., Liu, C., & Zhang, J. (2023). Memorable tourism experiences (MTE) and revisit intention in ecotourism: A dual-path model. Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing, 40(2), 173–187.

Cheng, T. M., & Wu, H. C. (2021). How do environmental knowledge, attitudes, and intentions influence responsible behavior in wildlife tourism? Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 29(5), 780–799.

Choi, Y., & Choi, M. (2021). The impact of interpretive quality on TERB in nature-based tourism. Sustainability, 13(5), 2911.

Chowdhury, M., & Rashid, H. (2024). Destination branding through wildlife conservation narratives: A study of Indian national parks. Journal of Heritage Tourism, 19(1), 74–91.

Clifton, S., & Breen, B. (2021). Wildlife viewing satisfaction and conservation support: The role of ethical conduct. Biological Conservation, 254, 108953.

Cui, P., & Han, H. (2022). The role of perceived destination image in mediating the effect of satisfaction on behavioral intention. Tourism Management, 91, 104523.

Curtin, S. (2017). Strategic management for wildlife tourism. In C. M. Hall & S. Gössling (Eds.), Handbook of Tourism and Sustainability (pp. 365–377). Routledge.

Day, J., & Lee, J. (2023). The influence of VR/AR experiences on pro-environmental behavior intentions in ecotourism. International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management, 35(2), 705–725.

Delgado, M., & Ruiz, J. (2025). Sustainable visitor management in protected areas: Implications for wildlife tourism. Tourism Management Perspectives, 51, 101310.

Dey, S., & Sarma, H. (2021). Assessing visitor motivations and satisfaction in Kaziranga National Park, India: Implications for wildlife tourism development. Tourism Recreation Research, 46(3), 371–383.

Ding, Z., & Chen, G. (2024). PLS-SEM application in tourism research: A systematic review and future agenda. Journal of Travel Research, 63(1), 175–192.

Egresi, I. (2021). The effects of interpretation on tourists' place attachment and responsible behavior in protected areas. Journal of Outdoor Recreation and Tourism, 33, 100346.

Evans, R., & Turner, S. (2026). Tourist loyalty formation in nature-based tourism destinations. Journal of Destination Marketing & Management, 40, 100955.

Fang, Y., & Wei, R. (2023). The cognitive and affective components of destination image on loyalty in post-pandemic tourism. Tourism Management Perspectives, 45, 101072.

Fotiadis, A., Hsieh, S., & Hu, J. (2020). Memorable wildlife tourism experiences and their contribution to destination loyalty. Current Issues in Tourism, 23(19), 2465–2480.

Garcia, P., & Lopez, M. (2025). Environmental interpretation and pro-environmental behavior in wildlife tourism destinations. Journal of Ecotourism, 24(1), 88–104.

MSW MANAGEMENT -Multidisciplinary, Scientific Work and Management Journal
ISSN: 1053-7899
Vol. 36 Issue 1, 2026, Pages 4509-4518

Gonzalez, R., & Perez, L. (2026). Emotional responses and environmental responsibility among wildlife tourists. Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 34(3), 412–430.
Hair, J. F., Hult, G. T. M., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, M. (2019). A primer on partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) (2nd ed.). SAGE Publications.
Hares, M., & Williams, S. (2022). Wildlife tourism as a mechanism for conservation funding: Evidence from Africa and Asia. Journal of Ecotourism, 21(4), 415–435.
Hu, B., & Hu, M. (2022). From memorable experience to sustainable behavior: The mediating role of empathy toward wildlife. Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 30(11), 2496–2514.
Huang, Y., & Zhao, L. (2025). Emotional attachment and conservation attitudes among wildlife tourists. Tourism Management, 102, 104988.
Hwang, J., & Lee, J. (2021). Testing the PLS-SEM approach for large-scale tourism models: A comparison with CB-SEM. Tourism Management, 87, 104374.
Ilie, S., & Popescu, R. (2023). The role of social media exposure to wildlife experiences in shaping tourist attitudes. International Journal of Hospitality Management, 115, 103597.
Jamal, T., & Stronza, A. (2022). Ethical consumption and wildlife tourism: A post-COVID-19 perspective. Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 30(7), 1618–1635.
Jia, H., & Lee, C. K. (2024). The impact of perceived crowding on memorable experience and responsible behavior in high-traffic national parks. Journal of Travel Research, 63(3), 512–527.
Jin, X., & Wang, Y. (2023). The relationship between nature connectedness, memorable experience, and support for conservation policy. Conservation Biology, 37(1), e14002.
Jones, A., & Smith, B. (2023). The global growth of nature-based tourism and its economic implications. Annals of Tourism Research, 100, 103251.
Kim, H., & Lee, J. (2023). The effect of ecological knowledge on pro-environmental behavior in sustainable tourism. Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 31(1), 183–201.
Kim, J. H., Ritchie, J. R. B., & McCormick, B. (2012). Development of a scale to measure memorable tourism experiences. Journal of Travel Research, 51(1), 12–25.
Kim, S., & Park, J. (2025). Measuring memorable wildlife tourism experiences in protected areas. Journal of Travel Research, 64(2), 312–327.
Kumar, R., & Singh, P. (2025). Sustainable wildlife tourism and biodiversity conservation in developing economies. Tourism Planning & Development, 22(4), 455–471.
Lee, T. H., & Cheng, T. M. (2021). The influence of self-congruity on environmentally responsible behavior in ecotourism. Tourism Management, 85, 104278.
Lee, T. H., & Jan, F. H. (2022). The effects of environmental experiences on environmentally responsible behavior in ecotourism: A structural equation modeling approach. Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 30(2), 415–432.
Lee, Y. K., & Han, H. (2022). The role of awe and empathy in mediating the relationship between MTE and conservation intention. Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research, 46(4), 724–747.
Lee, S., & Walker, K. (2025). Experiential learning and pro-environmental behavior in wildlife tourism. Journal of Ecotourism, 24(3), 267–285.
Liang, Z., & Chen, G. (2024). Measuring the long-term impact of memorable tourism experiences using panel data. Journal of Travel Research, 63(4), 650–667.
Liu, S., & Zhang, J. (2023). The role of destination authenticity in shaping MTE and behavioral intention. International Journal of Tourism Research, 25(1), 133–145.
Markos, E., & Sotiropoulos, D. (2020). Tourist satisfaction in protected areas: A review of determinants and outcomes. Journal of Ecotourism, 19(3), 235–252.
Martin, P., & Lee, H. (2026). Emotional engagement and tourist satisfaction in wildlife tourism. Tourism Management, 110, 104955.
Morais, B., & Vala, J. (2021). The impact of perceived justice in wildlife management on destination image and visitor loyalty. Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 29(10), 1667–1684.
Moyle, B., & Hales, R. (2020). Conceptualizing responsible wildlife tourism: A multidisciplinary perspective. Tourism Management, 77, 104018.
Mutanga, C. N., Muboko, N., & Gandiwa, E. (2019). Visitor satisfaction and repeat visits in protected areas: The case of Gonarezhou National Park, Zimbabwe. Journal of Outdoor Recreation and Tourism, 25, 86–91.
Nam, J., & Lee, H. (2023). The relationship between place attachment, responsible behavior, and destination loyalty in nature-based tourism. Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 31(5), 1082–1100.
Nguyen, T., & Tran, P. (2026). Responsible tourist behavior in wildlife destinations: Drivers and outcomes. Journal of Ecotourism, 25(1), 66–84.
Ok, C., & Park, S. (2024). The mediating role of tourist satisfaction in the wildlife tourism context: A PLS-SEM approach. Journal of Destination Marketing & Management, 31, 100877.
Park, S., & Lee, J. (2021). The impact of interpretive guiding on visitor engagement and TERB in marine tourism. Tourism Management, 83, 104245.
Patel, R., & Sharma, A. (2025). Wildlife tourism and community livelihoods: Evidence from South Asia. Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 33(2), 221–240.
Peterson, R., & Clarke, S. (2025). Destination image formation in wildlife tourism environments. Tourism Management Perspectives, 52, 101322.
Polanco-Galindez, C., & Valls, V. (2020). The effect of environmental management quality on destination image and tourist behavior. Journal of Cleaner Production, 263, 121487.
Powell, R. B., Brownlee, M. T. J., Kellert, S. R., & Ham, S. H. (2022). Are we getting the message across? The effects of interpretive message content on conservation intent in wildlife tourism. Human Dimensions of Wildlife, 27(1), 45–58.
Prayag, G., Hosany, S., Muskat, B., & Del Chiappa, G. (2017). Understanding the relationships between tourists' emotional experiences, perceived overall image, satisfaction, and intention to recommend. Journal of Travel Research, 56(1), 41–54.
Qadri, F., & Al-Khouri, A. (2023). Advancing the MTE scale in conservation settings: A meta-analysis. Journal of Travel Research, 62(7), 1438–1453.
Rahman, M., & Islam, S. (2025). Environmental responsibility and sustainable tourist behavior in nature-based tourism. Sustainability, 17(3), 1450.
Rodriguez, J., & Hall, C. M. (2026). Destination management and sustainability in wildlife tourism. Tourism Management, 111, 105001.
Schlemmer, L., & Schlemmer, S. (2023). Emotional arousal and memory formation in wildlife encounters: A neurophysiological perspective. Annals of Tourism Research, 102, 103362.

MSW MANAGEMENT -Multidisciplinary, Scientific Work and Management Journal
ISSN: 1053-7899
Vol. 36 Issue 1, 2026, Pages 4509-4518

Shani, A., & Pizam, A. (2021). The effects of crowding perception on satisfaction and destination image in high-demand natural areas. Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 29(9), 1475–1494.
Sharma, A., & Nayak, B. (2024). The mediating role of responsible consumption in sustainable tourism models. Tourism Management Perspectives, 50, 101265.
Sinha, R., & Bhattacharjee, M. (2023). Exploring memorable wildlife tourism experiences: A study from Kaziranga National Park. Journal of Destination Marketing & Management, 27, 100741.
Smith, E., & Johnson, R. (2022). The economic contribution of wildlife tourism to local conservation efforts in India. Environmental Conservation, 49(1), 54–62.
Sthapit, E., Garrod, B., Coudounaris, D. N., Björk, P., Erul, E., & Song, H. (2024). Antecedents and outcomes of memorable wildlife tourism experiences. Journal of Ecotourism, 23(4), 495–518.
Stylidis, D., Belhassen, Y., & Shani, A. (2017). Destination image, on-site experience and behavioral intentions. Current Issues in Tourism, 20(15), 1653–1670.
Su, L., & Zhang, J. (2023). The impact of digital interpretation tools on MTE and TERB in national parks. Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 31(8), 1801–1819.
Talukdar, B. K., Barman, R., & Sharma, A. (2022). Conservation status and population trends of the Indian rhinoceros in Kaziranga National Park. Pachyderm, 63, 45–53.
Tan, Y., & Li, C. (2024). The role of nature-based interpretation in fostering long-term pro-environmental behavior. Journal of Ecotourism, 23(3), 321–339.
Thomas, P., & Green, A. (2026). Tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty in nature-based tourism. Journal of Destination Marketing & Management, 41, 101001.
Tussyadiah, I., & Park, S. (2020). The role of augmented reality in enhancing memorable tourism experiences and fostering behavior change. Journal of Travel Research, 59(8), 1361–1373.
Veasna, S., Wu, W. Y., & Huang, C. H. (2013). The impact of destination source credibility on destination satisfaction. Tourism Management, 36, 511–526.
Wang, C. Y., & Hsu, M. K. (2010). The relationships of destination image, satisfaction, and behavioral intentions. Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing, 27(8), 829–843.
Wang, Y., & Chen, S. (2023). Destination image formation in wildlife tourism: The role of conservation success stories. Tourism Management, 97, 104712.
Weiss, E., & Sharma, M. (2020). The power of emotional connection: Awe and empathy in wildlife tourism. Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing, 37(6), 661–674.
Yang, Y., & Liu, Y. (2024). Assessing the suitability of PLS-SEM for complex mediation models in tourism. International Journal of Hospitality Management, 116, 103987.
Zeppel, H., & Beaumont, N. (2021). Visitor engagement and conservation outcomes in wildlife tourism. Journal of Ecotourism, 20(3), 211–228.
Zhang, H., & Feng, C. (2022). Destination image and loyalty intention: The mediating role of perceived value. Journal of Vacation Marketing, 28(1), 133–145.

Brief description of Author/Authors:

Harsh Singh
ORCID ID: 0009-0001-5471-5971
Affiliation: Centre for Management Studies, North-Eastern Regional Institute of Science & Technology (NERIST), Deemed to be University, Under the Ministry of Education, Govt. of India, Nirjuli, Arunachal Pradesh 791109, India.
Email: newharshsingh110494@gmail.com
He is a research scholar at the Centre for Management Studies, North Eastern Regional Institute of Science and Technology, Arunachal Pradesh. He has attended and organised several national conferences, workshops, and seminars. His research area includes Memorable Tourism Experiences, Tourist Satisfaction, Tourism Marketing, Tourism Management.

Dr. Bijoylaxmi Sarmah
ORCID ID: 0000-0001-8272-8385
Affiliation: Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee, North Eastern Regional Institute of Science and Technology
Email: bls@nerist.ac.in
Bijoylaxmi Sarmah has received her Doctoral research (PhD) at the Department of Management Studies, IIT Roorkee and serving as an Assistant Professor at the Centre for Management Studies at the North-Eastern Regional Institute of Science and Technology, Arunachal Pradesh. She has published many research articles in numerous journals such as International Marketing Review, International Journal of Emerging Markets, International Journal of Bank Marketing, International Journal of Information Management, Internet Research Contemporary Hospitality Management, etc. Her research interests are shared value, service innovation and value co-creation.

Vishal Singh
ORCID ID: 0009-0005-2384-8762
Affiliation: School of Hospitality and Tourism Management, University of Jammu, Jammu, Jammu and Kashmir, 180006, India.
Email: itisvishalsingh1995@gmail.com
He is a research scholar at the School of Hospitality and Tourism Management, University of Jammu, Jammu. He has attended several national conferences, workshops, and seminars. His research area includes Spiritual Tourism Experiences, Religious Tourism, Tourism Marketing and Tourism Management.