

# Tourist Satisfaction and Revisit Intention in Altai Tavan Bogd

International Journal of  
Business and Innovation  
6 (2) 1-20, 2026  
www.ijbi-irc.com



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## Abstract

The Altai Tavan Bogd region is one of Mongolia's most significant tourism destinations due to its unique natural landscapes, rich cultural heritage, and transboundary geographical location shared by Mongolia, Russia, and China. Despite its growing tourism potential, there is a lack of empirical research that systematically examines the factors influencing tourist satisfaction and revisit intention in this region, in particular. This study aims to identify and analyze the key factors affecting tourist satisfaction and revisit intention among visitors to the Altai Tavan Bogd area, focusing on elements such as natural environment, service quality, cultural interaction, and perceived risk. A quantitative research approach was employed. Data was collected through a structured questionnaire using a 5-point Likert scale and distributed through random sampling. The study incorporated accommodation, food service, such as authenticity, destination attractiveness, cultural contact, and perceived risk as independent variables, with satisfaction serving as a mediating variable and revisit intention as the dependent variable. The data were analyzed using SPSS for preliminary statistical tests (including descriptive, reliability, and correlation analyzes) and SmartPLS for advanced Structural Equation Modeling. Specifically, path analysis was employed to examine the direct, indirect, and mediating effects among the constructs, providing a comprehensive understanding of the causal relationships within the proposed research model. The findings reveal that tourist satisfaction has a strong positive impact on revisit intention. Additionally, some independent variables influence revisit intention indirectly through satisfaction, which functions as a mediating variable. To increase the potential for tourists to revisit the destination, it is important to ensure high-quality services, support meaningful cultural interactions, and maintain effective risk management systems, alongside the preservation of natural and cultural assets. These findings offer broader implications for tourism development, destination management, destination branding in Mongolia, and strategic planning in similar contexts.

## Keywords

Destination Image, Tourist Satisfaction, Revisit Intention, Altai Tavan Bogd.

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<https://doi.org/10.65194/IJBI-2026-1006>

Received 7 February 2026; Received in revised form 15 April 2026; Accepted 25 April 2026  
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## **Introduction**

The post-pandemic recovery of the global tourism sector has led to an intensified flow of international tourists, which significantly affects countries' economic growth, employment, and investment (UNWTO, 2023). Tourism, therefore, not only has economic importance but also serves as a strategic tool for promoting intercultural relations, regional development, and enhancing a country's international image (UNWTO, 2023).

In 2024, Mongolia received a total of 727,400 foreign tourists, surpassing pre-COVID levels (NSO, 2024). Among them, tourists from neighboring countries accounted for 55% of the total flow, indicating the prominent role of Russia and China in Mongolian tourism.

China's tourism market has expanded rapidly over the past decade, driven by rising income levels among the middle and upper classes. McKinsey & Company (2023) reported that nearly 40% of Chinese travelers planned to take an outbound leisure trip in the coming year. At the same time, the travel preferences of Chinese tourists have shifted from shopping-oriented destinations toward those offering clean air, unique natural landscapes, and cooler climates, reflecting a growing focus on health and well-being (China Briefing, 2023). In line with this trend, the UNWTO (2023) reported that about 25 - 30% of Chinese outbound travelers are interested in visiting mountainous and cold regions. This increasing interest in destinations such as Central Asia, Siberia, and the Himalayan region indicates that "Mongolia - particularly the Altai Tavan Bogd area - holds significant potential to attract Chinese tourists seeking pristine natural and high-altitude experiences.

Russia remains a key tourism partner for Mongolia due to its geographical proximity, shared history, and strong cultural ties, which together sustain a stable flow of cross-border visitors (Bat-Ochir, 2021; UNWTO, 2023). The similar natural landscapes between the Baikal region and western and northern Mongolia offer a particular advantage for short-distance and short-term travel (UNWTO, 2023). According to Bat-Ochir (2021), approximately 20% of Russian outbound tourists choose Mongolia as their destination, reflecting the country's strong appeal to nearby Russian travelers. Within Mongolia, the Altai Tavan Bogd region stands out as an ideal destination, combining convenient accessibility with distinctive natural and cultural attractions that resonate strongly with Russian tourists (Bat-Ochir, 2021; UNWTO, 2023).

The convergence of Chinese tourists' growing preference for mountainous and snowy destinations with Russian tourists' frequent travel to Mongolia underscores the research necessity and practical relevance of this study. Despite the strategic importance of these neighboring markets, limited empirical attention has been given to understanding their travel behavior, destination experiences, satisfaction levels, and revisiting intentions within the Mongolian context. Addressing this gap holds both theoretical values, by extending cross-border tourism and destination choice frameworks, and practical significance, by informing evidence-based marketing strategies, service quality

enhancement, and tourism competitiveness in Mongolia's evolving regional tourism landscape (UNWTO, 2023; NSO, 2024; Bat-Ochir, 2021).

Although some studies have examined the behavior and satisfaction of tourists in the context of Mongolia (Luvsandavaajav, Badarch, & Tserendorj, 2022), there is a clear empirical gap in understanding the factors affecting satisfaction and revisited intention among tourists from China and Russia, who make up the majority of Mongolia's visitors. This study addresses that gap by examining their travel experiences in the Altai Tavan Bogd region, providing essential insights for tourism management, marketing, service improvement, and sustainable development in border areas.

Building upon the identified research gap regarding the travel behavior, satisfaction, and revisited intentions of Chinese and Russian tourists in Mongolia, this study aims to make a substantive contribution to the sustainable development of the Altai Tavan Bogd tourism area, a major destination in western Mongolia. The overarching objective is to analyze the factors influencing tourists' travel experiences and satisfaction and to examine how these factors affect their revisited intentions and word-of-mouth recommendations. By addressing these relationships, the study seeks to generate empirical evidence that can inform tourism management, marketing strategies, and policy formulation, thereby enhance destination competitiveness and supporting sustainable regional development.

Specifically, this study seeks to identify the key factors influencing tourist satisfaction in the Altai Tavan Bogd region, examine the relationship between satisfaction and revisit intention, and analyze the behavioral and perceptual differences between Russian and Chinese tourists. In doing so, the research aims to develop evidence-based policy and marketing recommendations that promote sustainable tourism development and strengthen the region's long-term competitiveness.

## **Literature Review**

### **Destination Image**

Destination image refers to the sum of beliefs, ideas, and impressions that individuals hold about a particular place (Crompton J. L., 1979). It represents how tourists perceive and mentally visualize a destination before, during, and after their visit. According to (Gartner W. B., 1994), the destination image is a multidimensional construct comprising cognitive, affective, and conative components. The cognitive image relates to tourists' knowledge and beliefs regarding tangible attributes such as natural scenery, culture, and infrastructure; the affective image concerns emotional responses such as enjoyment, excitement, or relaxation; and the conative image reflects behavioral intentions, including the likelihood of revisiting or recommending the destination to others.

Scholars have provided a range of definitions that collectively emphasize the complexity of the destination image and its significance in shaping tourists' motivation, satisfaction, and loyalty (Crompton J. L., 1979; Gartner W. B., 1994;). Overall, the destination image

not only influences initial destination choice but also post-visit evaluations and word-of-mouth communication, making it a central concept in tourism behavior research.

A comprehensive review of recent literature demonstrates that the destination image is a multidimensional construct shaped by natural, cultural, service-related, and risk-related factors. In Asian contexts, natural and cultural imagery often exerts the strongest influence on tourists' perceptions and behavioral intentions. For example, in Vietnam's mountainous Thanh Hoa Province, natural factors were found to have the most significant effect on tourist satisfaction and loyalty (Le, 2020), while in China, destination image was determined by environmental quality, infrastructure, price, service, and safety dimensions (Li & Liao, 2023). Similarly, in Indonesia, perceived risk was found to have a paradoxical positive effect, as adventurous travelers often associate risk with excitement and novelty (Nursiana & Sugiarto, 2024).

Prior research indicates that destination image plays a crucial role in shaping electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), which subsequently influences tourists' revisit intentions and behavioral decisions (Abubakar et al., 2017; Jalilvand & Samiei, 2012). In Mexico's Sierra Madre, Alvarez and Espinosa (2020) identified perceived safety as a key determinant of destination image and tourist satisfaction. Across Southeast Asia, studies in Vietnam and Thailand further confirmed that both cognitive and affective dimensions of image directly affect tourist satisfaction and subsequent revisit intentions (Prayag et al., 2017; Chi & Qu, 2008).

In Europe, several studies have highlighted sustainability and safety as crucial elements of the destination image. For example, in Spain's Sierra de Guadarrama National Park, natural factors and safety were identified as the most important image components influencing satisfaction and loyalty (López-Sanz, 2021). In Austria's Alpine regions, the perception of sustainable development was shown to enhance the destination image (Apcc, 2025). Furthermore, both cognitive and affective dimensions of destination image have been found to significantly influence tourists' satisfaction and behavioral intentions, including revisit intention (Stylidis et al., 2017; Prayag et al., 2017).

In the Brazilian Amazon, affective image was found to have the greatest impact on tourists' overall perception of a nature-based destination (Chaves & Anjos, 2024). Across India's Himalayan region, Sutar and Kour (2023) demonstrated that destination image strongly influences satisfaction, which subsequently predicts revisit intention.

More recently, European and global studies using content analysis approaches have expanded the scope of destination image research. Nicola and Schmitz (2024) analyzed online reviews from TripAdvisor and Google Maps, revealing that tourists rated natural attractions and heritage positively, while infrastructure received negative evaluations. Similarly, Chauhan (2025) examined adventure tourism experiences, showing that positive adventure experiences enhance the destination image, which subsequently increases satisfaction and intention to revisit.

Collectively, these studies confirm that the destination image should not be perceived solely in terms of natural beauty, but rather as an integrated construct encompassing cultural heritage, service quality, hospitality, gastronomy, sustainability, and risk perception. A holistic approach to developing and managing the destination image is therefore essential for improving visitor satisfaction, fostering loyalty, and ensuring sustainable competitiveness in the global tourism market.

### **Accommodation Services**

Accommodation services constitute a core dimension of the tourism industry, fulfilling tourists' fundamental needs while providing comfort, safety, and convenience throughout their stay. Beyond serving as a place to rest, accommodation has evolved into a central component of the overall tourist experience, embodying the quality, authenticity, and hospitality that shape a destination's image and perceived value. As such, accommodation quality functions not only as a determinant of tourist satisfaction but also as a symbolic reflection of the destination's cultural identity and service standards.

Empirical research consistently confirms that the quality of accommodation services has a significant influence on tourist satisfaction, loyalty, and behavioral intentions. For example, Manyangara (2023) found that the quality of lodging facilities and the professionalism of service providers substantially enhance a destination's image and positively affect tourists' intention to revisit. Similarly, Jebbouri (2022) demonstrated that accommodation service quality, host involvement, integration of local products, and the accessibility of facilities collectively strengthen both destination image and tourist satisfaction.

These findings underscore the interconnectedness between the tangible (facilities, cleanliness, and amenities) and intangible (hospitality, authenticity, and emotional connection) dimensions of accommodation experience.

In the context of Altai Tavan Bogd National Park, a major tourism hub in western Mongolia endowed with exceptional natural and cultural resources, enhancing the quality, authenticity, and sustainability of accommodation services is particularly critical. Developing lodging facilities that reflect local cultural characteristics, environmental responsibility, and community engagement can significantly improve tourists' overall satisfaction, increase revisit intentions, and foster a positive, distinctive destination image. Ultimately, investing in accommodation development aligned with sustainable tourism principles contributes to both visitor experience enhancement and long-term competitiveness of the Altai Tavan Bogd region.

### **Food Service**

Food service constitutes an essential component of the tourism experience, extending beyond the satisfaction of basic nutritional needs to encompass cultural discovery, sensory pleasure, and emotional engagement. Local cuisine serves as an authentic medium for cultural exchange, allowing tourists to experience a destination's traditions,

values, and lifestyle through taste, presentation, and hospitality. Consequently, the quality, safety, authenticity, and accessibility of food services have been widely recognized as key determinants of tourist satisfaction, destination image, and revisit intention.

Empirical studies emphasize that food-related experiences strongly shape tourists' perceptions of a destination. Food service dimensions such as variety, taste, restaurant environment, service quality, and ingredient authenticity significantly shape destination image and revisit intention (Zhu et al., 2024). The findings revealed that tourists' evaluations of food service exert both direct and indirect influences on their intention to revisit, mediated by the destination image (Zhu et al., 2024). Similarly, Vu et al. (2025) found that culinary experience, restaurant service quality, and local production constitute key dimensions of a nation's destination image, emphasizing that improving gastronomic service quality enhances tourist appreciation and fosters positive destination attitudes. Their findings further demonstrate that innovation, authenticity, and accessibility in local cuisine significantly enhance travelers' perceived food value and revisit intentions.

Collectively, these studies affirm that food service is not merely a functional component of tourism but a strategic instrument for destination marketing and cultural representation. High-quality, safe, and culturally expressive culinary services enhance tourist satisfaction, reinforce the destination image, and strengthen behavioral loyalty. Therefore, in destinations such as Altai Tavan Bogd, promoting authentic, sustainable, and locally rooted gastronomy can play a pivotal role in elevating visitor experience and advancing sustainable tourism development.

### **Destination Attractiveness**

Destination attractiveness encompasses the set of natural, cultural, environmental, and service-related attributes that collectively determine the degree to which a location appeals to potential tourists. It reflects how effectively a destination captures travelers' interest, motivates visitation, and shapes their emotional and cognitive engagement. As a core dimension of destination competitiveness, attractiveness directly influences tourists' destination choice, satisfaction, revisit intention, and willingness to recommend the destination to others.

Empirical evidence highlights the multidimensional nature of destination attractiveness. Raimkulov and Juratargunov (2021) analyzed four primary dimensions - cultural, natural, infrastructural, and price related attributes and found a strong positive relationship between destination attractiveness and the creation of memorable travel experiences.

The study emphasized that both tangible factors such as infrastructure, accessibility, and pricing and intangible factors such as culture, heritage, and natural beauty are equally vital in shaping tourists' affective attachment and experiential satisfaction.

Enhancing destination attractiveness, therefore, requires a holistic and integrative approach that balances environmental conservation, cultural authenticity, service quality,

and visitor safety. Strengthening these elements not only increases tourists perceived value and satisfaction but also reinforces the destination image, encourages repeat visitation, and contributes to sustainable tourism development. Within this framework, destinations such as Altai Tavan Bogd, endowed with exceptional natural landscapes and rich cultural heritage, possess a strong foundation upon which to build long-term competitiveness through strategically managed attractiveness factors.

### **Cultural Contact**

Cultural contact refers to the experiential interactions through which tourists engage with local communities, including direct communication with residents, participation in cultural events, and immersion in traditional customs and daily lifestyles. Such experiences serve as an essential component of cultural and experiential tourism, enabling visitors to gain deeper cultural awareness and appreciation of the host society. Meaningful cultural contact not only enriches tourists' understanding of local heritage but also fosters positive destination perceptions, emotional attachment, satisfaction, and an enhanced intention to revisit.

Previous research has established that cultural engagement significantly strengthens the perceived value of tourism experiences, contributing to higher levels of satisfaction, trust, and enduring positive memories. Cultural contact has been conceptualized as both interaction with local residents and direct participation in cultural practices. A mixed-method study combining quantitative techniques (correlation and regression analyses,  $n = 350$ ) with qualitative interviews demonstrated that cultural contact exerts a significant positive effect on both tourist satisfaction and trust (Viet & Phuc, 2020). Similarly, Lai, Zhang, and Zhang (2021), in their study measured cultural contact through dimensions such as interaction with local culture, authenticity of experiences, and cultural memory. Their findings indicated that cultural contact not only enhances cultural memory but also has direct and indirect positive effects on tourists' intention to revisit the destination.

Accordingly, promoting cultural contact should be regarded not merely as a means of attracting visitors but as a strategic approach to preserving cultural heritage and fostering sustainable tourism development. By facilitating meaningful and respectful exchanges between tourists and host communities, destinations can cultivate deeper emotional connections, strengthen intercultural understanding, and enhance tourist satisfaction, loyalty, and long-term engagement. For culturally rich destinations such as Altai Tavan Bogd, embedding opportunities for authentic cultural interaction within tourism experiences is integral to achieving a sustainable and culturally grounded form of destination development.

### **Perceived Risk**

In tourism research, perceived risk is widely recognized as one of the most influential factors shaping tourists' decision-making processes, destination image formation, and behavioral intentions. It refers to travelers' subjective assessment of potential threats or uncertainties associated with visiting a destination, encompassing aspects such as

personal safety, health conditions, political stability, financial loss, and environmental hazards. High levels of perceived risk can diminish tourists' trust and satisfaction, reduce their likelihood of revisiting, and negatively influence overall destination loyalty. Conversely, effective risk management and transparent communication can mitigate these effects, reinforcing tourists' confidence and perception of safety.

Perceived risk has been widely conceptualized as a multidimensional construct encompassing financial, physical, psychological, and social dimensions. Prior research indicates that these risk dimensions negatively influence destination image and tourist behavioral intentions, with social and psychological risks exerting particularly strong effects. Importantly, destination image-through its cognitive and affective components-has been shown to play a mediating role, partially offsetting the negative impact of perceived risk on tourist loyalty (Fuchs & Reichel, 2006; Chew & Jahari, 2014; Jiang et al., 2022). These findings underscore the critical importance of managing perceived risk in tourism, particularly for destinations seeking to enhance competitiveness and visitor retention. For natural and border-region destinations such as Altai Tavan Bogd, ensuring safety, accessibility, and effective communication of risk management measures is essential not only for protecting tourists but also for strengthening trust, satisfaction, and a positive destination image. In this context, perceived risk should be understood as both a challenge and an opportunity - a determinant that, when effectively addressed, can enhance the destination's credibility, resilience, and long-term sustainability.

### **Tourist Satisfaction and Revisit Intention**

Tourist satisfaction and revisit intention are among the most extensively examined constructs in tourism behavior research and are widely recognized as core indicators of destination performance and competitiveness. Satisfaction is generally defined as the result of comparing tourists' pre-travel expectations with their actual experiences at a destination. It represents a cumulative psychological evaluation shaped by multiple factors such as service quality, cultural authenticity, food, safety, and environmental conditions. When tourists' experiences meet or exceed their expectations, satisfaction levels increase, leading to stronger emotional attachment, favorable destination image, and greater behavioral loyalty.

Empirical evidence consistently demonstrates that satisfaction serves as both a mediating and predictive construct in explaining tourists' post-visit behaviors. Prior research has shown that destination image exerts a significant positive influence on both satisfaction and tourist loyalty, with satisfaction acting as a key mediator in this relationship (Chi & Qu, 2008; Prayag et al., 2017). Furthermore, individual-level factors such as religiosity may function as moderating influences within these relationships (Eid, 2015).

Similarly, a questionnaire-based study (n = 500) using structural equation modeling (SEM) found that destination image positively influences satisfaction, which in turn enhances revisit intention. In addition, emotional value and affective experiences significantly strengthen tourists' satisfaction, reinforcing behavioral loyalty (Huyhn & Giao,

2024). Findings from a broad range of international studies conducted since 2020 collectively affirm that tourist satisfaction is not merely an outcome variable reflecting travel evaluation but a central determinant of revisit intention, loyalty, and destination competitiveness. High satisfaction fosters repeat visitation, stimulates positive word-of-mouth communication, and supports sustainable tourism growth.

For destinations such as Altai Tavan Bogd, which attract a significant number of visitors from neighboring countries like China and Russia, enhancing tourist satisfaction through improved service quality, authentic cultural experiences, and emotional engagement is essential. By doing so, the destination can strengthen and revisit intentions, build long-term tourist relationships, and promote sustainable regional development within Mongolia's broader tourism framework.

## **Research Methodology**

### **Research Hypotheses**

Building upon the theoretical and empirical insights from the preceding literature, this study proposes a set of hypotheses to examine the structural relationships among destination attributes, tourist satisfaction, and revisit intention in the context of Altai Tavan Bogd National Park. Prior studies highlight that natural attractiveness, accommodation, food service quality, and cultural contact exert positive effects on tourist satisfaction, while perceived risk tends to have a negative influence. Furthermore, tourist satisfaction is consistently found to predict revisited intention and word-of-mouth behavior (Le, 2020; Li & Liao, 2023; Viet & Phuc, 2020; Lai et al., 2021). Accordingly, the study tests the following hypotheses:

H1: Natural attractiveness has a positive effect on tourist satisfaction.

H2: Accommodation services have a positive effect on tourist satisfaction.

H3: Food service quality has a positive effect on tourist satisfaction.

H4: Perceived risk has a negative effect on tourist satisfaction.

H5: Cultural contact has a positive effect on tourist satisfaction.

H6: Tourist satisfaction has a positive effect on revisiting intention.

These hypotheses collectively aim to assess the mediating role of tourist satisfaction between destination experience and revisit intention, thereby providing empirical evidence for sustainable tourism development in the Altai Tavan Bogd region.

### **Conceptual Model**

The research model developed for this study illustrates the causal relationships among the six constructs. Tourist satisfaction functions as the mediating variable, linking five independent variables - natural attractiveness, accommodation, food service quality, perceived risk, and cultural contact - to the dependent variable, revisit intention.

The model integrates both cognitive dimensions (e.g., accommodation, food service, and natural attractiveness) and affective dimensions (e.g., cultural engagement and perceived risk), which together determine tourists' overall evaluation of the destination. This framework bridges theoretical understanding and managerial application, clarifying how various destination attributes collectively influence satisfaction-driven behavioral outcomes such as loyalty and repeat visitation.

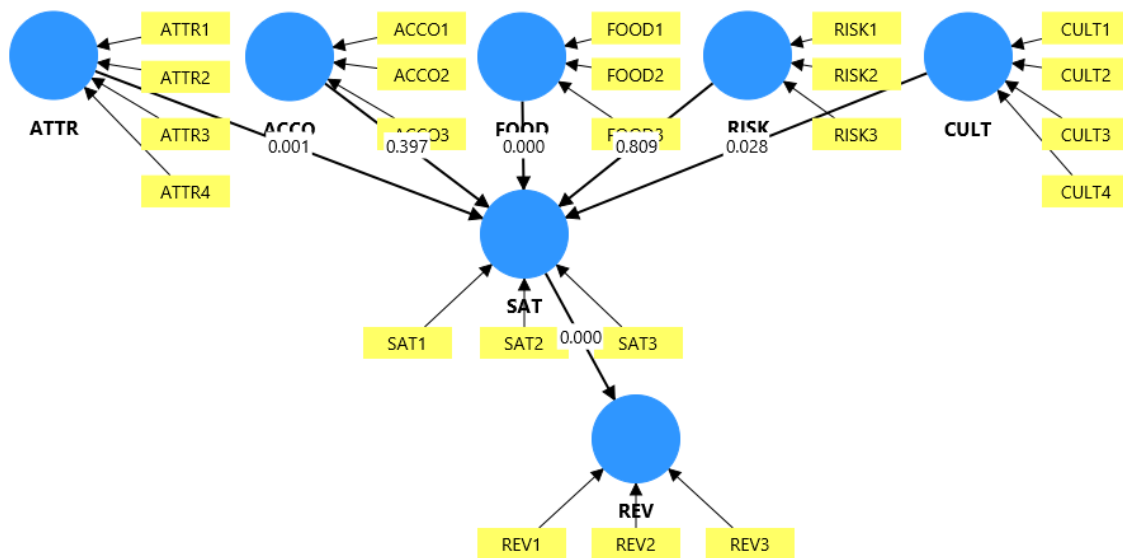


Figure 1 Research Model

## Research Design and Data Collection

A quantitative research design was employed to statistically analyze the factors influencing tourist satisfaction and revisit intention among Chinese and Russian tourists visiting Altai Tavan Bogd National Park. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire survey consisting of closed-ended Likert-scale items (1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree) that measured perceptions of destination attractiveness, accommodation, food service, cultural contact, perceived risk, satisfaction, and revisit intention.

The questionnaire was adapted from validated instruments used in prior tourism research (Hernández-García & Cruz, 2022; Pan & Chang, 2021; Seow et al., 2024). Demographic variables such as gender, age, marital status, occupation, and prior travel experience in Mongolia were also included.

A random sampling technique combined with a snowball approach was adopted. The first group of respondents was identified through local tour agencies, and subsequent participants were recruited through referrals from initial respondents who had visited the same destination. This mixed approach enabled the inclusion of a geographically diverse and representative sample of cross-border tourists.

A total of 228 valid responses were obtained, meeting the recommended sample size for multivariate statistical analysis using SPSS and SmartPLS. Data analysis involved descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) to test the proposed hypotheses and evaluate the causal structure among variables. All participants voluntarily consented to participate, and strict ethical standards regarding anonymity and confidentiality were observed.

### **Measurement Instruments and Variable Operationalization**

The questionnaire was designed to operationalize each construct through multiple measurement items adapted from established scales in tourism and hospitality research. All items were measured on a five-point Likert scale, ensuring comparability and statistical reliability across constructs.

Natural Attractiveness (H1): Measured through four items assessing perceptions of scenic beauty, ecological purity, and environmental appeal of Altai Tavan Bogd (Hernández-García & Cruz, 2022). Accommodation (H2): Assessed through three items evaluating comfort, cleanliness, and staff responsiveness, reflecting tourists' lodging satisfaction (Seow et al., 2024). Food Service (H3): Measured using three items reflecting food taste, cultural authenticity, and variety, capturing the experiential and cultural dimensions of gastronomy (Pan & Chang, 2021). Perceived Risk (H4): Measured using three indicators capturing safety concerns, health-related risks, and financial or logistical uncertainties, reflecting the multidimensional nature of perceived risk in tourism contexts (Fuchs & Reichel, 2006; Chew & Jahari, 2014; Jiang et al., 2022).

Cultural Contact (H5): Measured using four items capturing interaction with local residents and exposure to traditional music, dress, and customs, reflecting cultural immersion and engagement (Viet & Phuc, 2020; Lai et al., 2021).

Tourist Satisfaction (H6): Measured through three items evaluating overall satisfaction, emotional response, and impressions of the travel experience (Seow et al., 2024). Revisit Intention: Captured through three items assessing tourists' willingness to return and recommend Altai Tavan Bogd to others (Hernández-García & Cruz, 2022).

Each construct was treated as a latent variable, represented by its observed indicators in the PLS-SEM model. Reliability and validity were tested through Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability (CR), and average variance extracted (AVE) to ensure internal consistency and convergent validity. This operationalization framework ensures that all key variables are empirically measurable, allowing for robust statistical testing of the hypothesized relationships between destination attributes, satisfaction, and revisit intention.

## Results

### Demographic Profile of Respondents

A total of 228 valid responses were analyzed. The dataset includes demographic and behavioral variables such as gender, age, marital status, organization ownership, travel experience, trip duration, trip companions, and knowledge of Mongolian history. The summarized descriptive statistics and frequency distributions are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic Profile and Descriptive Statistics of Respondents (N = 228)

| Variable          | Categories     | n   | %     | Mean | Min | Max |
|-------------------|----------------|-----|-------|------|-----|-----|
| APPROVE           | 1 = Approve    | 228 | 100.0 | 1.00 | 1   | 1   |
| GENDER            | 1 = Male       | 119 | 52.2  | 1.48 | 1   | 2   |
|                   | 2 = Female     | 109 | 47.8  |      |     |     |
| AGEGRP            | 1 = 18 - 24    | 64  | 28.1  | 2.39 | 1   | 5   |
|                   | 2 = 25 - 34    | 65  | 28.5  |      |     |     |
|                   | 3 = 35 - 44    | 49  | 21.5  |      |     |     |
|                   | 4 = 45 - 54    | 47  | 20.6  |      |     |     |
|                   | 5 = 55+        | 3   | 1.3   |      |     |     |
| ORG_OWN           | 1 = Public     | 181 | 79.4  | 1.21 | 1   | 2   |
|                   | 2 = Private    | 47  | 20.6  |      |     |     |
| MARTIAL           | 1 = Single     | 124 | 54.4  | 1.45 | 1   | 2   |
|                   | 2 = Married    | 103 | 45.2  |      |     |     |
| VISITED_MN        | 1 = Yes        | 142 | 62.3  | 1.37 | 1   | 2   |
|                   | 2 = No         | 85  | 37.3  |      |     |     |
| TRIP_DAYS         | 1 = 1 - 2 days | 70  | 30.7  | 2.11 | 1   | 4   |
|                   | 2 = 3 - 4 days | 89  | 39.0  |      |     |     |
|                   | 3 = 5 - 6 days | 42  | 18.4  |      |     |     |
|                   | 4 = 7+ days    | 27  | 11.8  |      |     |     |
| TRIP_PARTNER      | 1 = Family     | 76  | 33.3  | 2.27 | 1   | 4   |
|                   | 2 = Friends    | 72  | 31.6  |      |     |     |
|                   | 3 = Alone      | 23  | 10.1  |      |     |     |
|                   | 4 = Tour group | 57  | 25.0  |      |     |     |
| HISTORY_KNOWLEDGE | 1 = Very Low   | 39  | 17.1  | 2.75 | 1   | 5   |
|                   | 2 = Low        | 52  | 22.8  |      |     |     |
|                   | 3 = Moderate   | 75  | 32.9  |      |     |     |
|                   | 4 = High       | 51  | 22.4  |      |     |     |
|                   | 5 = Very High  | 11  | 4.8   |      |     |     |

Note: Missing cases were found in Martial Status (1 case) and Visited Mongolia (1 case), each representing 0.4% of the total sample.

Overall, the dataset reflects a balanced and demographically diverse sample. Slightly more than half of respondents are male (52.2%) and single (54.4%), while the age composition shows that young adults (18 - 34 years) represent the majority (56.6%). Most participants (79.4%) were from public-sector organizations, indicating strong representation from government or public institutions.

In terms of travel experience, 62.3% have previously visited Mongolia, typically for 3 - 4 days (39%), and most traveled with family (33.3%) or friends (31.6%), suggesting that

travel behavior is socially oriented rather than individualistic. Knowledge about Mongolian history is generally moderate (mean = 2.75), while only a small percentage (4.8%) report very high awareness, highlighting potential for cultural education and heritage interpretation in tourism programs.

The results collectively indicate that respondents are young, educated, socially active travelers, mostly working in the public sector, with prior exposure to Mongolia but limited historical knowledge - an important insight for targeted cultural tourism and marketing strategies.

### Independent Samples T-Test by Nationality

Independent samples t-tests compared Russian (Group 1) and Chinese (Group 2) respondents on seven constructs of the model.

Table 2. Comparison of Mean Scores between Russian and Chinese Respondents

| Variable | Russia M (SD) | China M (SD) | t(df)        | p      | Cohen's d | Result      |
|----------|---------------|--------------|--------------|--------|-----------|-------------|
| ATTR_FAC | 4.07 (0.99)   | 4.11 (0.88)  | - 0.20 (226) | .845   | 0.03      | ns          |
| ACCO_FAC | 3.09 (1.04)   | 2.87 (1.28)  | 1.16 (226)   | .246   | 0.20      | ns          |
| FOOD_FAC | 3.83 (1.07)   | 3.67 (1.15)  | 0.85 (226)   | .394   | 0.15      | ns          |
| RISK_FAC | 3.02 (1.10)   | 3.99 (0.85)  | - 5.27 (226) | < .001 | 0.92      | Significant |
| CULT_FAC | 3.02 (1.10)   | 3.99 (0.85)  | - 5.27 (226) | < .001 | 0.92      | Significant |
| SAT_FAC  | 4.07 (0.89)   | 4.04 (0.84)  | 0.17 (226)   | .868   | 0.03      | ns          |
| REV_FAC  | 4.07 (1.00)   | 3.88 (1.02)  | 1.12 (226)   | .265   | 0.19      | ns          |

Note: Group 1 = Russia, Group 2 = China;  $\alpha = .05$ , two-tailed; ns = not significant.

No significant nationality differences were found in Attraction, Accommodation, Food, Satisfaction, or Revisit Intention ( $p > .05$ ). However, significant differences appeared for both Risk Perception and Cultural Experience, where Chinese tourists scored higher (Risk M = 3.99; Culture M = 3.99) than Russians (Risk M = 3.02; Culture M = 3.02), with large effect sizes ( $d = 0.92$ ). This suggests Chinese respondents perceive greater cultural engagement and are more risk-aware compared to Russian tourists.

Demographics show that the sample primarily comprises young, public-sector, Russian tourists, with most trips being short and socially oriented (family or friends). PLS-SEM analysis confirms that attraction, food, and culture are the strongest determinants of satisfaction, which in turn drives Revisit Intention. T-test comparisons reveal that Chinese tourists perceive risk and cultural elements more intensely than Russians, while both groups show similar satisfaction and revisit intentions.

These findings collectively indicate that destination marketing strategies should: emphasize cultural authenticity and culinary experiences, which directly increase satisfaction; address perceived risk through transparent safety communication, especially for Chinese tourists; and promote short-term, family-oriented travel packages that align with the prevailing behavior pattern of visitors. The integrated statistical analysis demonstrates that tourist satisfaction in Mongolia is primarily driven by cultural experience, attractions, and food quality rather than accommodation or perceived risk.

Satisfaction, in turn, is the strongest predictor of Revisit Intention, confirming its mediating role between experience and behavioral outcomes. Although cross-national differences are minimal overall, Chinese tourists show greater sensitivity to cultural richness and travel risk. These insights underline the importance of culturally responsive, safety-oriented, and experience-centered destination management in enhancing Mongolia's appeal to international tourists.

### PLS-SEM Structural Model Summary

The Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) analysis examined the relationships among five dimensions of the tourism experience - Accommodation, Attraction, Culture, Food, and Risk - and their influence on tourists' Satisfaction, which subsequently affects Revisit Intention. The bootstrapping procedure, using 5,000 resamples, was conducted to assess the significance of the hypothesized relationships in the structural model. The results of the bootstrapping analysis, including standardized path coefficients, t-values, and p-values for each hypothesized path, are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Results of Bootstrapping Analysis for the Structural Model

| Path                   | $\beta$ | t-value | p-value | Result             |
|------------------------|---------|---------|---------|--------------------|
| ACCO $\rightarrow$ SAT | 0.06    | 0.85    | .397    | Not significant    |
| ATTR $\rightarrow$ SAT | 0.25    | 3.40    | .001    | Significant        |
| CULT $\rightarrow$ SAT | 0.18    | 2.19    | .028    | Significant        |
| FOOD $\rightarrow$ SAT | 0.33    | 4.44    | < .001  | Highly significant |
| RISK $\rightarrow$ SAT | - 0.02  | 0.24    | .809    | Not significant    |
| SAT $\rightarrow$ REV  | 0.53    | 7.84    | < .001  | Highly significant |

Note: Bootstrapping with 5,000 subsamples; significance level  $\alpha=0.05$ .  $\beta$ =standardized path coefficient.

As shown in Table 3, attraction ( $\beta = 0.25$ ,  $t = 3.40$ ,  $p = .001$ ), culture ( $\beta = 0.18$ ,  $t = 2.19$ ,  $p = .028$ ), and food ( $\beta = 0.33$ ,  $t = 4.44$ ,  $p < .001$ ) had positive and statistically significant effects on tourist satisfaction. In contrast, accommodation ( $\beta = 0.06$ ,  $t = 0.85$ ,  $p = .397$ ) and risk perception ( $\beta = -0.02$ ,  $t = 0.24$ ,  $p = .809$ ) were not statistically significant.

In contrast, accommodation ( $\beta = 0.06$ ,  $t = 0.85$ ,  $p = .397$ ) and risk perception ( $\beta = - 0.02$ ,  $t = 0.24$ ,  $p = .809$ ) were not statistically significant. Satisfaction had a strong positive and highly significant influence on revisit intention ( $\beta = 0.53$ ,  $t = 7.84$ ,  $p < .001$ ), indicating that higher satisfaction leads to a greater likelihood of revisiting.

The coefficient of determination for satisfaction was approximately  $R^2 = 0.50$ , and, for Revisit Intention, it was  $R^2 = 0.53$ . These results indicate a moderate-to-substantial level of explanatory power, showing that the model explains about half of the variance in these constructs, thus demonstrating its robustness.

From a theoretical perspective, the findings support both the Expectation - Confirmation Theory (ECT) and the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB). Satisfaction serves as a key

mediating construct. That connects experiential factors to behavioral intentions, reaffirming its pivotal role in understanding tourist behavior. Practically, the findings suggest that tourism organizations should prioritize improving food quality, cultural experiences, and attraction appeal, as these are the strongest drivers of satisfaction. In contrast, accommodation quality and risk perception alone do not significantly enhance satisfaction. Effective destination management strategies should, therefore, emphasize satisfaction as a pathway to increase revisit intention and visitor loyalty.

Overall, the PLS-SEM results demonstrate that culture, food, and attraction quality are the main determinants of tourist satisfaction, while satisfaction itself is the strongest predictor of revisit intention. These findings offer valuable implications for tourism policy, service quality improvement, and sustainable destination development.

The bootstrapping procedure, with 5,000 subsamples (two-tailed), was conducted to evaluate the significance of the hypothesized paths within the PLS-SEM structural model. The analysis assessed the direct relationships among the constructs of the tourism experience - accommodation, attraction, culture, food, and risk - on satisfaction, as well as the influence of satisfaction on revisit intention. The results of the bootstrapping analysis, including standardized path coefficients, t-values, p-values, and 95% confidence intervals, are summarized in Table 4.

Table 4. Results of Bootstrapping Analysis (n = 5,000 subsamples)

| Path       | Hypothesis | $\beta$ (Path Coefficient) | t-value | p-value | 95% CI (approx.) | Result        |
|------------|------------|----------------------------|---------|---------|------------------|---------------|
| ACCO → SAT | H1         | 0.06                       | 0.85    | .397    | [- 0.08, 0.19]   | Not Supported |
| ATTR → SAT | H2         | 0.25                       | 3.40    | .001    | [0.11, 0.39]     | Supported     |
| CULT → SAT | H3         | 0.18                       | 2.19    | .028    | [0.02, 0.35]     | Supported     |
| FOOD → SAT | H4         | 0.33                       | 4.44    | < .001  | [0.18, 0.46]     | Supported     |
| RISK → SAT | H5         | - 0.02                     | 0.24    | .809    | [- 0.15, 0.11]   | Not Supported |
| SAT → REV  | H6         | 0.53                       | 7.84    | < .001  | [0.40, 0.66]     | Supported     |

Note: Bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples; two-tailed test at significance level  $\alpha = .05$ .

The bootstrapping procedure (5,000 subsamples, two-tailed) was applied to assess the significance of the hypothesized paths. As shown in Table 4, accommodation quality (ACCO → SAT) had a positive but statistically insignificant effect on satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.06$ ,  $t = 0.85$ ,  $p = .397$ ). Attraction (ATTR → SAT) showed a significant positive relationship with satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.25$ ,  $t = 3.40$ ,  $p = .001$ ), as did culture (CULT → SAT) ( $\beta = 0.18$ ,  $t = 2.19$ ,  $p = .028$ ) and food (FOOD → SAT) ( $\beta = 0.33$ ,  $t = 4.44$ ,  $p < .001$ ). In contrast, risk perception (RISK → SAT) had no significant impact ( $\beta = - 0.02$ ,  $t = 0.24$ ,  $p = .809$ ).

Finally, satisfaction (SAT → REV) demonstrated a strong positive and statistically significant influence on revisit intention ( $\beta = 0.53$ ,  $t = 7.84$ ,  $p < .001$ ). These results indicate that visitors' perceptions of attraction, culture, and food quality are key predictors of

satisfaction, which in turn strongly drives revisit intention, whereas accommodation and risk perception play only a negligible role in this model.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study examined international tourists' experiences and behavioral intentions toward visiting Mongolia by integrating demographic analysis, PLS-SEM structural modeling, and independent sample t tests. The results revealed that Mongolia's tourism experience is largely shaped by cultural, culinary, and attraction-related factors, while satisfaction remains the strongest predictor of revisit intention.

The majority of respondents were Russian tourists (82.5%), followed by Chinese (17.5%), with a balanced gender ratio and predominance of young, educated, and socially active travelers. Most visitors were public-sector employees who traveled with family or friends, stayed for 3 - 4 days, and showed moderate knowledge of Mongolian history, indicating a potential for deeper cultural interpretation and learning.

The PLS-SEM results demonstrated that attraction, culture, and food significantly and positively influenced satisfaction, whereas accommodation and risk perception had no meaningful impact. Satisfaction had a strong direct effect on revisit Intention ( $\beta = 0.53$ ,  $p < .001$ ), confirming its mediating role between experience and behavior. The model explained around half of the variance in both constructs ( $R^2 \approx 0.5$ ), reflecting moderate-to-high explanatory power. These findings are consistent with the Expectation - Confirmation Theory and the Theory of Planned Behavior, underscoring that satisfaction is the central determinant of tourists' loyalty and behavioral outcomes.

Comparative analysis between Russian and Chinese tourists indicated no significant differences in most experience dimensions, except for Risk and Cultural experience, where Chinese tourists scored significantly higher ( $p < .001$ ,  $d = 0.92$ ). This suggests that Chinese visitors are more sensitive to perceived risks and place greater value on cultural engagement, whereas Russian tourists exhibit more neutral perceptions. Such cross-cultural variation highlights the need for destination management strategies tailored by nationality.

In summary, tourist satisfaction in Mongolia is primarily driven by cultural authenticity, attraction quality, and food experience rather than accommodation or risk *perception*. The results imply that improving cultural and culinary offerings, while ensuring clear safety communication, can substantially enhance visitor satisfaction and loyalty. The study recommends the following actions to enhance Mongolia's tourism competitiveness and visitor satisfaction:

1. Expand cultural tourism programs by developing immersive heritage-based experiences and fostering partnerships with local communities, artists, and cultural institutions to promote authentic engagement.

2. Develop culinary tourism offerings that reflect Mongolia's regional diversity, emphasizing traditional cuisine, local ingredients, and food-related experiences as integral parts of cultural identity.
3. Strengthen risk communication and safety standards, especially for Chinese tourists, by ensuring transparent information, multilingual guidance, and visible safety protocols across all visitor touchpoints.
4. Promote family- and group-oriented travel services by designing inclusive tour packages, discounts, and accommodation options that align with the social nature of travel among international visitors.
5. Adopt satisfaction-based marketing strategies that highlight emotional connection, cultural learning, and memorable experiences to inspire repeat visits and long-term destination loyalty.

For long-term sustainability, it is recommended that Mongolia's national tourism strategy integrates cultural, culinary, and safety dimensions into destination branding and policy frameworks. Continuous monitoring through satisfaction surveys and structural modeling can further support data-driven, visitor-centered policy development.

Overall, this research provides robust empirical evidence that culture, food, and attractions are Mongolia's competitive advantages in international tourism. Satisfaction is the core driver of revisiting intention, and fostering culturally rich, safe, and authentic travel experiences will strengthen Mongolia's global image as a distinctive and sustainable destination.

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