

INTERNAL FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE TOURISTS' MOTIVATION TO TRAVEL TO PALI REGENCY, SOUTH SUMATRA

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Abstract: This study investigates the factors influencing tourist motivation to visit Kabupaten PALI, South Sumatera, Indonesia. Employing a descriptive quantitative approach, the research analyzes internal (push) factors that shape domestic tourists' travel decisions. The results indicate that push factors have a positive and statistically significant effect on tourist motivation. The determination coefficient ($R^2 = 0.993$) shows that 99.3% of the variation in tourist motivation can be explained by these internal drivers. The main push factors identified include the desire to escape daily routines, seek relaxation, strengthen family relationships, enjoy entertainment, and achieve self-fulfillment. These motivations originate from psychological and emotional needs within individuals. The findings highlight the importance of understanding tourists' internal motivations as a basis for developing appropriate tourism strategies to increase tourist visits to Kabupaten PALI.

Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi motivasi wisatawan untuk berkunjung ke Kabupaten PALI, Sumatera Selatan, Indonesia. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif deskriptif untuk mengkaji faktor internal (push factors) yang membentuk keputusan perjalanan wisatawan domestik. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa push factors memiliki pengaruh positif dan signifikan terhadap motivasi wisatawan. Nilai koefisien determinasi ($R^2 = 0,993$) menunjukkan bahwa sebesar 99,3% variasi motivasi wisatawan dapat dijelaskan oleh faktor-faktor internal tersebut. Faktor pendorong utama yang teridentifikasi meliputi keinginan untuk melepaskan diri dari rutinitas sehari-hari, mencari relaksasi, mempererat hubungan keluarga, menikmati hiburan, serta mencapai pemenuhan diri. Motivasi-motivasi tersebut berasal dari kebutuhan psikologis dan emosional yang muncul dari dalam diri individu. Temuan penelitian ini menekankan pentingnya pemahaman terhadap motivasi internal wisatawan sebagai dasar dalam merumuskan strategi pengembangan pariwisata yang tepat untuk meningkatkan jumlah kunjungan wisatawan ke Kabupaten PALI.

Keywords: tourist motivation, push factors, kabupaten pali

INTRODUCTION

The recovery of the tourism and creative economy sectors is strengthening post-pandemic, although it has not yet reached pre-pandemic levels. The Central Statistics Agency (BPS) recorded cumulative foreign tourist visits in the first quarter of 2023 reaching 2.5 million, a 508.87% increase compared to the same period in 2022. The Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy (Kemenparekraf) also predicts that foreign tourist visits will reach approximately 9 million by the end of this year. The tourism sector is one of the pillars of the Indonesian economy and a major contributor to foreign exchange. The Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD) reported in its Tourism Trends and Policies 2022 report that in 2019, the tourism

sector contributed 5.0% to Indonesia's gross domestic product (GDP). However, the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 resulted in a 56% decline in tourism's contribution to GDP, dropping to just 2.2% of the total economy. (Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Indonesia, 2023)

In Indonesia, this sector is formally regulated in Law Number 10 of 2009 concerning Tourism, which defines tourism as a variety of tourism activities supported by facilities and services provided by the community, businesses, the government, and local governments. As the world's largest archipelagic nation, Indonesia boasts natural resources in the form of beaches, mountains, tropical forests, lakes, and the rich culture of hundreds of ethnic groups, all of which

can serve as excellent resources for developing tourist destinations (Rindrasih, 2021).

The reality on the ground shows that this enormous potential has not been fully optimally tapped. Rindrasih (2021) emphasized that there is still a gap between the potential of tourism resources and the quality of management and promotion. This is relevant to the conditions in PALI Regency (Penukal Abab Lematang Ilir) in South Sumatra. This area boasts a unique cultural, historical, and natural richness, yet tourist arrivals remain relatively low. Data shows a significant downward trend in tourist numbers, except for the business tourism segment, which is actually increasing. This phenomenon can serve as a basis for research to explore the factors causing the decline and formulate strategies for developing and promoting more sustainable tourism destinations.

Table 1. Data on Visits to the Bumi Ayu Temple Collection Building in Pali Regency in 2024/2025

NO	Traveler	YEAR	
		2024	2025
1	Service	42	90
2	Students	1,018	503
3	General	2,351	1,918
4	Overseas	5	0
	Amount	3,416	2,511

Source: Pali Regency Tourism Office, 2025

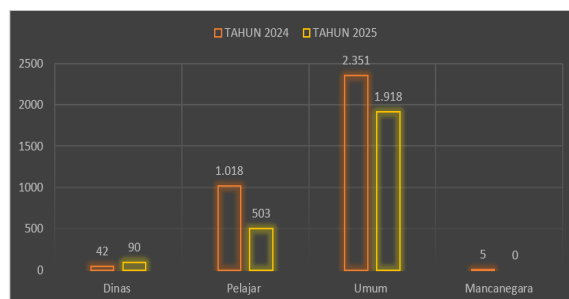


Figure 1. Graphic of Visit Data to the Bumi Ayu Temple Collection Building in Pali Regency in 2024/2025

Presentation of data on visits to the Bumi Ayu Temple Collection Building in Pali Regency in 2024/2025 shows that; The declining trend in total tourist arrivals has become a major issue that requires further investigation. This decline may be influenced by various factors, both internal and external to the destination. From the internal perspective, aspects such as service quality, tourism facilities, and promotional strategies may affect

tourists' decisions to visit. Meanwhile, external factors including changes in tourism trends, economic conditions, and government policies may also contribute to fluctuations in tourist arrivals. Understanding these factors is therefore essential in order to identify the underlying causes of the decreasing visitation trend and to formulate appropriate development strategies.

In addition, several patterns in tourist segmentation indicate potential opportunities and challenges for tourism development in the region. For instance, the increasing number of business tourists suggests the potential for developing MICE-based tourism, which may be more promising compared to general tourism activities. Conversely, the decline in student tourist visits indicates a shift in the travel patterns of educational groups, which may require specific strategies from destination managers to attract this segment. Furthermore, the absence of foreign tourists reflects weak international market penetration, which may be related to limited promotional outreach, inadequate transportation access, or the relatively low competitiveness of the destination in the global tourism market.

Monthly data from 2025 shows that tourist visits are heavily influenced by the holiday season and major events, with general tourists dominating. However, reliance on this segment is risky if not balanced with a diversification strategy. The low number of international tourists also indicates the need for promotion and increased global accessibility. This phenomenon is highly relevant as a research background to explore the factors influencing tourists' travel decisions

Table 2. Data on Visits to the Bumi Ayu Temple Area in Pali Regency in 2025

NO	Traveler	2025						
		January	February	March	April	May	June	July
1	Service	0	0	0	17	54	33	46
2	Pelajar	80	156	0	148	110	362	67
3	Umum	6,537	3,062	2,206	24,482	4,126	12,821	3,466
4	Media	0	0	0	2	15	0	0
5	Overseas	2	0	0	0	0	1	0
	Amount	6,619	3,218	2,206	24,649	4,305	13,217	3,579

Source: Pali Regency Tourism Office, 2025

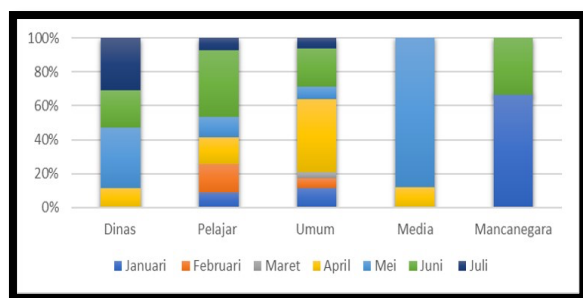


Figure 2. Graph of Visit Data for the Bumi Ayu Temple Area in Pali Regency in 2025

The presentation of tourist visit data to the Bumi Ayu Temple area in PALI Regency in 2025 indicates several important patterns in visitor characteristics and trends. First, the number of tourist arrivals shows sharp fluctuations throughout the year. At the beginning of the year, the number of visitors was relatively low, followed by a significant increase in April, a decline in the following months, and another rise in June. This pattern suggests that seasonal factors as well as cultural, educational, and religious calendars play a considerable role in influencing tourist visitation. In addition, general tourists dominate the visitor composition, accounting for more than 80 percent of the total number of visitors in almost all observed months. This dominance indicates that the destination is highly dependent on the regular domestic tourist market; consequently, any decline in this segment would significantly affect the overall number of tourist arrivals.

Furthermore, the data reveal several opportunities and challenges for tourism development in the Bumi Ayu Temple area. The presence of student tourists is relatively significant, particularly in June, indicating the potential for developing educational tourism programs through collaboration with schools and universities. On the other hand, the number of foreign tourists remains extremely low, with only three recorded visits over the seven-month observation period. This condition reflects the limited penetration of the international tourism market and suggests the need for stronger promotion and improved accessibility. In addition, although still relatively small in number, the increasing involvement of media-related visits indicates a potential opportunity for the development of MICE-based tourism and the strengthening of digital promotion strategies to increase the destination's visibility.

As a new regency, Penukal Abab Lematang Ilir (PALI) continues to explore all its resources, not just natural resources (SDA) and human resources (SDM), but also other potentials (kabarpali.com) In connection with the above problems, this research has the title, namely Factors Influencing Tourist Motivation in Undertaking Tourist Travel in Pali Regency, South Sumatra.

An operational definition refers to the explanation of a variable based on how the concept is measured and observed in practical terms within the scope of the research object being studied. In this research, the variables consist of one independent variable and one dependent variable. The independent variable is the push factor, which represents the internal motivations that encourage tourists to travel. Meanwhile, the dependent variable is tourist motivation in undertaking tourist trips. The operational definitions of these variables are presented in the following table.

METHOD

This study employs a descriptive quantitative research approach. Quantitative research is based on the positivist paradigm and is used to analyze phenomena through measurable data and statistical analysis. The descriptive quantitative approach aims to systematically describe and analyze the factors that influence tourist motivation based on numerical data obtained from respondents. Through this approach, the study focuses on identifying and examining internal and external factors that influence tourist motivation to visit PALI Regency, South Sumatra. The data collected are analyzed using statistical techniques to provide an objective understanding of the patterns and relationships among the variables studied.

Table 3. Operational Definition of Variables

Variables	Variable Definition	Variable Indicator	Scale
Factors influencing tourist motivation (X)	Driving factors (Push Factors) (X1)	1. Escape Relaxation. 2. Play. 3. Strengthening family bonds 4. Prestige. 5. Social interaction.	Ordinal
	Internal factors that come from the desires, needs and		

personal	7.
motivatio	Romance.
ns of	8.
tourists to	Educational
travel	opportunitie
	s.
	9. Self-
	fulfillment.
	10. Wish-
	fulfillment.

The push factor construct in this study was initially measured using ten indicators derived from tourism motivation literature. However, after conducting validity and reliability testing during the instrument evaluation stage, three indicators—namely social interaction, romance, and wish-fulfillment—did not meet the required validity criteria. Therefore, these indicators were excluded from further analysis. As a result, the interpretation presented in Table 7 focuses on the seven indicators that were statistically valid and reliable in explaining tourists' internal motivations to visit PALI Regency.

Data collection in this research was carried out by a questionnaire is a list of questions asked to respondents to obtain data related to research. Data obtained using a closed questionnaire, namely questions that are structured in such a way that respondents are limited to providing answers to only a few alternatives or just one answer.

On study This population Which taken sized big that is totaling 57,793 people, in determining the sample according to Slovin the following formula is used:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Based on formula on, so amount sample Which must take is: $n = 99.82726$, $n = 100$ (rounded). Based on the description above, the number of respondents in this study was 100 respondents, which can represent the existing population

Hypothesis Test

The t test is to test how each independent

variable individually influences the dependent variable. This test can be carried out by comparing the t count with the t table or by looking at the significance column in each t count. The t test process is identical to the F test (see SPSS calculations in Coefficient Regression Full Model / Enter).

- Ho:** The influencing factors X1 do not have a significant influence on tourists' motivation to travel (Y) in PALI Regency, South Sumatra.
- Ha:** The influencing factors X1 have a significant influence on tourists' motivation to travel (Y) in PALI Regency, South Sumatra.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study uses a multiple linear regression model to analyze the influence of two independent variables. X1 = Push Factors towards Y = Tourist Motivation in Traveling to PALI Regency. The resulting multiple regression model equation is:

Table 4. Model Summary Results	
Statistics	Mark
R	0.997
R Square (R ²)	0.993
Adjusted R ²	0.993
Standard Error of the Estimate	0.437

Source: SPSS Processed Data, 2025

Interpretation:

- The R value = 0.997 shows a very strong and positive relationship between push factors (X1) on tourist motivation (Y).
- The R² value = 0.993 means that 99.3% of the variation in tourist motivation can be explained by both variables X1 and X2 together.
- Only the remaining 0.7% is explained by other variables outside the model (e.g. economic factors, personal experience, or facility conditions).
- Thus, this regression model has very high and significant explanatory power.

Table 5. Results of the F Test (Simultaneous) – ANOVA

Source of Variations	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	2669,1	1	1334,5	6998,6	0,0

ion	43	72	55	00
Residua	18,497	9	0.191	
l		7		
Total	2687,6	9		
	40	9		

Source: SPSS Processed Data, 2025

Interpretation:

- The F count value = 6998.655 with a significance of 0.000 (< 0.05) indicates that the simultaneous regression model is significant.
- This means that push factors (X_1) have a significant influence on tourist motivation (Y).
- Thus, the regression model is suitable for explaining the relationship between these variables.

Table 6. Results of the t-Test (Partial) Coefficients Table

Variables	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Interpretation
Constant	-2.505	0.387	—	-6.471	0.000	Baseline value of motivation
Push Factors (X_1)	0.065	0.020	0.057	3.316	0.001	Positive and significant effect

Source: SPSS Processed Data, 2025

Influence of Driving Factors (X_1)

The coefficient value $B = 0.065$ with $\text{Sig.} = 0.001$ (< 0.05) indicates that the driving factors have a positive and significant influence on tourist motivation. This means that the stronger the internal drive of tourists, such as the desire for relaxation, social interaction, and the search for new experiences, the greater the motivation to travel to PALI Regency. Based on the results of the analysis above, it can be concluded that:

- Simultaneously, push factors have a significant influence on tourists' motivation to visit PALI Regency.
- The high R^2 value (0.993) shows that this model is very good and can explain almost all variations in tourist motivation.

Push factors need to be considered by providing a pleasant, safe, and emotionally valuable tourism experience to motivate tourists to visit again. By strengthening these two aspects, PALI Regency has the potential to become a leading destination at the regional level because it has a strong combination of

destination appeal and tourist social motivation. This model shows that each unit increase in:

The Driving Factor (X_1) Increases Tourist Motivation

This study aims to analyze the influence of internal driving factors (Push Factors) on tourist motivation to visit PALI Regency, South Sumatra. The results of the regression analysis show that the push factor variable (X_1) has a positive and significant effect on tourist motivation (Y), with a coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.993. This indicates that 99.3% of the variation in tourist motivation can be explained by internal driving factors. Furthermore, several key dimensions of push factors were identified as influencing tourists' motivation to visit PALI Regency.

Internal factors in this study include various personal drives originating from within tourists, namely psychological, social, and emotional needs that trigger someone to travel. Based on the regression results, the variable X_1 (Push Factors) has a positive coefficient value $B = 0.065$ with a significance level of $p = 0.001$ (< 0.05), so it can be concluded that internal factors have a positive and significant effect on tourist motivation.

Thus, the stronger the personal drive of tourists, the higher their motivation to visit tourist destinations in PALI Regency. The descriptive results of the questionnaire show that the driving factors (X_1) consist of ten main indicators. Based on the interpretation of the analysis results, the following are the internal factors that most influence tourist motivation in PALI Regency:

Table 7. Meaning and Influence on Tourist Motivation from the Push Factor Aspect (Internal)

Push Factor Aspect (Internal)	Meaning and Influence on Tourist Motivation
1. The desire to escape from daily life	Tourists are drawn to PALI to escape the routines of work, school, or the pressures of everyday life. The need for mental relaxation is a key driver of local tourism.
2. Search for inner peace and mind (Relaxation & peace of mind)	This factor indicates a strong psychological need. PALI has a relatively calm and natural atmosphere, making it suitable for

	relaxation tourism.
3. Togetherness with family (Strengthening family bonds)	Many tourists come with their families to strengthen relationships and create shared memories. This suggests that socio-emotional motivations play a role in travel decisions.
4. Entertainment and play needs	Tourists are motivated by the need for fun and enjoyable experiences that can relieve boredom. Tourist attractions that offer games, parks, or water recreation are a particular draw.
5. Desire to learn and understand new cultures (Educational opportunity)	Tourists also have a drive to gain new knowledge, particularly about the local culture and community in PALI Regency. This reflects cognitive motivation.
6. Self-actualization needs (Self-fulfillment & personal growth)	Some tourists seek meaningful experiences and self-reflection. PALI, as a region with potential for natural and social tourism, provides a space for such personal experiences.
7. The desire to show prestige or social status (Prestige motivation)	Although not dominant, some tourists (especially young people) make tourism activities part of their lifestyle and a symbol of social status, for example by sharing photos or experiences on social media.

Source: Author's Processing, 2025

The results of the study in PALI Regency strengthen the theory, that the internal motivation of tourists mainly arises from emotional and social needs not only for recreational activities, but also a form of self-expression and the search for life balance. In the context of regional tourism, these results indicate that tourists come to PALI Regency because of a personal drive to find peace, togetherness, and meaningful experiences. Based on the results of the regression and interpretation of the internal factors above, the strategic implications for tourism managers in

PALI Regency are as follows:

Tourism development in PALI Regency should focus on strengthening relaxation and family-oriented tourism by improving supporting facilities such as parks, green spaces, and recreational areas that accommodate family activities, as well as developing family healing or eco-retreat tour packages. In addition, tourism managers should enhance experience-based tourism by providing opportunities for visitors to learn about local culture, interact with local communities, and engage with the natural environment, for example through educational tourism programs in agricultural areas, conservation sites, or local art activities. Strengthening the destination image is also important by positioning PALI as a place where tourists can “unwind and find peace,” with promotional messages highlighting the tranquility of the environment, the hospitality of local communities, and the natural atmosphere of the region. Furthermore, tourism development can support lifestyle-oriented tourism by providing aesthetic photo spots, organizing community-based activities, and facilitating social events that encourage tourists to share their experiences and build a positive image of PALI as an attractive tourism destination.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMENDATION

Conclusion

Push factors (internal factors) have a positive and significant influence on tourists' motivation to visit PALI Regency, indicating that these internal drivers play an important role in encouraging tourists to visit the destination. The main internal factors influencing tourist motivation include the desire to escape from daily routines, seek tranquility, strengthen family relationships, obtain entertainment, and achieve self-actualization.

Recommendation

This urge is a psychological and emotional drive that arises from within the tourist. Therefore, to strengthen tourist motivation based on push factors, tourism stakeholders in PALI Regency should develop destination branding strategies that emphasize experiences fulfilling tourists' internal needs, such as relaxation, escape from routine, and exploration of new environments. Practical steps may include designing experience-based tourism packages, promoting authentic cultural and nature-based

activities, and creating storytelling content in digital promotions that highlights emotional and experiential benefits of visiting PALI Regency.

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