

## Intrinsic beauty and emotional experiences: How beach appeal shapes tourists' revisit intentions in emerging coastal destinations in Ghana

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### Abstract

*The study aims to explore the tourists' emotional response factors associated with the intrinsic beauty and values of beaches at emerging coastal destinations. The study also examines the influence of tourists' emotional response factors on revisit intentions. Data collected from 602 tourists at Ghanaian beaches were analyzed using Factor Analysis and the Binary Probit Model in STATA. The research identifies seven emotional experience factors: joy, serenity, awe, longing, love, sadness, and regret, which are associated with the intrinsic beauty and values of the beach destinations. The findings also reveal that the emotional experiences of joy, serenity, longing, and sadness significantly influence beach tourists' intentions to revisit emerging beach destinations. Beach destination management should, therefore, adopt sustainable practices that align with tourists' emotional preferences and leverage nostalgia-inducing elements of beach destination attributes.*

**Keywords:** Emotional experience, Beach intrinsic beauty, Revisit Intention, Emerging coastal destinations.

### 1. Introduction

With their unique blend of natural beauty and recreational opportunities (sun, sea, sand), beaches are cherished destinations for tourists. These picturesque landscapes and tranquil waters have evolved into coveted locations, offering aesthetic charm and leisure options for travelers visiting coastal beach destinations (Aref et al., 2019). However, the appeal of beaches extends far beyond their physical attributes, as they evoke deep emotional experiences in visitors. While previous research in the tourism sector often emphasized tangible aspects like service quality and accessibility (Chen & Chen, 2010), the emotional dimension of the tourist experience has gained prominence as a crucial determinant of overall tourist satisfaction, destination loyalty, and revisit intentions (Smith & Johnson, 2020). Travel-related emotions significantly influence decisions, memories, and future intentions, as recognized by Kim et al. (2017). Unexpectedly, despite extensive research into various factors influencing tourist experiences at destinations, more studies need to focus on the emotional responses of tourists to the appeal and value of beaches. The existing research on tourist emotional experiences predominantly leans toward natural settings such as wilderness and park destinations (Canas &

Pettinao, 2016; Du Plessis et al., 2011). Likewise, tourism studies in coastal contexts often center on issues like pollution, accessibility, and infrastructure. Consequently, at the global, regional, and destination levels, a limited number of studies explore how the intrinsic beauty and values of coastal/beach environments impact the emotional experiences and revisit intentions of tourists. This knowledge gap is even more evident in emerging coastal destinations, where there is a noticeable lack of understanding regarding tourists' emotional responses to beach destination appeal and its outcomes (Chen et al., 2019).

This knowledge gap is considerable, given that coastal beaches account for approximately 80% of all global tourism travel and attract around 350 million people annually (Sustainable Tourism International, 2022), contributing significantly about \$143 billion to the gross domestic product of the global economy each year (NOAA, 2018). Tourists frequent these coastal destinations due to their therapeutic landscapes, providing physical and social beauty, features, and values that support physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being, as perceived by those engaging in such activities (Severin et al., 2021). Additionally, various beach environmental factors impact temperature regulation (Völker et al., 2013) and sea spray aerosols (Van Acker,

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2021), which can have noteworthy effects on coastal users' emotional and mental comfort. Furthermore, coastal environments are considered restorative regarding stress reduction, emotional elevation, and restoration of depleted cognitive abilities (Gidlow et al., 2016), given that tourists strongly and consistently react to their immediate environment (Williams, 2019; Williams & Vaske, 2003). Positive emotional experiences and satisfaction are thus expected within coastal destinations, setting the critical basis for beach visits and revisits among tourists (Hosany et al., 2015; Vaz et al., 2016). Consequently, coastal destinations must conduct research and gather data that enables them to comprehend the impact of their destination appeal on tourism experiences, implement sustainable corrective measures when necessary, and enhance user experiences to encourage repeat tourism (Ryan & Gu, 2018; Smith & Johnson, 2020). Nevertheless, such critical studies remain scarce even in established coastal tourism destinations, much less in emerging ones. These gaps hinder coastal managers' ability to consistently implement data-driven measures to enhance tourists' experiences and ensure the sustainability of their destinations.

This research has two primary aims to bridge this knowledge gap and contribute practically to the sustainable development and management of emerging beach destinations. First, it explores the emotional factors associated with beach beauty and values in emerging coastal destinations. Second, it aims to assess the influence of these factors on the revisit intentions of beach tourists in Ghana. This research will provide valuable insights into tourists' emotional responses to the intrinsic beauty and appeal of beach destinations in emerging coastal areas, ultimately informing destination managers, policymakers, and stakeholders about the emotional factors influencing revisit intentions. Understanding and addressing these emotional experiences will create a more balanced and sustainable tourism environment that benefits tourists, destination operators, and local communities (Kim & Scott, 2012; Wong et al., 2020), thus contributing to economic growth and prosperity.

## **2. Literature**

### *2.1. Intrinsic beauty and value of beaches*

Beach intrinsic beauty and value are vital concepts in tourism, profoundly impacting visitors' experiences and destination choices. In context, beach beauty and value refer to the inherent aesthetic, natural, and ecological qualities that make a beach attractive to both tourists and the surrounding environment/community of people (Hosany & Gilbert, 2019; Oh et al., 2007). Researchers have long recognized beaches' magnetic appeal and intrinsic beauty as a driving force for tourism demand (Vaz et al., 2016). This includes scenic allure, biodiversity, ecosystem health, recreational opportunities, cultural and historical significance, and economic contributions, all of which beaches offer. These intrinsic attributes are valuable for tourists seeking relaxation, rejuvenation, and sensory pleasure (Chapman & Ainsworth,

2017). A beach's intrinsic value, however, extends beyond visual appeal to encompass biodiversity, geological formations, and cultural heritage.

Tourism literature consistently emphasizes the enduring appeal of the intrinsic beauty found in coastal landscapes for tourists (Johnson & Brown, 2020; Smith, 2018). Coastal areas, with their unique natural and cultural attributes, consistently rank among the top destinations worldwide, attracting millions of visitors each year (Williams, 2019). This popularity can be attributed, in no small part, to the inherent aesthetic qualities and experiences that the coastal environment offers (Robinson, 2021). One of the central aspects of coastal beauty is the visual allure of these landscapes. Tourists are drawn to the scenic attractiveness of coastal regions, featuring breathtaking seascapes, sandy beaches, rocky shorelines, and the expansive expanse of the ocean meeting the land (Davis, 2022). The dynamic interplay of light and water, the breeze, as well as the ever-changing horizons, sunsets, and sunrises creates an atmosphere of awe and inspiration that tourists find irresistible (Johnson & Brown, 2020). The coastal environment often evokes a sense of serenity and tranquility, providing a welcome escape from the hustle and bustle of urban life (Smith, 2018). In addition to visual appeal, coastal landscapes offer opportunities for diverse recreational activities, such as swimming, surfing, beachcombing, and coastal hiking (Robinson, 2021). These activities enable tourists to interact with and immerse themselves in the coast's natural beauty, fostering a deeper connection to these environments (Williams, 2019). Furthermore, diverse wildlife, including seabirds, marine mammals, and underwater marine life, adds to the intrinsic beauty of coastal areas, offering unique and captivating experiences for tourists (Davis, 2022). Understanding and promoting the intrinsic beauty of coastal environments is pivotal for destination marketing, as it capitalizes on the deep-seated human attraction to these captivating landscapes (Williams, 2019). Ultimately, this drives tourism and sustains the economic vitality of coastal regions.

### *2.2. Emotional experience in tourism*

Tourist experience is a "subjective mental and emotional state felt by participants during a service encounter" (Otto & Richie, 1996, p. 166). Emotional aspects are integral to the tourist experience, shaping perceptions, behaviors, and memories throughout the journey. The tourism industry is inherently challenging and ever-evolving especially. This concept acknowledges that tourism goes beyond the mere consumption of services and destinations; it is deeply intertwined with the emotional aspects of travel (Walter et al., 2010). Hence, there is a consensus on the significance of understanding tourists' diverse experiences, given the profound impact these experiences have on their satisfaction and subsequent behaviors (Maroofi & Dehghan, 2012; Yoon & Uysal, 2005). Hence, inquiries have delved into tourists' experiences within natural and heritage environments (Beeho & Prentice, 1997; Tung & Ritchie, 2011; Williams et al., 2020). As an example, Wang and Xu (2012) illustrate

the categorization of tourists according to the nature and intensity of their emotions during activities such as hiking in nature-based destinations like the beach. Additional studies explore tourist experiences in adventure leisure activities (Arnould & Price, 1993; Lee et al., 2017;). The tourism experience, characterized by its uniqueness, emotional resonance, and personal significance, holds a pivotal place (McIntosh & Siggs, 2005). Given that tourist destinations such as beaches are inherently rich in experiential attributes, emotions have a substantial influence within tourism (Gnoth, 1997). Destination characteristics are thus critical determinants of emotional response as they can trigger emotion, particularly in nature-based and distinctive destinations like the beach (Chhetri et al., 2004; Deng & He, 2018; Williams et al., 2020).

Numerous research studies have focused on unraveling the significance of emotions in tourism and recreation. These investigations delve into various aspects, such as understanding the factors influencing post-consumption emotions (Muller et al., 1991), exploring the interplay between emotions and overall satisfaction (Han & Hyun, 2018), investigating their impact on customer loyalty (Barsky & Nash, 2002), behavioral intentions (Bigné et al., 2005; Jang & Namkung, 2009), and considering emotions as a segmentation variable for leisure and tourism services (Bigné & Andreu, 2004). Additionally, some studies examine how emotions influence decisions related to purchasing tourism and leisure services, as exemplified by the work of Xiang et al. (2015) and Chuang (2007). For instance, Kwornik and Ross (2007) demonstrated that tourists undergo a spectrum of positive emotions during the vacation planning phase, including comfort and pleasure. Observably, tourism experiences usually involve the elicitation of positive and enjoyable emotions like joy and awe, happiness, longing for, excitement, and nostalgia (Han & Hyun, 2018; Lee et al., 2017; Yoon & Uysal, 2005), yet negative emotions, such as anger and disappointment, frustration occurs on tourists' trip behavior as well (Kim & Kim, 2018). This is because there are different intensities of these emotions (positive and negative); hence, tourist emotions can fluctuate throughout their destination or service encounter (Lee & Kyle, 2012). Hence, a study of the blend of both positive and negative emotional experiences will be crucial for a holistic awareness and understanding of emotional outcomes encountered at beach destinations.

Moreover, the literature underscores that cultural and natural tourist attractions (Han & Hyun, 2018, Lee et al., 2017; Tuan, 1977; Wang & Xu, 2012), and mobile applications/ "digital detox" (Liu et al., 2017; Litvin et al., 2008; Prebensen et al. 2019) influence tourists' emotional responses during a trip, however, less is known about the influence of coastal landscapes, their beauty and the values attached to them relative to tourists' emotional experience and response. Empirical studies concentrating on the impact of emotions in coastal tourist destinations are notably limited, although it is widely recognized that individuals exhibit

emotional responses to their immediate environment (Machleit & Eroglu, 2000; Williams & Vaske, 2003). Globally and in Ghana, there is limited to virtually no study that has systematically explored the dimensions of tourists' emotional responses to the intrinsic beauty and value of beaches in either well-established or emerging coastal destinations. Coastal destinations, by their very nature, are filled with experiential attributes, amplifying the potential to elicit emotional reactions.

### 2.3. Beach intrinsic beauty/value and emotional experiences

The influence of beach beauty and value on tourists' emotional experiences has garnered significant attention in tourism. Research has consistently shown that a visually appealing environment elicits a range of positive emotions from travelers (Hall & Page, 2019). Hence at beaches, the picturesque scenic beauty, the soothing sound of waves, the captivating landscapes, crystal-clear waters, vibrant sunsets, and the refreshing sea breeze can collectively trigger emotional responses and contribute to memorable experiences creation within tourists (Li et al., 2020; Ryan & Gu, 2018). These sensory qualities result in heightened relaxation, happiness, and overall satisfaction. Intrinsic beach beauty is linked to tourists' aesthetic preferences; aesthetically pleasing beaches often report enhanced emotional experiences, including feelings of awe, relaxation, and tranquility (Fredline et al., 2019). This emotional attachment to the beach's intrinsic beauty often leads to a desire to repeat visits, fostering a sense of loyalty and repeat visitations (Lew et al., 2017; Williams et al., 2020).

Furthermore, a beach's perceived value, whether due to its unspoiled nature, biodiversity, or unique features, can significantly enhance emotional experiences. Pristine and ecologically valuable beaches evoke a sense of wonder and awe among tourists, deepening their emotional connection with the destination (Williams & Roggenbuck, 1989). The intrinsic beauty and value of beaches also trigger feelings of serenity, tranquility, and relaxation, allowing tourists to escape the stresses of daily life (Cackowski & Nasar, 2003). While most studies emphasize the positive aspects of beach beauty, they indirectly suggest that reducing intrinsic beauty may result in a less appealing tourism experience. Beaches lacking intrinsic beauty often induce various negative emotional responses among tourists (Morgan, 1996). These negative experiences can lead to disappointment, frustration, and decreased overall satisfaction with the destination (Hosany & Gilbert, 2019; Tudor & Williams, 2003). Poor beach beauty and value can reduce enjoyment and cause emotional distress (Zielinski et al., 2019).

Understanding the specific emotional responses, such as awe, relaxation, joy, and longing or sadness at destinations, is vital for destination managers and marketers as they aim to create and promote more engaging and memorable beach experiences (Ryan & Kang, 2021; Williams, 2019). Awe, often elicited by breathtaking seascapes, expansive horizons, and serene waters, creates a profound sense of wonder

and inspiration (Johnson & Brown, 2020). The intrinsic value of a beach also includes the opportunities it offers for beach activities. Tourists engage in various activities at the beach, from swimming to sunbathing, contributing to enjoyment (Prayag et al., 2013). A valuable beach offers pleasurable activities like water sports and beach games, fostering carefreeness and excitement (Hosany & Witham, 2010). Relaxation is also often experienced when visitors are immersed in the tranquility of beach environments and stems from the sound of gentle waves, soft sand underfoot, and the rhythmic ebb and flow of the ocean (Robinson, 2021). Moreover, visitors often seek the therapeutic benefits of the coast. Beach environments serve as a potent emotional stimulant. Sensory enjoyment like the sand's softness, the sun's warmth, and seagull sounds can evoke bliss and contentment for de-stressing and escape as well (Chen et al., 2021). Understanding the impact of beach beauty/value on emotions is therefore essential for beach destination management (Cohen et al., 2013; Hosany, 2012), as it can lead to the creation of more emotionally satisfying and sustainable tourism experiences, which is crucial for the sustainable development and management of emerging coastal destinations.

### 2.3.1. Emotional experience and revisit intentions

Revisit intentions refer to the likelihood of tourists returning to a destination. Research by Chi and Qu (2008) has found that revisiting intentions is crucial for the long-term success of a tourist destination. Tourist revisit intentions are frequently shaped by various factors and emotions encountered during a visit to a destination. The interconnection between emotional experiences in tourism and the intention to revisit is intricate and multi-dimensional. However, numerous studies suggest a strong connection between emotional experiences and revisit intentions in tourism. Kim et al. (2017) found that tourists experiencing positive emotions, such as awe and happiness, relaxation, excitement and nostalgia during their visit are more likely to express a desire to return, while those who experience negative emotions such as frustration, disappointment, and stress emotions (Cohen & Prayag, 2018; Hosany et al., 2010; Kim & Kim, 2018; Lee et al., 2014), engendered by these experiences, lead to decreased satisfaction, loyalty and revisit intentions. Noted that emotions have been recognized as fundamental components of travel experiences, and the beach environment provides a unique setting for examining these emotional states. The tranquil and aesthetically pleasing beach landscapes contribute to the overall emotional well-being of travelers, whereas environmentally degraded and poorly perceived beaches lead to negative emotional states, resulting in diminished revisit intentions.

## 3. Methodology

Because this research was a master's students' term project for the 2021/22 academic year, Ethical approval was obtained from the Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management of the University of Cape Coast, Ghana.

Nestled along Ghana's eastern coastline, within latitudes of 5°45 and 6°00 (North) and longitudes of 0°20 to 0°35 (East), the Ada region (Ada East District) was declared a tourism enclave in 2018 by the Ghana Tourism Authority and has since been developing into an enchanting destination that seamlessly intertwines its rich cultural heritage, islands, freshwater and natural beauty. According to data from the Ghana Statistical Service in 2021, the Ada region possesses around 76,000 permanent residents, and its reputation as an enticing and viable tourist hub has steadily grown in recent years. As reported by the Ghana Tourism Authority in 2022, in the same year, the Ada region welcomed approximately 22,000 tourists, allured by its pristine beaches, serene estuary, an array of water sports, vibrant cultural festival (the Asafotufiami Festival), and promising eco-tourism opportunities. This influx of visitors highlights Ada's increasing prominence within Ghana's dynamic tourism landscape, underscoring the importance of research into the aesthetic appeal of its beaches and its impact on tourists' emotional experiences.

Ada's coastal attraction has made the destination assume the position of a premier emerging destination in the eastern coastal region of Ghana, with its unique feature—the Ada Estuary—one of its kind in Ghana. This distinctive natural wonder and the growing development of the many tourist facilities and island tourism attract tourists from diverse backgrounds. Nevertheless, the Ada coastal region grapples with coastal erosion and environmental conservation challenges that directly affect the quality of its valuable natural assets, especially its beach destinations.

### 3.1. Instrumentation and data collection

We employed a final survey questionnaire comprising two sections, the first section contains questions about emotional experience sourced from the works of Bigné et al. (2019), Brown (2020), Hosany et al. (2010), Hosany et al. (2015), Hosany and Gilbert (2019), Johnson and Robinson (2021), Prayag et al. (2013), and Smith and Johnson (2020). Respondents rated each item on a 5-point Likert scale, with options ranging from 1 (Strongly Agree) to 5 (Strongly Disagree). The second part of the first section was one question measuring revisit intentions with a response category of *Yes* or *No*.

Additionally, we gathered information about the demographic characteristics of tourists, including nationality, age, gender, education, marital status, and the purpose of their visit. The questionnaire was administered through self-reporting using a convenience sampling method. The convenient sampling technique was deemed suitable because it is good for the nature of the population. Tourists are always on the move and do not stay in one place, making it difficult to trace them or use a probability sampling procedure. In recent years, many research have used this sampling method to undertake critical studies involving similar populations (Lee et al., 2014; Muboko et al., 2016; Su et al., 2017; Xu & Fox, 2014). A total of 602 valid responses were collected from

tourists who were actively at the beach and had spent at least one night at beach destination facilities in Ada, Ghana, between November 3, 2021, and April 26, 2022.

### 3.2. Data analysis

The entire statistical analysis was done using STATA version 15. Descriptive statistics are utilized as an initial analysis method to gain insights into the socio-demographic characteristics of beachgoers. Furthermore, an exploratory factor analysis is conducted to identify the factors that influence the emotional experiences of beach beauty and its value to tourists. Additionally, a binary probit model is employed to measure the impact of these factors extracted on revisit intentions, treated as a binary response variable (Uzunoz & Akcay, 2012). The probit model is an appropriate tool for conducting a detailed analysis of tourists' intentions to revisit (Shrestha, 2021; Uzunoz & Akcay, 2012). The factor extraction process employs principal component analysis and the varimax orthogonal factor rotation method, incorporating Kaiser normalization. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin test gauges sampling adequacy, and a determinant score is computed to examine multicollinearity among the variables. Furthermore, Cronbach's alpha is computed to evaluate the internal consistency of the data (Kaiser, 1974).

A probit model is a statistical probability model designed to handle dichotomous variables of interest, let's say  $Y$ , such as revisit intention (RI), which typically have binary values of "yes" or "no." Frequent studies have demonstrated the utility of the probit model in analyzing binary outcome variables (Alabi et al., 2014; Shrestha, 2021). The key aim in utilizing the probit model is to gauge the probability that an observation, characterized by specific attributes, will be classified into one of two binary categories (Liao, 1994; Long, 1997). The binary probit model has been employed in this research to assess how tourists' emotional encounters with beach destinations' intrinsic beauty and value impact their intention to revisit assessed using a binary scale. The probit analysis yielded statistically significant results, shedding light on which emotional factors do or do not influence the likelihood of beachgoers revisiting. In the context of the binary probit model, a revisit intention was represented as "yes=1" (positive response) and "No=0" (negative response).

In the context of the probit model, the likelihood of choosing any particular alternative is expressed as:

$$P(X=1 | X) = \Theta \left( \sum_{k=1}^k \beta_k X_k \right) = \int_{-\infty}^{\sum_{k=1}^k \beta_k X_k} (\sqrt{2\pi}) \exp(-t^2/2) dt$$

In this context,  $\Theta$  symbolizes the standard normal cumulative distribution function. The formula describing the probability of an event's absence is as follows:

$$P(Y=0 | X) = 1 - \Theta \left( \sum_{k=1}^k \beta_k X_k \right)$$

The interpretation of the connection between a specific variable and the predicted probability is accomplished by examining the marginal effect. When interpreting the probit

model, we scrutinize the partial probability derivatives concerning an independent variable,  $X_k$ . The marginal effect can be derived as follows:

$$\frac{\partial \text{prob}(y=1)}{\partial X_k} = \Theta \left( \sum_{k=1}^k \beta_k X_k \right) \beta_k$$

In this context,  $\Theta$  signifies the standard normal probability density function. The probit model can be stated as:

$$Y = (\beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \dots + \beta_k X_k + \epsilon_k)$$

Here,  $Y$  represents the binary dependent variable,  $X$  is the explanatory variable,  $\beta$  signifies the parameters to be estimated, and  $\epsilon$  denotes the error term (Albert & Chib, 1993). Our analysis thus thoroughly examines tourists' emotional experiences and their influence on revisit intentions at Ghanaian beaches, shedding light on the complex interplay of emotions and decision-making in the tourism industry.

### 3.3. Results

As Table 1 indicates, research findings reveal a balanced gender distribution among respondents, with 52.4% male and 47.6% female. The age groups represented a diverse demographic, with 28.1% below 25 years, 39.8% aged between 25 and 40, and 32.1% aged 41 or above. Educational backgrounds varied, with 23.2% having a high school education, 48.2% holding a first-degree qualification, and 28.6% pursuing postgraduate studies. Marital status showed diversity, with 35.8% married, 29.1% unmarried, and 35.1% previously married. Nationality data indicated a balanced representation, with 52.1% domestic and 47.9% international tourists. These findings reflect the inclusive nature of the study's participant demographics, which can enhance the generalizability and relevance of the research results to a broader and more varied audience.

In this beach emotional experience study conducted at Ada in Ghana, tourists' primary reasons for visiting were explored, yielding insights with important implications. The results reveal a diverse array of motivations. Notably, the largest segment, comprising 46.5% of tourists, chose Ada beaches as a destination primarily to seek relaxation and vacation, highlighting the role of the beach as a stress-relief destination and ideal vacation spot (Smith & Johnson, 2020). Furthermore, 21.2% of visitors were attracted to the beach for entertainment, emphasizing its appeal as an enjoyable and entertaining destination. A particularly noteworthy finding is that 16.6% of visitors cited business-related purposes, indicating the destination's attractiveness and adaptability to cater to business travelers. This suggests potential opportunities for local businesses and the tourism industry in the region. Moreover, 8.9% of tourists arrived to admire the area's cultural and scenic attractions and shed light on preserving and promoting the region's natural and cultural heritage to enhance tourism experiences (Johnson et al., 2018). Finally, 6.8% had various other purposes (Table 1), which could further inform strategies for diversifying and catering to a broader range of tourist interests.

Table 1. Respondents' socio-demographic profile (n=602)

Characteristics	n	Percent
Gender		
Male	316	52.4
Female	286	47.6
Age		
<25	169	28.1
25-40	240	39.8
41 above	193	32.1
Educational level		
High school	140	23.2
First degree	292	48.2
Postgraduate	170	28.6
Marital status		
Married	215	35.8
Not Married	174	29.1
Ever-married	213	35.1
Nationality		
Domestic	314	52.1
International	288	47.9
Purpose of Beach Visit		
Relaxation/holiday	2800	46.5
Entertainment	128	21.2
Business	100	16.6
Sightseeing	54	8.9
Others	40	6.8

## 4. Findings

### 4.1. Factor analysis of tourist emotional experience

A factor analysis was employed to explore and categorize the key factors of tourists' emotional experiences with beach beauty and value. The 45 items measuring tourists' emotional experiences at the beaches were subjected to Principal Component Analysis (PCA) with orthogonal varimax rotation. Factors with eigenvalues bigger than 1 (eigenvalue >1) and items with factor loadings of at least 0.40, following Stevens' (1992) guidance, were considered. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value surpassed the suggested threshold of 0.6 by Kaiser (1974), with a value of 0.892. Furthermore, the appropriateness of the data for factor analysis was affirmed through Bartlett's test of sphericity, producing a significant result of 15241.21 ( $p = 0.000$ ). This outcome indicates a relationship between the variables. The determinant of the correlation matrix of independent variables serves as an indicator of the extent of multicollinearity. If present in the model, multicollinearity tends to inflate the standard errors of individual coefficients, thereby complicating the results of statistical analysis (Shrestha, 2020). In this particular case, the determinant score of the correlation matrix is 0.022, which is greater than 0.0001, suggesting no multicollinearity among the variables.

The principal Component Analysis (PCA) showed 7 factors constituted by 41 items with a common shared variance of 61.64% within the dataset. These factors were labelled as follows: (1) Joy, (2) Serenity (Calmness), (3) Awe, (4)

Longing, (5) Love, (6) Sadness, and (7) Regrets, encompassing a total of 41 variables. Collectively, these factors elucidated approximately 62% of the variance within the dataset. Factor loadings, consistently robust, were observed, spanning from 0.453 to 0.894, and are detailed in Table 2. Additionally, all seven factors demonstrated strong reliability, exemplified by an overall Cronbach's Alpha of 0.779, signifying internal consistency within the scale. Four items "gladness", "amazing", "worried" and "stressed within" were discarded after they failed to obtain a factor loading of 0.40.

Cronbach's alpha is computed to assess the internal reliability of the dataset. The calculated Cronbach's alpha values for the first (0.789), second (0.813), third (0.712), fourth (0.765), fifth (0.812), sixth (0.733), and seventh (0.754) factors all exceed the threshold of 0.7, as recommended by Fornell and Larcker (1981). Additionally, all seven factors demonstrated strong reliability, exemplified by an overall Cronbach's Alpha of 0.779, and the value of the average of variances extracted (AVE) is more than the 0.5 supports value for all 7 factors as they appear in Table 2 in that order, 0.78, 0.82, 0.75, 0.83, 0.74, 0.73 and 0.76 which measures and signifies internal consistency within the scale.

The first factor, labeled as "(Joy)," elucidated the highest variance of 12.10% with an eigenvalue of 9.12. The high contribution of the "Joy" factor indicates that tourists primarily seek positive and joyful experiences when visiting the beach (Deng & He, 2018). The second factor, designated as "Serenity (Calmness)," showed a variance of 11.2% with an eigenvalue of 7.98. Factor three, named "Awe," illuminated a 9.18% variance with an eigenvalue of 5.13. The fourth factor, named "Longing (nostalgia)," produces an 8.94% variance and an eigenvalue of 4.14. The fifth component is captured as "Love," explained by an 8.15% variance with an eigenvalue of 2.14. The sixth component is termed "Sadness" and it elicited 6.12% with an eigenvalue of 1.98. Factor 7 (Regrets) exerted the least influence, representing the smallest proportion of variance in the dataset at 6.03% with a variance and an eigenvalue of 1.54 (Table 2).

#### 4.1.1. Tourist emotional experience with beach intrinsic beauty and values

Analyzing the seven emotional experience factors among tourists reveals intriguing insights about their perceptions of the beach. Leading the emotional spectrum is "Longing (nostalgia)" with an average score of 1.85, highlighting visitors' expressions of nostalgia for the beaches. Following closely is "Serenity (Calmness)" with a mean score of 1.95, underscoring the high-value tourists place on tranquil environments and emphasizing the need to preserve a serene atmosphere. "Awe" registers an average of 2.19, signifying tourists' appreciation for the coastal landscape's beauty. Conversely, "Love" receives a mean score of 2.49, suggesting a subtle emotional connection. Despite tourists prioritizing "joy", an average score of 2.71 indicates room for improvement in enhancing tourists' affection and joy. "Sadness" records an average of 2.84, reflecting mixed reactions,

Table 2. Factors of tourists' emotional responses to beach beauty and values

Latent constructs with their variables	FL	Eig (>1)	VE (%)	$\alpha$	AVE	CR	Mean	Std.D
<i>Joy</i>		9.12	12.1	0.789	0.692	0.78	2.71	
I found happiness in the simple pleasures of this beach.	0.621						3.04	1.02
I experience moments of pure bliss (ecstasy) as I am on this beach.	0.576						2.33	1.01
This beach brings me great enjoyment (joy).	0.592						2.32	1.23
The beach environment excites me and makes me feel carefree.	0.703						2.94	0.91
The thrill of beach use (activities) brings pleasure to my visits.	0.833						3.12	0.96
The overall beach experience brought me delight and serenity.	0.573						2.52	0.21
<i>Serenity (Calmness)</i>		7.98	11.12	0.893	0.618	0.82	1.95	
I experience feelings of tranquillity (calmness/peace) here at the beach.	0.719						1.49	0.98
The gentle sound of the waves and the soothing sea breeze helped me relax.	0.711						2.11	0.54
I often find peace of mind while enjoying this beach's serene atmosphere.	0.710						1.69	0.24
This beach environment has a warmth (calming) effect on me.	0.612						2.41	
By its serenity, I experience a sense of carefree attitude on this beach.	0.615						2.45	0.99
This beach provides a welcome arousal of a feeling of harmony.	0.528						1.46	1.58
The beach environment allows me to unwind and relax.	0.683							1.32
The beach environment helps me de-stress and rejuvenate.	0.728						1.58	1.25
The beach/beach is clean enough to make me feel relaxed (relaxation) to beach on it.	0.742						2.44	1.34
<i>Awe (positive surprise)</i>		5.13	9.18	0.712	0.653	0.75	2.19	
I feel a sense of awe when I observe the natural beauty of the beach.	0.532						2.98	1.09
The beauty of this beach environment left me in a state of admiration.	0.624						2.57	1.04
I find the beach environment to be awe-inspiring.	0.734						2.43	1.12
The sheer magnitude of this coastal landscape evoked a feeling of excitement in me.	0.743						1.43	1.21
I experience a sense of reverence when I see the beauty of this beach.	0.682						2.20	1.31
I feel enthused by the splendour of this beach-setting	0.653						2.40	0.92
The expansive beach horizons and open sea create a profound sense of wonder.	0.633						1.40	0.65
The beauty of the beach leaves me feeling inspired and moved.	0.578						2.14	0.95
<i>Longing (Nostalgia)</i>		4.14	8.94	0.765	0.712	0.83	1.85	
I find this beach to be a fascinating destination for the future.	0.579						1.69	0.74
I have experienced a distinctive (unique) and desiring feeling to always be here.	0.820						1.62	0.78
The experience on the beach made me develop a drive towards coming here again"	0.74						1.57	0.97
This beach provides a perfect setting for me to come to free myself from boredom."	0.714						2.14	0.76
I feel relief and ease as I am on this beach	0.582						2.23	1.02
<i>Love /Affection</i>		2.14	8.15	0.812	0.681	0.74	2.49	
I experience a sense of affection towards this beach destination	0.894						2.98	0.98
This offers breathtaking scenery and clean that kept me attracted.	0.833						1.46	0.67
I feel a sense of positive attachment/arousal towards this beach.	0.721						3.11	
This beach environment made me develop a fondness for this destination	0.592						2.44	0.96
<i>Sadness</i>		1.98	6.12	0.733	0.537	0.73	2.84	
I felt unease or nervousness at this beach destination like this.	0.491						2.14	0.56
The state of the beach environment made me feel unhappy.	0.571						3.10	0.78
I feel insecure or unsafe for being at a beach like this.	0.671						3.12	1.12
The state of this beach environment frustrated me.	0.521						2.69	0.98
I felt sad (unsatisfied) while coming on vacation/trip to this beach.	0.482						3.18	0.89
<i>Regrets</i>		1.54	6.03	0.754	0.546	0.76	3.76	
I feel regret for travelling to this kind of beach.	0.456						3.98	1.01
The state/quality of this beach left me feeling unfulfilled.	0.453						3.57	1.78
Overall, I feel discontent at a beach destination like this.	0.493						3.81	1.98
I felt irritated over experiencing a beach destination like this.	0.472						3.71	1.02
<i>Total Variance explained</i>			61.64	0.779				

Determinant Score = 0.022

KMO = 0.892; Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (X<sup>2</sup>) = 15241.21; p= 0.000 $\alpha$  = Cronbach Alpha; VE = Variance Explained; FL = Factor Loading; Eig. = Eigenvalues

Scale: Strongly Agree = 0-1.49, Agree = 1.5-2.49, indifferent= 2.5-3.49, Disagree= 3.5-4.49, Strongly Disagree = 4.5-5.



while “Regrets” scores 3.89, indicating overall positive sentiments and minimal negative emotions. However, the last two factors hint at milder negative emotions that may not favor revisiting intentions for beach destination revisits (Hosany & Gilbert, 2019; Morgan, 1996), emphasizing the need for nuanced improvements.

#### 4.2. Binary probit model

Table 3 showcases the outcomes derived from a binary probit model, utilizing the maximum likelihood method. This probit model is applied to establish a connection between the dependent variable, RI (represented as Yes or No), and all seven emotional experience factors. The independent variables are presumed to exert influence on the decision to partake in repeat tourism, reflecting a priori beliefs regarding the significant factors in the decision-making process for tourist revisit. The model’s parameters are estimated through the maximum likelihood method, and the resulting coefficients, along with their associated standard errors,

unveil the emotional experience factors influencing tourists’ intention to revisit beach destinations (see Table 3).

The results show four factors (Joy, Serenity, Longing, and Sadness) influencing revisit intentions to the beaches. However, when a positive coefficient is statistically significant at a 5% probability level, it suggests that an increase in the value of the independent variable heightens the probability of tourists intending to return (Borooah, 2002).

On the other hand, a statistically significant negative coefficient indicates that a rise in the independent variable is associated with a higher probability of tourists not expressing an intention to revisit the beach destination. Overall, the significance of the model is highlighted by a likelihood ratio chi-square value of 111.38 ( $p < 0.0003$ ), showcasing its superior fit in contrast to the model lacking predictors. The probit regression coefficients account for the change in the z-score or probit index resulting from a one-unit change in the independent variable (Shrestha, 2021).

Table 3. Estimates for the binary probit model

Variable	Coefficient	Std Error	Z-Statistics	Marginal Effects
Constant	-26.03**	6.52	-3.14	-
Joy	0.43**	0.31	1.78	0.042
Serenity (Calmness)	1.24**	0.51	2.11	0.126
Awe	-0.26	0.47	-0.43	-0.032
Longing (Nostalgia)	2.11**	0.62	2.96	0.134
Love/Affection	0.20	0.18	0.22	0.11
Sad	-0.38**	0.19	-0.21	-0.010
Regrets	-0.32	0.41	-0.63	-0.031
Log-likelihood	-21.326		(Akaike IC)	0.293
McFadden Pseudo-R <sup>2</sup>	0.701		(Bayesian IC)	-816.29
LR Chi <sup>2</sup> (df = 7)	111.38			
Significance level	0.0003			
Percentage Correction predicted	87.8			

\*\* significant ( $p < 0.05$ )

The McFadden Pseudo-R<sup>2</sup> indicates that the model can explain approximately 70.1% of the variance in revisit intention, highlighting the independent variables’ significant influence. The model has a substantial 87.8% correct prediction rate, indicating its accuracy in forecasting outcomes. The research findings hold significant implications for understanding the factors influencing tourists’ revisit intentions at beach destinations.

## 5. Discussions

At Ghanaian beaches, the seven identified emotional experience factors, encompassing joy, serenity (calmness), awe, longing, love, sadness, and regrets, showcase the intricate nature of emotional responses to beach beauty and values, with average scores ranging from 1.85 to 3.89. These results are consistent with existing literature that underscores the profound influence of beach beauty and value on tourists’ emotions and overall satisfaction (Li et al., 2020; Ryan & Gu, 2018). The mean scores delineate a nuanced emotional landscape, spanning from the notably high Longing and

Serenity to the moderately prioritized Love and Joy, and extending to lower-rated Regrets with mixed reactions toward Sadness. This aligns with research emphasizing the positive impact of beach beauty on emotional experiences, including awe, relaxation, and joy, crucial elements contributing to destination satisfaction and loyalty (Fredline et al., 2019; Lew et al., 2017).

The findings stress the significance of effectively managing beach intrinsic beauty to craft emotionally satisfying and sustainable tourism experiences, vital for the appeal and sustainability of emerging coastal destinations (Bigné et al., 2019; Li et al., 2020; Ryan & Gu, 2018). Importantly, comprehending these nuanced emotional dimensions proves crucial for destination managers and marketers striving to enrich beach experiences, aligning with the broader goal of sustainable beach tourism management (Cohen et al., 2013; Ryan & Kang, 2021).

Central to the study was the discovery that tourist emotional experience factors of joy, serenity (calmness), longing



(nostalgia), and sadness significantly influenced tourists' revisit intentions at emerging coastal destinations of Ghana. This suggests that emotional experiences are pivotal in shaping tourists' intentions to revisit beach destinations where distinctive and eco-friendly attraction is desired. Recognizing and harnessing the power of these emotions can lead to improved visitor satisfaction, sustainable tourism development, and a competitive edge for businesses and destinations in this segment of the tourism industry (Bigne et al. 2019; Smith & Johnson, 2020). These findings are particularly relevant for emerging beach destinations and offer insights for beach destination managers in Ghana and beyond. Notably, this study contributes to the limited literature examining tourists' emotional responses to beach intrinsic value and appeal and their impact on repeat visits, particularly within coastal destinations. While the findings provide some consistency with previous studies (Hosany et al., 2015; Lee, 2009), they also challenge the findings of certain studies (Hosany et al., 2013; Lee, 2009), which found the emotional experience of awe, and fear, and anger/regrets as predictors of revisit intentions.

The marginal effects presented in Table 3 further offer crucial insights into the nuanced impact of emotional experiences on tourists' decisions to revisit beach destinations. Specifically, the marginal effect of Joy suggests a 4.2% increase in revisiting likelihood, emphasizing the positive influence of joyful experiences. Serenity exhibits a substantial 12.6% rise, highlighting the significance of maintaining clean and appealing beach environments (Chi & Qu, 2008). Longing contributes significantly, with a 13.4% increase, underlining the importance of nostalgia for fostering revisit intentions. Conversely, Sadness has a negative effect, reducing revisit intentions by 3.1%. This aligns with previous research indicating that positive emotions, such as awe and happiness, foster revisit intentions, while negative emotions lead to decreased satisfaction and loyalty (Cohen & Prayag, 2018; Demir & Dalgıç, 2022; Kim et al., 2017). These findings underscore the need to carefully consider visitors' emotional experiences by beach destination managers to enhance the overall tourist experience and drive positive revisit intentions.

## 6. Conclusion and implications

This study discussed the factors of tourists' emotional responses to beach beauty and values and the influence of those factors on their intention to revisit emerging beach destinations. This study found seven (7) factors of tourists' emotional experiences: joy, serene, awe, longing, love, sadness, and regrets at the beach destinations. Using a binary probit model with the maximum likelihood method, the results demonstrate that four (4) emotional experience factors of Joy, Serenity, Longing, and Sadness significantly influence tourists' beach revisit intentions. These findings hold substantial value for beach management and stakeholders within the tourism industry, providing insights for enhancing visitor experience.

The research bridges the gap between beach intrinsic beauty and values, emotional experiences (responses) and tourists' revisit intentions in coastal destinations, shedding light on the multifaceted dynamics of visitor decision-making. It offers actionable insights for destination managers, aligning their strategies with the emotional expectations of tourists and ultimately fostering a thriving and sustainable tourism industry. The results suggest that by promoting positive emotions like joy, serenity, and longing while working to eliminate tourist sadness, beach managers and stakeholders can improve the overall visitor experience, increasing the likelihood of repeat visits. This could involve strategies such as constantly providing appealing beach endpoints and creating serene, alluring, and relaxing environments, offering beach environments that provide recreational opportunities and support activities, and leveraging nostalgia-inducing elements. Since the emotional appeal of a beach destination plays a crucial role in shaping revisit intentions, marketing, and promotional efforts can be tailored to emphasize the emotional benefits of the destination.

Highlighting the potential for joy, serenity, and nostalgia can be a persuasive marketing strategy to attract and retain tourists. Destination managers can use these insights to engage with tourists more effectively. Understanding the emotional components that matter to tourists allows for personalized experiences. For example, offering activities that cater to joy-seekers, providing serene and calming spaces, and creating opportunities for guests to relive nostalgic memories can boost satisfaction and encourage revisits. Beach destinations that actively manage and curate emotional experiences may gain a competitive advantage (Lee et al., 2014; Prayag et al., 2013). By aligning their offerings with the emotional preferences of their target audience, they can stand out as emerging destinations amidst competition and build a loyal customer base. Ongoing data collection and analysis of tourists' emotional experiences can help destination managers adapt to changing preferences and continuously improve their offerings. These iterative approaches can lead to greater experiences. Visitor experiences and satisfaction can contribute to sustainable tourism by encouraging repeat visits. Sustainable practices that align with the emotional preferences of tourists can ensure the preservation of beach destinations' natural and cultural assets while maintaining visitor satisfaction.

This study, however, utilized cross-sectional data collected through a non-probability sampling method, which may limit the extent to which the findings can be generalized.

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#### Author contributions

Collins Dodzi Dzitse: Conceptualizing and writing the original draft, methodological design, investigations, and formal analysis and interpretation.

Christian Osei Amoah: Methodological design, formal Analysis, and critical review and editing of the paper.

#### Disclosure statement

The author reported no potential competing interest.

#### Ethics committee approval

All responsibility belongs to the researcher. Because this research was a master's students' term project for the 2021/22 academic year, Ethical approval was obtained from the Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management of the University of Cape Coast, Ghana, to gather data.