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# ASSESSMENT OF ONLINE VISITOR REVIEWS FOCUSED ON CAMPING TRAVEL MOTIVATION: MOUNT IDA AS A CASE STUDY

Kamp Seyahati Motivasyonuna Yönelik Çevrimiçi Ziyaretçi Yorumlarının Değerlendirilmesi: Kaz Dağları Örneği

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#### **Abstract**

This research seeks to explore the motivations behind camping among individuals who visited the camping sites in the Mount Ida by analyzing online feedback from these visitors and assessing their satisfaction levels regarding the camping experiences. In pursuit of this goal, a comprehensive content analysis was performed on 1313 visitor feedback entries related to the Akaleos and Kazdağı campsites, noted for having the most extensive commentary on Google Maps and Tripadvisor. The existing body of literature identifies travel motivation as influenced by both push and pull factors. Motivational drivers have been identified as sources of entertainment, engagement with the natural environment, familial and social connections, serenity, restfulness, escapism, and innovative pursuits. Among these, the aspects of relaxation and serenity have particularly stood out. Key elements contributing to the destination's appeal included the availability of facilities, safety measures, accessibility, opportunities for physical activities, natural landscapes, and cleanliness. Natural scenery, particularly its aesthetic value, proved to be the most significant determinant of visitor preference. This finding clearly demonstrates that natural beauty functions not only as an environmental asset but also as a strategically decisive factor in destination selection.

**Key words:** Camping tourism, user-generated content, visitor comments, travel motivation, Mount Ida

## Öz

Bu çalışmanın amacı Kaz Dağları'nda bulunan kamp alanlarında tatil yapan bireylerin çevrimiçi yorumlarının incelenerek motivasyon unsurlarının ve memnuniyet durumlarının tespit edilmesidir. Bu amaç doğrultusunda Google Haritalar ve Tripadvisor platformlarında en çok yorum alan Akaleos ve Kazdağı kamp alanlarına ait toplam 1313 ziyaretçi yorumu içerik analizine tabi tutulmuştur. İlgili alan yazın çerçevesinde seyahat motivasyonu itici ve çekici faktörler olmak üzere iki alt tema altında incelenmiştir. Araştırma sonucunda itici motivasyon faktörleri eğlence, doğa ile iç içe olma, aile/arkadaş birlikteliği, rahatlama ve huzur, dinlenme, kaçış ve yenilik olarak ortaya çıkmıştır. Bu faktörler arasında rahatlama ve huzur faktörü ön plana çıkmıştır. Çekici faktörler ise olanaklar, güvenlik, uygunluk, fiziksel aktiviteler, doğal çekicilikler ve temizlik/hijyen olarak belirlenmiştir. Çekici faktörler kapsamında, ise ön plana çıkan faktör doğal çekicilikler olmuştur.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Kamp turizmi, kullanıcı tarafından oluşturulan içerikler, ziyaretçi yorumları, seyahat motivasyonu, Kaz Dağları

## Introduction

Shifts in consumer preferences have led to the emergence of specialized tourism activities (Adamovich et al., 2021). The recent crises have altered tourists' choices regarding holiday destinations, resulting in a surge in the popularity of camping tourism (Sommer, 2020). Consequently, camping has evolved into a diverse recreational experience that attracts individuals from various demographic backgrounds and with differing values (Yaşar and Ardahan, 2023). Camping is classified as a nature-based tourism activity that facilitates direct engagement with natural landscapes. It typically entails overnight stays in non-urban, outdoor setting that contrast markedly with the tourist's habitual living environment (Huang et al., 2024). Camping tourism, deeply intertwined with the natural surroundings, demonstrates a versatile and mobile essence (Mikulic et al., 2017). Fjelstul and Wang (2012) highlight that campers communicate their experiences and interact with fellow enthusiasts through electronic resources, which encompass online communities, discussion forums, consumer reviews, and blogs.

User-generated content, which has arisen from advancements in internet and mobile technologies, empowers potential visitors to engage in activities such as providing reviews, lodging complaints, and sharing their experiences (Lu and Stepchenkova, 2015). The advantages provided by these applications encompass efficiency, user convenience, thorough information, and a variety of choices, with other travelers focusing on the main experiences presented in these resources (Amaral et al., 2014). Travelers' contributions on social media serve as valuable resources that assist tourists in organizing their journeys and making informed travel choices, featuring attributes such as trustworthy and readily available information (Kaosiri et al., 2019). A variety of platforms, such as TripAdvisor and Twitter, host substantial information on tourism and hospitality practices (Lu and Stepchenkova, 2015). Users frequently turn to these

platforms for information (Ukpabi and Karjaluoto, 2018), which significantly impacts their motivation in selecting travel destinations (Güçlü, 2017).

Motivation encompasses psychological mechanisms and individual traits, leading participants in camping tourism to carry their past experiences, personal aspirations, convictions, and chances to engage in activities to the destination. These driving factors instill a strong inclination to explore camping sites (Heerden, 2020). Motivation plays a crucial role in revealing the factors that lead people to participate in camping, yet it fails to explain the reasons behind the actual implementation of such activities. Thus, the exploration of preferences for certain locations and their links to different motivations and experiences is emerging as a critical area of research (Lin and Chuang, 2021). The research focused on evaluating visitor feedback concerning the Akaleos and Kazdağı camping sites, receiving a high volume of feedback among all campsites found within Mount Ida.

## 1. Theoretical Framework

## 1.1. Camping Tourism and Motivational Factors

Regions that possess specific attributes in their natural and cultural resources tend to experience growth in camping tourism activities. Camping encompasses not only the experience of residing in a tent for a brief period at a campsite or in nature but also includes various types of temporary accommodations, such as caravans and other forms of transient shelters (Adamovich et al., 2021). In camping tourism, limitations stemming from reliance on only fundamental amenities and the influence of external elements frequently result from personal choices rather than being driven by necessity (Rogerson and Rogerson, 2020: 351). The camping tourism experience fundamentally relies on interactions with nature and the establishment of social relationships (Radović et al., 2021). The driving factors, recognized as the impetus for the experience, contribute to comprehending the roots of that experience (Hasse et al., 2015).

Motivation, which reflects specific preferences in tourism, seeks to uncover the underlying reasons for the actions or anticipated actions of individuals or groups (Mehmetoglu and Normann, 2013). Travel motivation can be understood through two primary influences: the push factors that drive individuals away from their current environment and the pull factors that attract them to a vacation destination. Key motivators that drive individuals to engage in camping include the desire to bond with family or friends, as well as the need for rest, relaxation, and tranquility. Pull factors in this scenario include the experiences provided by the natural environment and the excellence of the destination (Sommer, 2020). When selecting campsites, individuals motivated by certain factors actively pursue information to enhance their camping experience (Brooker and Joppe, 2013). Individuals regard user-generated content that reflects authentic camping experiences as a credible source of information when selecting camping locations, thus enhancing its value as data (Brochado ve Brochado, 2019).

## 1.2. User-Generated Content and Online Reviews

Content shared by travelers, particularly that which is disseminated through social media and includes personal stories, viewpoints, images, and evaluations derived from their experiences in various activities such as traveling, sightseeing, shopping, lodging, and dining, plays a crucial role in the digital tourism landscape (Marine-Roig, 2022). Within the landscape of virtual networks and communities, travelers proactively seek out and share relevant information both in advance of their trips and upon their return. Furthermore, these platforms facilitate the arrangement and planning of travel schedules, allow users to provide feedback, assess the travel destination, and offer recommendations post-journey (Qi and Chen, 2019). The insights gained from these aspects are vital for grasping the perceptions and experiences of tourists (Meneses et al., 2023) and are recognized as an essential resource for different users and stakeholders (Khan et al., 2021). For prospective travelers, obtaining the highest quality experience from a tourism product necessitates gathering insights about unfamiliar offerings and analyzing feedback from previous users, underscoring the significance of traveler reviews on travel platforms (Ukpabi and Karjaluoto, 2018). For various stakeholders, it plays a role in boosting competitiveness, shaping a positive image, and crafting effective communication plans (Xu et al., 2023), along with recognizing organizational challenges (Akehurst, 2009).

## 2. Methodology

This research seeks to identify the key motivational drivers and satisfaction levels of individuals who choose to vacation at the Akaleos and Kazdağı campsites located in the Mounth Ida. As part of the qualitative methodological approach, document review served as the primary tool for data collection in this study. 935 reviews were retrieved from Google Maps and five from TripAdvisor for Kazdağı Camp. Of these, 183 lacked textual content and were thus excluded, resulting in an evaluable dataset of 757 reviews. For Akaleos Camp, 795 online reviews were gathered—790 from Google Maps and 5 from TripAdvisor. Following the exclusion of 239 non-textual entries (i.e., those containing only ratings or images), 556 reviews were considered valid for analysis. The final dataset for both campsites comprised 1,313 reviews.

The collected data were initially transferred into a Word document, where typographical errors were corrected. Subsequently, content analysis was carried out using the qualitative data analysis software MAXQDA 2020. As noted by Yıldırım and Şimşek (2013, p. 259), the main objective of content analysis is to identify key concepts that help interpret the data and to reveal the relationships among these concepts. In total, 2,835 codes were produced throughout the analysis. Of these, 2,377 were associated with the overarching theme of motivation, while 458 pertained to satisfaction. The coding process was guided by concepts derived from the data, with attention paid to recurring and similar expressions. Related codes were organized into main themes and sub-themes. The categorization of push and pull travel motivations was structured in alignment with existing literature. Agreement among researchers was achieved during the development of themes and codes. Furthermore, the user

comments analyzed from the selected campsites were reviewed and evaluated by two tourism experts.

# 3. Findings

## 3.1. Findings related to visitor motivation

The data analysis process uncovered that visitor motivation is characterized by two sub-themes, identified as push and pull factors. A comprehensive 2,377 coding were recorded concerning these motivational factors. Figure 1 illustrates the concepts of push and pull factors along with the associated codes categorized under these themes.

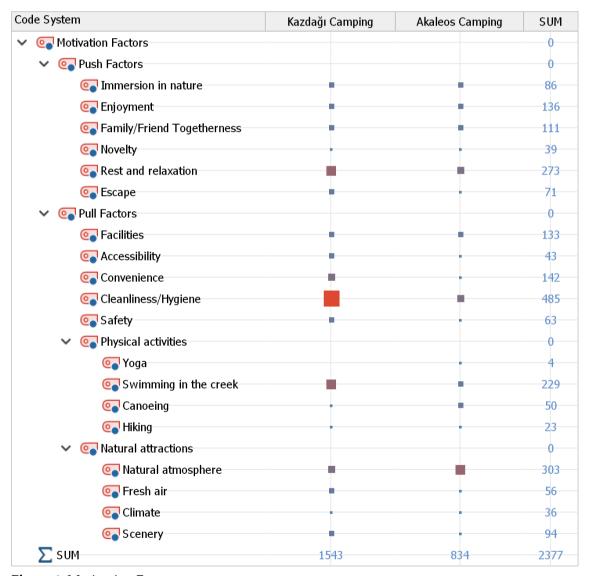
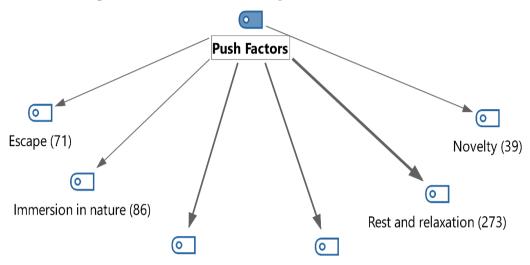


Figure 1. Motivation Factors

# 3.2. Findings related to push factors

The analysis identified 6 distinct codes and 716 instances of coding related to the theme of push factors. The elements identified as codes include pleasure, engagement with the natural environment, social bonding with family and friends, opportunities for rest and relaxation, as well as experiences of escape and novelty. A significant portion of the coding was categorized under the theme of rest and relaxation. The push factors' codes and frequencies are illustrated in Figure 2.



Family/Friend Togetherness (111) Enjoyment (136)

Figure 2. Push Factors

The analysis of visitor feedback on the campsites reveals several themes, codes, and assessments, which are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Codes and Reviews Related to Push Factors

Theme	Codes	Reviews	
	Enjoyment	"The campsite we encountered by coincidence provided us with four days of remarkable enjoyment."  "This unique location has provided me with an enjoyable and fulfilling camping experience over the past six weeks, allowing me to connect deeply with nature in a tranquil environment."	
Push Factors	Family/Friend Togetherness	"This campsite provides an ideal escape from the demands of city life, facilitating enjoyable experiences with friends and fostering a connection to nature."  "A location ideal for enjoying time together with family and peers."	
	Rest and relaxation	"This location serves as an excellent environment for individuals seeking relaxation, and I highly endorse it."  "This campsite serves as an excellent environment for unwinding and experiencing serenity, showcasing the beauty of nature; I strongly encourage a visit."	

	Immersion in nature	"An unpolluted environment enveloped by natural surroundings, where the soothing sounds and refreshing temperatures of the stream provide relaxation for individuals, free from disruptive noises or odors even in the presence of large groups; engaging and genuine dialogues occur"  "The suitability of a campsite largely hinges on individual preferences; for instance, the absence of mobile phone reception was a feature that appealed to us. Our visit lasted three days, during which individuals frequently arrived and departed; however, the surroundings consistently maintained a serene and tranquil atmosphere, placing us directly within a natural setting. At the point of access, the water level does not exceed waist height, and it diminishes even more as the summer season advances".
	Novelty	"Upon my initial visit, I remained for approximately seven days. This site was my choice due to its significance as my first camping adventure, and I sought to create a memorable experience. I am grateful for the choice I have made, and I sincerely appreciate your efforts in bringing joy to my life with your cheerful demeanor and all that you do."
	Escape	"Undoubtedly, this destination merits a visit, as it offers an immersive experience in the natural world, providing a serene escape from the hustle and bustle of urban life."  "The location is vast in scale. Residing near the river provided a respite from the urban environment."

## 3.3. Findings related to pull factors

Focusing on the theme of pull factors, the analysis revealed seven key dimension, leading to the completion of 1657 coding. The elements influencing this context include amenities, safety measures, accessibility, recreational activities such as yoga, hiking, canoeing, and swimming in the creek, as well as natural features like climate, clean air, picturesque landscapes, and a serene environment, along with standards of cleanliness and hygiene. The analysis revealed that 'natural attractions' ranked as the most prominent pull factor within the identified range. Figure 3 illustrates the coding and frequency details for all pull factors.

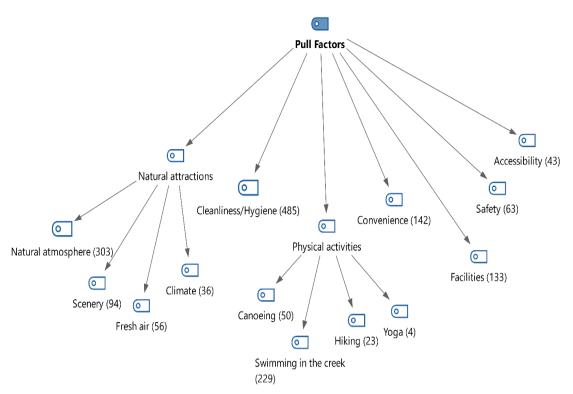


Figure 3. Pull Factors

The analysis of visitor feedback on the campsites reveals several themes, codes, and assessments related to the pull factors, which are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. Codes and Reviews Related to Pull Factors

Theme	Codes	Reviews
Pull Factors	Cleanliness/Hygiene	"The rooms were tidy, and we didn't run into any bugs or anything like that. The windows had mosquito nets. The bathroom was spacious, and the sinks were spotless. We stayed in a bungalow, so I can't speak for the tent area or the sinks there."
	Facilities	"We visited for the first time and spent three days there. It is such an amazing spot, perfect for camping. The campsite is super clean and right by the Zeytinlik stream. You can take a dip in the chilly, vibrant green water of the stream. I have never come across a campsite with such spotless restrooms and showers. Moreover, the showers have hot water! There are also spots for barbecuing. It is super close to Hasan Boğuldu pond and Sütüven Waterfalls. You can find some grocery stores close by, and there's a fridge you can use."
	Safety	"They've set up a chill place where you can hang out with your family and not worry about anything".  "This camp is pretty nice—it's tidy, peaceful, and feels secure. I'd totally suggest it!."

Conve	nience	"We really enjoyed the camp; it was super nice and the prices were totally fair."  "We hung out in some really tidy stone homes. Jumping into the chilly stream was super refreshing. Overall, it was a great deal for what we paid."
<ul> <li>Climate</li> <li>Fresh air</li> <li>Scenery</li> <li>Natural atmosphere</li> <li>Surrounded by plate flowing stream. To don't get tricked land deep enough person in charge enjoy your vacation.</li> <li>Just unzip the total surrounded by plate flowing stream. To don't get tricked land and deep enough person in charge enjoy your vacation.</li> </ul>	"A great spot for camping is a place with lots of oxygen, surrounded by plane and pine trees, right next to a nice, flowing stream. There are bungalow homes around, but don't get tricked by the stream; that water is really cold and deep enough to take a dip, just like a pool. The person in charge here really tries hard to ensure you enjoy your vacation.".  "Just unzip the tent and you'll see a beautiful green landscape, plus you can dive into the water straight from your spot."	
Physic o o	al activities Hiking Canoeing Swimming in the creek Yoga	"The coolest part of the campsite is that you can splash around in the stream for ages The water is super clear and fresh."  "Paddling down the river in a canoe is super chill and helps you unwind."  "We had a blast hiking in Mount Ida and doing all sorts of fun stuff together."  "People who are into yoga really love hanging out here."

## 3.4. Findings on visitor satisfaction

In Figure 4, a selection of reviews regarding visitor satisfaction with the camping experience is illustrated. A total of 292 instances were coded concerning satisfaction levels. Among these, 22 reviews pertained to recommendations, while 15 focused on the likelihood of returning for another visit. The analysis of visitor dissatisfaction resulted in the creation of 166 coding instances.

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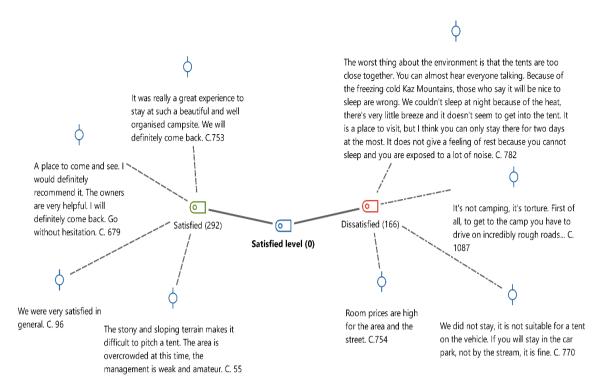


Figure 4. Visitor Satisfaction

#### 4. Discussion

As camping gains global popularity, many camping sites have undergone significant changes, evolving into private facilities equipped with water supply systems, modern toilets, paved roads, enhanced oversight, and a variety of recreational activities (Lee, 2020). Mikulic et al. (2017) emphasize that the key attributes of camping sites include infrastructure, security, and ecological standards. The purpose of this research was to explore the driving forces and levels of contentment among tourists visiting the Kazdag and Akaleos camping sites. The analysis of travel motivation focused on two primary dimensions: push factors and pull factors. The driving forces include the principles of leisure, connection with the natural environment, social bonds with family and friends, tranquility, restfulness, the desire for escape, and the pursuit of innovation. Key determinants that have emerged consist of the need for peace and relaxation, the quest for entertainment, and the motivations stemming from family and friendships. Research indicates that individuals visiting the Mount Ida are primarily driven by the desire to rejuvenate both physically and mentally, seek relief from the pressures of everyday life, enjoy quality time with loved ones, and engage in recreational activities. The factors identified as pull factors primarily included amenities, safety measures, and overall convenience. Additionally, opportunities for physical engagement, the presence of natural sites and the upkeep of cleanliness and hygiene were also considered influential.

The research by Lin and Chuang (2021) highlights that individuals participate in camping activities mainly to achieve physical and mental rejuvenation, boost their energy levels, acquire new knowledge, interact with others, and confront personal challenges. According to Perera et al. (2022), individuals are motivated to engage in camping primarily due to their desire to experience natural environments, utilize leisure time, spend quality moments with friends and family, escape crowded places, pursue educational opportunities, and enhance their physical well-being and vitality. Ristensen et al. (2021) identified five key factors that motivate individuals to engage in camping tourism, categorizing these motivations as immersion in nature, social engagement, relaxation and rejuvenation, skill development, personal challenges, and a sense of curiosity. According to Kim et al. (2023), engaging in camping activities within natural settings offers a distinctive and immersive experience that aligns with personal values and preferences. They argue that motivation serves as a catalyst for travel, emphasizing the importance of escape and relaxation. As noted by Au-Yong et al. (2023), factors that drive individuals include time spent in natural settings, physical fitness activities, stress reduction techniques, and relaxation practices. The insights gained from this research parallel those found in other scholarly investigations within the literature.

Xu et al. (2023) emphasize that the features of a region significantly impact the decision-making process for camping locations, highlighting that aspects like superior service, security, and accessibility to natural landscapes are favorably associated with camping area preferences. Mallikage et al. (2021) emphasize that maintaining cleanliness in camping sites is crucial for enhancing the experience of visitors, making it a priority for area management. According to Gogo (2015), the elements that draw individuals to camping locations include considerations of health and safety, the ecological characteristics of the environment, financial implications, ease of access, available recreational activities, and the quality of infrastructure and physical amenities provided. According to the findings of Au-Yong et al. (2023), the existence of trash bins, restrooms, sufficient lighting, well-constructed roads, and clear signage effectively impacts individuals' choices. Additionally, Lee et al. (2019) point out that attractive elements include affordability, cleanliness, campsite density, and safety measures. The results derived from this study align closely with the existing literature on the subject.

Despite the generally favorable evaluations of campsites in Mount Ida, according to Rouliez et al. (2019) individuals exposed to negative comments tend to score these areas lower. The dissatisfaction expressed by campers arises from several elements, including difficulties in transportation (17), the pricing of facilities (3), concerns regarding cleanliness and hygiene (7), and problems associated with making reservations (6). In addition to the aforementioned points, there exists a range of unfavorable remarks regarding the conduct of the campsite management, characterized by phrases like "disgraceful," "awful," and "I am dissatisfied. Online reviews from travelers can discourage prospective buyers and adversely influence their buying choices, leading to unfavorable biases, particularly when the product lacks widespread recognition (Pantano & Di Pietro, 2013).

The characteristics of the natural landscape play a crucial role in determining the configuration of road systems, which directly impacts the ease of reaching campsites. In most cases, road accessibility is superior in level areas compared to those with significant elevation changes (Luo, 2023). According to Sun and Shao (2020), the conditions of roads and traffic significantly influence the frequency of visits to specific tourist destinations. These elements also play a crucial role in shaping the overall experience of visitors, which in turn affects the feedback they provide on travel review platforms. Ozkok et al. (2024) asert that the convenience of reaching facilities plays a crucial role in enhancing overall satisfaction levels. Besides, according to Li et al (2022) highlight that negative experiences frequently arise from tourism products, especially concerning security, pricing, quality of service, and ecological conditions.

Camping sites and outdoor recreational zones typically exhibit insufficient sanitation infrastructure (Stevenson et al., 2020). The accumulation of litter at campsites leads to significant ecological repercussions, while also detracting from the visitor experience; consequently, individuals prioritize the cleanliness of the campsite as a crucial element influencing their overall satisfaction (Mallikage et al., 2021). Insufficient hygiene and sanitation practices pose significant health hazards for consumers (Berybe et al., 2023). It is crucial to emphasize that the Covid-19 pandemic has intensified the focus on hygiene and sanitation measures.

Zorlu et al. (2023: 959) argue that enhancing the availability of safe and customized travel options in camping sites will likely lead to a rise in camping tourism demand. The analysis revealed that visitors typically enjoyed their experiences in the camping regions of Mount Ida and expressed a desire to return to these locations in the future. The satisfaction of tourists is significantly influenced by the natural environment of camping sites, where factors like tranquility and hygiene are crucial. Indeed, Guo et al. (2024) highlight that the specific characteristics of camping environments directly influence the quality of experiences for tourists, subsequently affecting their intentions to revisit. Tür (2023) observes that the satisfaction rates among tourists exploring the Mount Ida for nature-based tourism are notably high.

## 5. Conclusion and Recommendation

Individuals engaging in nature-oriented tourism pursuits prioritize serenity and visual appeal during their experiences in natural settings. When selecting destinations in this context, elements like the natural environment and standards of cleanliness and hygiene are of utmost importance. Visitor satisfaction at campsites is shaped by the emphasis on maintaining environmental quality and improving sanitation practices. Enhancing the capacity of natural sites to serve as hubs for tourism necessitates the implementation of sustainable and eco-friendly service practices. Implementing hygiene protocols in campsites will diminish tourists' concerns regarding disease exposure and their tendencies to avoid risks, thereby enhancing their intentions to visit. In light of this context, it becomes increasingly important to acknowledge that a multitude of review platforms exists, where users actively share their personal experiences and contribute content. These platforms are incredibly valuable resources for managers and operators within the region. Consequently, those who manage

campsites must diligently engage with the feedback and comments that are posted on various online forums. Furthermore, they should promptly address the needs and expectations of their visitors to ensure a positive experience. By prioritizing the resolution of negative feedback and fostering positive responses, one can significantly boost the motivation of prospective visitors to attend. Additionally, divesifying the range of physical activities within camping tourism-such as guided hikes, canoe tours, and nature based workshops-can enhance visitor engagement and attract a broder demographic of outdoor enthusiasts.

While tourism and leisure pursuits generate certain economic benefits, they simultaneously exert detrimental impacts on environmental and natural resources through their consumption. The practice of camping in natural settings can result in significant and often localized resource degradation, affecting soil, flora, fauna, and water, with the intensity of such degradation fluctuating according to the level of recreational use. At this stage, it is essential to create a balance between the number of visits and the management of resources. In light of this, it is crucial to formulate comprehensive long-term strategies for the camping areas.

This study contributes to the theoretical understanding of nature-based tourism by emphasizing the interplay between environmental quality, hygiene standards, and visitor satisfaction within camping contexts. It extends existing tourism literature by highlighting how sustainability practices and active engagement with user-generated content on online review platforms can shape tourist behavior and destination image. The study provides a nuanced perspective on how perceived environmental cleanliness and responsive management strategies influence visitors' risk perceptions and intention to revisit. Furthermore, by integrating insights from environmental psychology and tourism management, it underscores the importance of balancing ecological preservation with recreational use.

One of the key restrictions of this study is its implementation within a single geographic context. It also features online commentary from individuals who are part of the camping tourism sector. Future research initiatives can adopt quantitative frameworks to evaluate the relationship between the defining campsites' attributes and the quality of experiences enjoyed by visitors. Qualitative methods can reveal the motivations, anticipations, and experiences of individuals who select various camping locations for their vacation preferences.

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