

# The Relationship

## Between Domestic Tourists' Motivation Factors and Their Intention to Revisit Ecotourism Destinations: A Case Study of Preah Monivong Bokor National Park, Cambodia

Sor Sreng <sup>1\*</sup>  
Suthira Sitthikun <sup>2</sup>  
Winitra Leelapattana <sup>3</sup>  
Weerapon Thongma <sup>4</sup>

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### Abstract

This study aims to analyze the relationship between domestic tourists' motivation and their intention to revisit Preah Monivong Bokor National Park in Cambodia. The sample group consisted of 400 Cambodian domestic tourists, selected using a convenience sampling method. A questionnaire was employed as the research instrument, with Cronbach's Alpha values of 0.974 for the motivation construct and 0.871 for revisit intention. These values exceeded the acceptable threshold of 0.70, confirming the instrument's reliability and suitability for data collection. The data were analyzed using mean, standard deviation, and Pearson's correlation coefficient.

The results revealed that the overall level of tourists' motivation was high, and the overall level of revisit intention was very high. Pearson's correlation analysis indicated a moderate positive relationship between tourists' motivation and their intention to revisit Preah Monivong Bokor National Park, with statistical significance at the 0.05 level.

**Keywords:** Motivation, Revisit Intention, Ecotourism, Domestic Tourist, Cambodia

<sup>1</sup> Master's student in Tourism Management Program, International College, Maejo University

\* Email: suthira.sit@gmail.com

<sup>2-4</sup> International College, Maejo University

## Introduction

Ecotourism has gained significant attention in tourism due to its emphasis on sustainable practices and conservation efforts (Wall, 1997). Concerning ecotourism principles, there is a need to improve the application of nature-based experiences and environmental education to ensure the preservation of nature and establish sustainable tourism in the area (Sulaksana et al., 2023). Preah Monivong Bokor National Park in Cambodia is a prime example of an ecotourism destination offering a unique blend of natural beauty, cultural heritage, and biodiversity (Ministry of Tourism Cambodia, 2020). The park's diverse ecosystems and historical significance attract many domestic tourists seeking to immerse themselves in nature and learn about the region's rich heritage (Ministry of Tourism Cambodia, 2021).

Tourism behavior is shaped by a combination of internal motivations and external influences, emphasizing experiential consumption and personalized experiences. Unlike conventional consumer behavior, tourists seek unique and memorable experiences, demonstrating loyalty to preferred brands while also considering sustainability. The rise of tech-savvy travelers has transformed tourism, with digital platforms playing a crucial role in accommodation choices and service quality. Social media significantly influences travel decisions, while responsible tourism is increasingly embraced as a societal norm. Additionally, sustainable tourism behavior reflects travelers' conscious choices to align with sustainability principles, yet research highlights gaps in waste management, recycling, and sustainable design. Addressing these challenges requires targeted market segmentation and the integration of innovative technology for sustainable tourism development (Li et al., 2024; Reis & Rodrigues, 2024; Zheng et al., 2024).

Revisit intention in Preah Monivong Bokor National Park can be significantly influenced by various factors such as perceived quality, satisfaction, and destination image. Understanding these elements is crucial for enhancing tourist loyalty and ensuring sustainable tourism in the park. The following sections elaborate on these key aspects. High perceived quality of services and facilities leads to increased tourist satisfaction, which directly correlates with the intention to revisit the park (Tri & Nguyen, 2024). Tourists who experience quality services are more likely to express a desire to return, as satisfaction acts as a mediator between service quality and revisit intention. A positive destination image plays a critical role in shaping tourists' perceptions and their likelihood of returning (Morshed et al., 2022). Effective marketing strategies that enhance the park's image can attract more visitors and encourage repeat visits, as seen in other national parks. Online customer reviews significantly impact tourists' decisions, with favorable reviews enhancing revisit intentions. Competitive pricing strategies can also influence tourists' perceptions and their willingness to return to the park (Mahendra & Hapsari, 2024). While these factors are essential for promoting revisit intentions, it is also important to consider potential challenges such as environmental sustainability and the impact of over-tourism, which could deter future visits if not managed properly.

Understanding the factors influencing tourists' decisions to revisit ecotourism destinations is essential for sustainable destination management and enhancing visitor experiences. The significance of travel motivations in influencing travel intentions and

behaviors. It emphasizes that understanding the underlying motivations behind tourists' travel decisions is crucial for the tourism industry to effectively cater to travelers' needs and preferences. The research aims to provide valuable insights for tourism professionals to enhance their marketing strategies by exploring the relationship between travel motivations and intentions. It offers to attract and retain tourists (Maghrifani et al., 2022). Tourists' revisit intentions are influenced by various factors such as motivation, attitude, and perceived destination sustainability. Studies have shown that push and pull motivations significantly impact tourists' revisit intentions (Nam, 2023; Sumendap et al., 2023). Therefore, the objective of this study is to analysis the relationship between of domestic tourists' motivation and revisit intention of ecotourism in Preah Monivong Bokor National Park, Tuek Chhou District, Kampot Province, Cambodia.

## Literature Review

### Consumer Behavior Theory

Consumer Behavior Theory explores how individuals make decisions to spend their available resources (time, money, effort) on consumption-related items. It examines the processes consumers go through before, during, and after purchasing products or services. The theory integrates concepts from psychology, sociology, economics, and marketing to understand factors that influence purchasing decisions.

There are several key models and perspectives within this theory:

1. Economic Model – Assumes consumers are rational and aim to maximize utility based on income and product prices (Marshall, 1890).
2. Psychological Model – Focuses on internal factors such as perception, motivation, learning, beliefs, and attitudes that affect buying behavior (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007).
3. Sociocultural Model – Emphasizes the influence of family, social class, culture, and reference groups (Kotler & Keller, 2016).

Decision-Making Process Model – Outlines five stages: problem recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision, and post-purchase behavior (Engel, Blackwell & Miniard, 1995).

Understanding consumer behavior helps businesses develop effective marketing strategies, segment markets, and improve customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Tourist motivation is a key component of consumer behavior in tourism. Theories such as Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, Push and Pull Theory, and Plog's Psychographic Theory provide insights into why domestic tourists make travel decisions based on various types of motivation.

Physical motivation refers to the desire for rest, relaxation, health recovery, and escape from daily stress. It is a fundamental reason why individuals engage in travel, especially to nature-based or tranquil destinations. According to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, this aligns with physiological and safety needs (Maslow, 1943). From the Push-Pull Theory perspective,

it is a push factor—an internal drive that compels individuals to leave their routine environment for physical and mental renewal (Dann, 1977).

Status and prestige motivation refers to the desire for recognition, social approval, and personal enhancement through travel. Tourists may choose destinations or experiences that elevate their social standing or reflect a prestigious lifestyle. According to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, this aligns with esteem needs, where individuals seek respect, accomplishment, and social status (Maslow, 1943). The Self-Concept Theory further explains that travelers select experiences that reflect or enhance their ideal self-image and align with their perceived social identity (Sirgy & Su, 2000).

Cultural motivation refers to the desire to explore and learn about new cultures, traditions, heritage, and historical contexts. Tourists are often driven by curiosity and a willingness to gain deeper understanding through immersive cultural experiences. This aligns with the Push-Pull Theory, where cultural elements act as pull factors that attract tourists to destinations with rich heritage and history (Crompton, 1979). Additionally, the Experiential Consumption Theory emphasizes that travelers seek authentic and educational experiences, highlighting the emotional and intellectual fulfillment gained through cultural tourism (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982).

Impersonal motivation involves internal drivers such as curiosity, the pursuit of novelty, and aesthetic appreciation, which are not necessarily influenced by cultural or social factors. These tourists seek personal fulfillment through exploration, discovery, or sensory enjoyment. This motivation aligns with Plog's Psychographic Theory, which classifies allocentric tourists as individuals who are curious and eager to explore unfamiliar destinations for personal interest (Plog, 1974). It also reflects the Hedonic Consumption Theory, which emphasizes emotional and sensory pleasure as key motivators in tourism behavior (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982).

### **Ecotourism Concept**

Ecotourism is a form of responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment, sustains the well-being of local people, and involves interpretation and education (TIES, 2015). It is a sustainable tourism practice that aims to minimize negative impacts on nature and culture while enhancing conservation efforts and providing socio-economic benefits to host communities.

Key characteristics of ecotourism include:

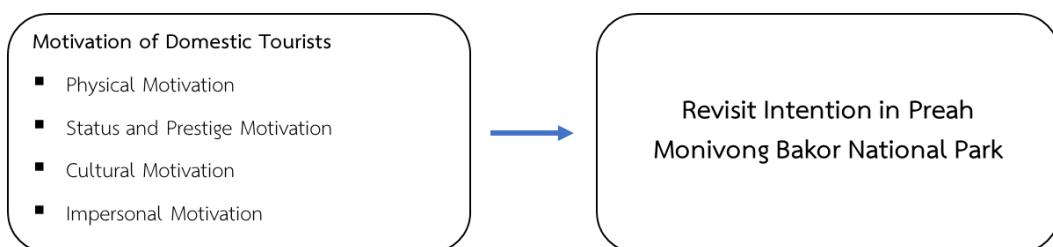
1. Environmental conservation – Tourism activities are designed to minimize ecological footprints and contribute to protecting biodiversity.
2. Local community involvement – Local people are actively engaged and benefit economically and socially from tourism.
3. Education and awareness – Tourists gain knowledge and appreciation of natural and cultural heritage.
4. Sustainability – Long-term environmental, cultural, and economic sustainability is prioritized.

Ecotourism differs from conventional mass tourism by focusing on low-impact, small-scale travel and encouraging meaningful experiences in natural environments (Honey, 2008). It promotes responsible behavior among both tourists and tourism operators.

## Conceptual Framework

Tourist motivation is a fundamental determinant that directly influences travel behavior, particularly the intention to revisit a destination. When tourists perceive that their motivational needs—such as physical relaxation, the pursuit of status and prestige, cultural exploration, or impersonal factors like safety and convenience—have been adequately fulfilled, they are more likely to report high levels of satisfaction with their travel experiences. This satisfaction, in turn, contributes to emotional attachment, perceived value, and ultimately a greater intention to revisit the same destination in the future.

Previous studies have consistently supported the notion that well-responded motivations play a critical role in shaping tourists' long-term behavioral intentions. Understanding these motivational dimensions is therefore essential for tourism planners and destination managers seeking to enhance visitor loyalty and promote sustainable tourism by encouraging repeat visitation.



**Figure 1** Conceptual Framework

## Research Methodology

### Sample

The study aims to collect data from 400 domestic tourists visiting Preah Monivong Bakor National Park in Tuek Chhou District, Kampot Province, Cambodia.

### Sampling Techniques

The researcher may employ a systematic random sampling technique to select the sample of domestic tourists. This method involves selecting every domestic tourist entering the park during the peak tourist season from February 2024 to March 2024.

### Data Collection

Data will be collected primarily through the administration of a structured survey questionnaire distributed to domestic tourists at key locations within Preah Monivong Bakor

National Park, including the main entrance and visitor center. The questionnaire will assess tourists' motivations and their intentions to revisit the park, alongside demographic variables such as age, gender, income level, and place of residence to gain a comprehensive profile of the sample. The collected data will be analyzed using statistical techniques, including descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation coefficient analysis, to identify the key factors influencing domestic tourists' revisit intentions to this ecotourism destination.

### **Construct and measurement**

**Instrument Validity and Reliability Testing:** Prior to the main data collection, the researcher conducted a pretest to ensure the research instrument's validity and reliability in measuring constructs related to domestic tourists' experiences at Preah Monivong Bokor National Park.

**Content Validity:** The questionnaire was reviewed by the 3 experts, to assess content validity. Their feedback was used to refine the instrument, ensuring that all items were relevant to the research objectives and appropriately aligned with the study's constructs.

**Reliability Testing:** A pilot test was conducted with 30 participants possessing similar characteristics to the target population. Cronbach's Alpha was used to assess internal consistency. The results demonstrated high reliability, with Cronbach's Alpha values of 0.974 for the motivation construct and 0.871 for revisit intention. These values exceeded the acceptable threshold of 0.70, confirming the instrument's reliability and suitability for data collection.

### **Data analysis**

This study analyzed data to investigate the psychological factors influencing domestic tourists' revisit intentions in ecotourism at Preah Monivong Bokor National Park, located in Tuek Chhou District, Kampot Province, Cambodia. The researcher employed the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to perform quantitative analysis, using both descriptive and inferential statistics to examine the relationship between tourists' motivation and their intention to revisit.

## Results

### Part 1: Personal Information Domestic Tourists at Preah Monivong Bokor National Park

**Table 1** The Personal Information

Personal factors	Content	Frequency	Percent %
Gender	Male	200	50.00%
	Female	200	50.00%
Age	less than 24	211	52.75%
	25-32	61	15.25%
	33-40	96	24.00%
	41-48	26	6.50%
	more than 49	6	1.50%
Status	Single	276	69.00%
	Married	122	30.50%
	Windowed/ Divorced	2	0.50%
Education	Secondary School	80	20.00%
	High School	167	41.75%
	Associate's Degree	10	2.50%
	Bachelor's Degree	130	32.50%
	Master's Degree	12	3.00%
	Doctoral Degree	1	0.25%
Personal factors	Content	Frequency	Percent %
Occupation	Student	154	38.50%
	Farmer	49	12.25%
	Civil Servant	43	10.75%
	Factory Worker	60	15.00%
	Bank Official/ Credit Official	31	7.75%
	Lawyer Occupation	17	4.25%
	Owner of Business	22	5.50%
	Non-government Officials	24	6.00%
Monthly Income	less than 150\$	149	37.25%
	151\$-720\$	243	60.75%
	721\$-1291\$	4	1.00%
	1863\$-2433\$	2	0.50%
	more than 2434\$	2	0.50%

Table 1 provides data on general characteristics and is summarized as follows:

Gender: The sample was evenly divided between male and female respondents, with 200 males (50.00%) and 200 females (50.00%).

**Age:** Most respondents were under 24 years old, totaling 211 individuals (52.75%). This was followed by those aged 33–40 years (96 individuals, 24.00%), 25–32 years (61 individuals, 15.25%), 41–48 years (26 individuals, 6.50%), and over 49 years (6 individuals, 1.50%).

**Marital Status:** Most respondents were single, totaling 276 individuals (69.00%), followed by 122 individuals who were married (30.50%), and only 2 individuals who were widowed or divorced (0.50%).

**Education Level:** The largest portion of respondents had completed high school (167 individuals, 41.75%), followed by those with a bachelor's degree (130 individuals, 32.50%) and secondary school education (80 individuals, 20.00%). Other qualifications included associate's degree (2.50%), master's degree (3.00%), and doctoral degree (0.25%).

**Occupation:** Most of the respondents were students (154 individuals, 38.50%). This was followed by factory workers (15.00%), farmers (12.25%), civil servants (10.75%), bank or credit officers (7.75%), non-government employees (6.00%), business owners (5.50%), and those in legal professions (4.25%).

**Monthly Income:** Most respondents earned between 151 and 720 USD per month (243 individuals, 60.75%), followed by those earning less than 150 USD (149 individuals, 37.25%). A small number reported income between 721–1291 USD (1.00%), and more than 1863 USD (1.00%).

## Part 2: Analysis of Domestic Tourists' Motivation Factors

The results of the analysis of domestic tourists' motivation were examined using the mean and standard deviation. The interpretation of the results is as follows

**Table 2** Summary of motivation of domestic Tourists' respondents (N=400)

Motivation of Domestic Tourists	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Physical Motivation	3.96	0.652	High
Status and Prestige Motivation	3.86	0.711	High
Cultural Motivation	4.20	0.584	High
Impersonal Motivation	4.03	0.555	High
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.01</b>	<b>0.510</b>	<b>High</b>

Table 2 provides the motivations driving domestic tourists to Preah Monivong Bokor National Park, which are diverse and significant. Physical Motivation scores a high 3.96 ( $SD=0.652$ ), indicating that activities like hiking, swimming, and enjoying the outdoors are major attractions. Status and Prestige Motivation also scores high at 3.86 ( $SD=0.711$ ), suggesting that social recognition and the prestige associated with visiting certain destinations are important for some travelers. Cultural Motivation leads with an impressive 4.20 ( $SD=0.584$ ), highlighting a strong interest in exploring local cultures, traditions, and historical sites. Impersonal Motivation, with a score of 4.03 ( $SD=0.555$ ), reveals that many individuals seek travel for personal reasons such as solitude or a break from routine. The overall average

motivation score of 4.01 ( $SD=0.510$ ) underscores these varied factors' strong influence in shaping domestic tourists' travel decisions at the park.

### Part 3: Analysis of Revisit Intention in Preah Monivong Bokor National Park

The results of the analysis of revisit intention of domestic tourists' respondents were examined using the mean and standard deviation. The interpretation of the results is as follows

**Table 3** Summary of revisit intention of domestic tourists' respondents (N=400)

Revisit intention in Preah Monivong Bokor National Park	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Revisit intention in Preah Monivong Bokor National Park	4.23	0.553	Strongly Agree
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.23</b>	<b>0.553</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>

Table 3 provides data on revisit intention for Preah Monivong Bokor National Park, showing a high mean score of 4.23 ( $SD=0.553$ ), interpreted as Strongly Agree. This suggests that respondents are strongly inclined to revisit the park, indicating a highly positive experience or perception of the destination. This strong intention underscores the park's appeal and tourists' satisfaction with their experiences.

### Part 4: The analysis revealed that the motivation of domestic tourists has a significant relationship with their intention to revisit ecotourism destinations in Preah Monivong Bokor National Park.

The motivation of domestic tourists significantly influences revisiting intention ecotourism in Preah Monivong Bokor National Park.

**Table 4** Research Hypothesis

Motivation of Domestic Tourists	Revisit Intention in Preah Monivong Bokor National Park	Significance
Physical Motivation	.408**	.000
Status and Prestige Motivation	.402**	.000
Cultural Motivation	.428**	.000
Impersonal Motivation	.425**	.000
<b>Total</b>	<b>.508**</b>	<b>.000</b>

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 4 provides data on the Pearson correlation coefficients for Physical Motivation (0.408), Status and Prestige Motivation (0.402), Cultural Motivation (0.428), and Impersonal

Motivation (0.425) with Revisit Intention indicate somewhat positive relationships between each type of motivation and the intention to revisit. All p-values are 0.000, making these correlations significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). This suggests that higher levels of physical, status, prestige, cultural, and impersonal motivations are associated with a stronger intention to revisit the park. The statistical significance confirms that these relationships are improbable to have occurred by chance, emphasizing the importance of these motivations in influencing tourists' decisions to return.

The Hypothesis delves into the connection between the motivations driving domestic tourists to visit Preah Monivong Bokor National Park and their likelihood of returning. It posits that factors such as seeking relaxation, adventure, or educational experiences are pivotal in shaping tourists' intentions for future visits. The study confirms a significant relationship between these motivations and the inclination to revisit, implying that tourists deeply motivated by their initial experiences in the park are more likely to plan a return trip.

Result: Accepted. This outcome underscores that the stronger tourists' motivations are initially, the greater the probability of them planning a subsequent visit. It emphasizes the importance of understanding and catering to tourists' diverse motivations to foster repeat visitation and sustainable tourism development.

## Discussion

Understanding the psychological factors that influence the revisit intentions of domestic tourists to ecotourism destinations like Preah Monivong Bokor National Park is essential for promoting sustainable tourism development. This discussion synthesizes insights from various studies to explore how factors such as place attachment, quality perceptions, destination image, tourist experiences, and environmental attitudes impact tourists' likelihood of returning to this Cambodian national park.

The present study of domestic tourists at Preah Monivong Bokor National Park provides valuable insights into the psychological determinants of revisit intention. By examining the relationships between tourists' motivations and their intent to revisit, several key trends and connections emerge that align well with the broader literature on ecotourism motivation and revisit behavior.

Findings on tourist motivation at Preah Monivong Bokor National Park reflect well-established themes in ecotourism research. Various motivational factors drive tourists' satisfaction and environmentally responsible behavior, including physical, cultural, status-driven, and personal motivations (Chi & Pham, 2024; Jayasekara et al., 2024; Kim et al., 2023). The highest mean score was found in Cultural Motivation ( $\bar{x} = 4.20$ ,  $SD = 0.584$ ), indicating that exploring local traditions and heritage strongly motivates domestic tourists. This is consistent with prior research showing that cultural and historical attractions play a significant role in ecotourism engagement (Dai et al., 2023; Hoang et al., 2022).

Impersonal Motivation ( $\bar{x} = 4.03$ ,  $SD = 0.555$ ), which includes seeking solitude and escape from daily routines, also emerged as a significant driver. This aligns with studies highlighting the psychological benefits of nature-based tourism (Kim & Koo, 2020). Physical

Motivation ( $\bar{x} = 3.96$ ,  $SD = 0.652$ ) reflects interest in outdoor activities such as hiking and swimming, corroborating literature on adventure and recreational travel (Chan & Saikim, 2022; Constantin et al., 2022). Status and Prestige Motivation ( $\bar{x} = 3.86$ ,  $SD = 0.711$ ) suggests that social recognition influences destination choice, supporting findings that social image and materialism affect travel decisions (Kong & Chang, 2024).

Pearson correlation coefficients reveal moderately positive relationships between motivation types and revisit intention: Cultural ( $r = 0.428$ ), Impersonal ( $r = 0.425$ ), Physical ( $r = 0.408$ ), and Status and Prestige ( $r = 0.402$ ), all statistically significant at  $p < 0.001$ . These results align with studies linking motivation, place attachment, and revisit behavior (Quoquab et al., 2021; Zhang et al., 2024). Importantly, engagement with environmental and cultural aspects can strengthen attachment to ecotourism sites, fostering repeat visits (Li et al., 2021; Pham & Khanh, 2021).

Overall, the findings emphasize the critical role of cultural, physical, and personal motivations in shaping ecotourism experiences and revisit intentions. These insights can help policymakers and tourism managers design effective marketing strategies, improve sustainable tourism services, and promote long-term visitor loyalty. Future research may explore how environmental concerns and destination image further moderate these relationships (Ali et al., 2022; Chen et al., 2023).

## Conclusion And Recommendations

The research conducted at Preah Monivong Bokor National Park in Tuek Chhou District, Kampot Province, Cambodia, aimed to investigate the psychological factors influencing domestic tourists' revisit intentions in ecotourism settings. Through quantitative analysis of tourists' motivation and revisit intention, valuable insights were gained regarding the drivers of repeat visitation and their implications for sustainable tourism development.

The study revealed a significant positive relationship between tourists' motivation and their intention to revisit the national park. Key motivators included autobiographical memory, altruism, personal well-being, and environmental concern, all of which influence tourists' decisions to return to ecotourism destinations. Understanding and leveraging these motivational factors can enhance visitor experiences and foster loyalty among domestic tourists.

### Managerial Implications

These findings hold practical significance for park managers and tourism stakeholders, aiming to improve visitor experience and encourage repeat visitation. By enhancing destination attributes, promoting sustainable tourism practices, and fostering positive attitudes toward ecotourism, managers can create an environment conducive to revisits. Such efforts contribute to the long-term sustainability and economic viability of Preah Monivong Bokor National Park.

### Future Research Directions

Building on the insights gained, future research could explore additional factors influencing revisit intentions, including socio-demographic characteristics, prior experience,

and destination marketing strategies. Longitudinal studies tracking tourists' behavior over time and qualitative research capturing tourists' experiential narratives could offer deeper understanding of the complex dynamics underlying revisit intentions in ecotourism contexts.

In conclusion, this research underscores the importance of understanding and leveraging tourists' motivation to shape revisit intentions at ecotourism sites. By addressing these psychological factors and aligning destination management strategies with tourists' preferences and values, stakeholders can create memorable experiences, build visitor loyalty, and sustainably develop Preah Monivong Bokor National Park as a sought-after destination for domestic tourists.

### **Limitations and future research**

Ecotourism research is crucial in understanding tourists' motivations towards natural environments and cultural heritage sites. However, like any field of study, ecotourism studies have limitations. One standard limitation is the reliance on small sample sizes, which may hinder the generalizability of findings to larger populations. To address this limitation, future research could focus on increasing sample sizes and diversifying participant demographics to ensure a more representative sample.

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