



## SMART TECHNOLOGY, TOURIST DELIGHTING AND RE-INTENTIONS: AN EMPIRICAL PERSPECTIVE

*Tecnologia inteligente, encantamento turístico e reavaliações de intenções: uma perspectiva empírica*

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### ABSTRACT

A study was conducted to examine the relationship between smart technology, tourist delight, and tourists' re-intentions in the context of the tourism industry. It examined the impact of smart technology on tourists' levels of satisfaction, their intentions to revisit a destination, and their likelihood of recommending it to others. An extensive review of the relevant literature highlights the growing significance of smart technology in the tourism sector, including the use of mobile applications, augmented reality, and personalized services. It underscores the role of tourist delight as a crucial factor influencing satisfaction and re-intentions. Previous studies consistently indicate that the adoption of smart technology positively influences tourist delight and satisfaction. To further investigate the issue of how smart technology influences tourists' delight with destinations and their intentions to revisit them, a survey was administered to a large sample of respondents. The sample consisted of tourists staying at six luxury hotels in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia that were chosen based on their online ranking and positive reviews. Six hundred questionnaires were distributed to tourists staying at the targeted hotels, and 482 valid responses were obtained. Overall, the findings highlighted the positive impact of smart technology on tourist satisfaction and revisitation intentions, underscoring the importance of integrating smart technology into tourism practices to enhance tourist experiences and foster destination success.

**Keywords:** Tourists, Smart Technology, Delight, Satisfaction, Saudi Arabia

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## TECNOLOGIA INTELIGENTE, ENCANTAMENTO TURÍSTICO E REAVALIAÇÕES DE INTENÇÕES: UMA PERSPECTIVA EMPÍRICA

*Smart technology, tourist delighting and re-intentions: an empirical perspective*

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### RESUMO

Um estudo foi conduzido para examinar a relação entre tecnologia inteligente, encantamento turístico e intenção de retorno dos turistas no contexto da indústria do turismo. O estudo analisou o impacto da tecnologia inteligente nos níveis de satisfação dos turistas, em suas intenções de revisitar um destino e na probabilidade de recomendá-lo a outros. Uma extensa revisão da literatura relevante destaca a crescente importância da tecnologia inteligente no setor de turismo, incluindo o uso de aplicativos móveis, realidade aumentada e serviços personalizados. Ressalta-se o papel do encantamento turístico como um fator crucial que influencia a satisfação e a intenção de retorno. Estudos anteriores indicam consistentemente que a adoção de tecnologia inteligente influencia positivamente o encantamento e a satisfação dos turistas. Para investigar mais a fundo como a tecnologia inteligente influencia o encantamento dos turistas com os destinos e suas intenções de revisitá-los, uma pesquisa foi aplicada a uma grande amostra de respondentes. A amostra consistiu em turistas hospedados em seis hotéis de luxo em Riad, Arábia Saudita, selecionados com base em sua classificação online e avaliações positivas. Seiscentos questionários foram distribuídos aos turistas hospedados nos hotéis selecionados, e 482 respostas válidas foram obtidas. De forma geral, os resultados destacaram o impacto positivo da tecnologia inteligente na satisfação dos turistas e na intenção de retornar, ressaltando a importância de integrar a tecnologia inteligente às práticas turísticas para aprimorar as experiências dos turistas e promover o sucesso do destino.

**Palavras-chave:** Turistas, Tecnologia Inteligente, Prazer, Satisfação, Arábia Saudita

## INTRODUCTION

The advent of technology has revolutionized the tourism industry, transforming the way travelers plan, experience, and share their journeys. Understanding the impact of tourism technology on re-intentions, or the intention of tourists to revisit a destination, is crucial for destination managers and marketers. Below are some insights into the relationship between tourism technology and re-intentions.

**Online Travel Platforms:** Booking websites, review platforms, and travel blogs have become integral to the travel planning and decision-making process. Research has shown that positive experiences with online platforms positively influence re-intentions (Brouder et al., 2015). Travelers rely on online platforms to search for information, read reviews, and make reservations, and a seamless and user-friendly online experience can contribute to increased re-intentions.

**Mobile Applications:** The widespread use of smartphones has led to the emergence of mobile applications that cater specifically to the needs of travelers. Mobile applications offer functionalities such as personalized recommendations, real-time information, navigation assistance, and booking options. Studies have indicated that the use of travel-related mobile applications positively impacts re-intentions (Xiang et al., 2017). Mobile applications enhance convenience, provide on-the-go access to information, and offer personalized experiences, all of which contribute to increased re-intentions.

**Augmented Reality and Virtual Reality:** Technologies have gained prominence in the tourism industry, offering immersive and interactive experiences for travelers. These technologies allow tourists to virtually explore destinations, engage with cultural heritage, and participate in virtual tours. Studies have shown that the use of augmented reality and virtual reality in tourism positively influences re-intentions (Chang et al., 2020).

Augmented reality and virtual reality enhance the experiential aspect of travel, create memorable experiences, and stimulate curiosity, thereby increasing the likelihood of repeat visitation. Similarly, social media and user-generated content can positively influence re-intentions. Social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and TripAdvisor play a significant role in shaping tourists' perceptions and influencing their travel decisions. User-generated content, including travel photos, reviews, and recommendations, has a strong impact on re-intentions. Positive engagement with social media platforms and user-generated content has been found to positively influence re-intentions (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004). Social media platforms allow tourists to share their experiences, seek inspiration, and engage with destination marketing efforts, fostering a sense of connection and interest in revisiting.

Overall, it appears that tourism technology, including online travel platforms, mobile applications, augmented reality and virtual reality, and social media, significantly influences re-intentions. These technologies enhance convenience, personalization, and engagement, creating memorable experiences for tourists. Understanding the role of technology in shaping re-intentions is essential for destination managers and marketers in developing effective strategies to foster repeat visitation and loyalty.

## 1 LITERATURE REVIEW

### 1.1 Smart Technology Tourism Applications

Smart technology has revolutionized the tourism industry, offering new opportunities to enhance the travel experience and improve destination management. The integration of smart technology, including Internet of Things (IoT), mobile applications, wearable devices, and data analytics, has enabled innovative tourism applications. This literature review highlights key findings and trends related to smart technology tourism applications.

**Smart Destination Management:** Smart technology has transformed destination management, enabling efficient resource utilization, improved visitor experiences, and sustainable development. Smart destination management applications involve the use of data analytics, sensors, and IoT devices to collect and analyze data, monitor visitor flows, optimize transportation, and enhance safety and security (Gretzel et al., 2015). Studies have explored the implementation of smart destination management systems, highlighting the benefits of real-time data analysis and decision-making for destination stakeholders (Neuhofer et al., 2015).

**Mobile Applications and Traveler Engagement:** Mobile applications have become an essential tool for travelers, offering personalized recommendations, interactive maps, and real-time information. Smart mobile

applications provide functionalities such as trip planning, booking, navigation, and social sharing. Research has shown that mobile applications positively influence traveler engagement, satisfaction, and decision-making (Xiang et al., 2017).

**Wearable Devices and Augmented Reality:** Wearable devices and augmented reality technologies have the potential to transform the way tourists experience destinations. Wearable devices, such as smart glasses and smartwatches, offer hands-free access to information, augmented navigation, and context-aware recommendations. Augmented reality technologies provide immersive and interactive experiences, allowing tourists to overlay digital information on the physical environment. Research has explored the use of wearable devices and AR in tourism, highlighting their potential to enhance engagement, learning, and enjoyment (Neuhofer et al., 2015).

**Smart Transportation and Mobility:** Smart technology has also been applied to transportation and mobility in the tourism context. Intelligent transportation systems, including real-time traffic management, smart parking, and multimodal navigation, aim to optimize transportation efficiency and improve the visitor experience. Studies have examined the impact of smart transportation applications on traveler satisfaction, accessibility, and sustainable mobility (Neuhofer et al., 2015).

**Data Analytics and Personalization:** The use of data analytics in tourism applications allows for personalized experiences and targeted marketing. By analyzing large volumes of data, including social media data, geolocation data, and user preferences, tourism stakeholders can tailor recommendations, offers, and services to individual travelers. Research has investigated the use of data analytics for personalized marketing, destination recommendations, and understanding tourist behavior (Gretzel et al., 2015).

Consequently, smart technology tourism applications have transformed destination management, traveler engagement, transportation, and personalization. The integration of smart technology into the tourism industry offers opportunities for efficient resource management, enhanced visitor experiences, and sustainable tourism practices. Understanding the potential and challenges of smart technology in tourism is crucial for destination stakeholders in harnessing its benefits and providing memorable and personalized travel experiences.

## 1.2 Tourist Experience

The concept of tourist experience has gained significant attention in tourism research, focusing on understanding the subjective and holistic nature of tourists' interactions, perceptions, and emotions during their travel. This literature review provides insights into the key dimensions, factors, and outcomes of the tourist experience.

**Dimensions of Tourist Experience:** The tourist experience is a multifaceted construct that encompasses various dimensions. Researchers have identified several key dimensions, including cognitive, affective, social, physical, and sensory aspects (Arnould and Price, 1993; Pine and Gilmore, 1999). These dimensions capture the cognitive understanding, emotional responses, social interactions, physical environment, and sensory stimulation that tourists encounter during their journeys.

**Factors Influencing Tourist Experience:** Various factors influence the tourist experience, and researchers have explored their impact on tourists' perceptions and satisfaction. These factors include destination attributes (such as natural and cultural resources), service quality, interactions with locals, authenticity, novelty, personal motivations, and prior expectations (Crompton, 1997; Chen and Tsai, 2007; Gursoy et al., 2015). Understanding these factors is crucial for destination managers and marketers in designing and delivering memorable and meaningful experiences.

**Experiential Marketing and Co-creation:** Experiential marketing emphasizes the creation of unique and memorable experiences for tourists. It involves engaging tourists in active participation, personalization, and co-creation of their experiences. Co-creation refers to the collaborative process between tourists and service providers in designing and delivering experiences that meet individual preferences and needs (Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004). Co-creation can enhance tourists' engagement, satisfaction, and loyalty, as they feel a sense of ownership and empowerment in shaping their experiences.

**Emotional and Hedonic Aspects:** The emotional and hedonic aspects of tourism play a vital role in the tourist experience. Positive emotions, such as joy, awe, and excitement, contribute to overall satisfaction with and enjoyment of the experience (Jensen et al., 2019). Hedonic experiences involve pleasure, entertainment, and sensory stimulation, adding a sense of novelty, fun, and escape from everyday routines (Hultman et al., 2018).

Understanding and managing tourists' emotions and hedonic desires is crucial for creating memorable and transformative experiences.

**Transformative Experiences:** Tourist experiences can also have transformative effects on individuals, leading to personal growth, self-reflection, and changes in attitudes or behaviors. These transformative experiences often occur when tourists engage with different cultures or natural environments, or participate in meaningful activities (Strzelecka et al., 2019). Such experiences have long-lasting impacts and can foster a deeper connection and understanding of the visited destination.

In summary, the tourist experience is a multidimensional phenomenon influenced by various factors, including destination attributes, service quality, authenticity, and personal motivations. Emotional and hedonic aspects, as well as the potential for transformative experiences, play a crucial role in shaping tourists' perceptions and satisfaction. Understanding the dimensions, influential aspects, and outcomes of the tourist experience is essential for destination managers and marketers in creating and delivering memorable and meaningful experiences for tourists.

### 1.3 Tourist Satisfaction

Tourist satisfaction is a key focus in tourism research, as it reflects the extent to which tourists' expectations are met or exceeded during their travel experiences. Understanding the factors influencing tourist satisfaction is crucial for destination managers and marketers in providing quality services and enhancing the overall visitor experience. The following are some key findings and trends related to tourist satisfaction.

**Service Quality and Tourist Satisfaction:** Service quality is a fundamental determinant of tourist satisfaction. Researchers have explored the relationship between service quality dimensions such as reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibles, and tourist satisfaction (Parasuraman et al., 1988). Positive perceptions of service quality contribute to higher levels of satisfaction. It is essential for service providers to meet or exceed tourists' expectations by delivering reliable, responsive, and personalized services.

**Destination Attributes and Tourist Satisfaction:** Destination attributes, including natural and cultural resources, infrastructure, amenities, and accessibility, significantly influence tourist satisfaction. Research has shown that the quality of destination attributes positively impacts tourist satisfaction (Beerli and Martin, 2004). Tourists are more likely to be satisfied when they perceive destinations as attractive, safe, well-maintained, and offering a range of appealing activities and experiences.

**Tourist Expectations and Perceived Value:** Tourist expectations play a crucial role in shaping satisfaction levels. Expectations can be formed through pre-trip information, word-of-mouth, and past experiences. When the actual experience meets or exceeds expectations, tourists are more likely to be satisfied. Additionally, perceived value, which is the trade-off between the perceived benefits and costs of the travel experience, influences tourist satisfaction (Zeithaml, 1988). When tourists perceive that the benefits outweigh the costs, they are more likely to be satisfied with their travel experience.

**Emotional and Affective Factors:** Emotional and affective factors play an important role in shaping tourist satisfaction. Positive emotions, such as happiness, excitement, and enjoyment, contribute to higher levels of satisfaction (Kim et al., 2012). Conversely, negative emotions, such as frustration or disappointment, can lead to lower levels of satisfaction. Managing tourists' emotions through personalized interactions, attention to detail, and empathetic service delivery can enhance satisfaction levels.

**Post-trip Experience and Word-of-Mouth:** The post-trip experience, including memories and reflections on the travel experience, can influence tourist satisfaction. Tourists' post-trip evaluations and overall reflections on their experiences shape their satisfaction levels. Positive post-trip experiences often lead to positive word-of-mouth recommendations, which can further contribute to destination reputation and satisfaction for future travelers (Litvin et al., 2008).

In summary, tourist satisfaction is influenced by various factors, including service quality, destination attributes, tourist expectations, perceived value, emotional factors, and post-trip experiences. Understanding these factors and their impact on satisfaction levels is crucial for destination managers and marketers in providing high-quality experiences and fostering positive word-of-mouth recommendations.

#### 1.4 Tourist Delight

Tourist delight refers to the positive emotional state or feeling of pleasure and satisfaction experienced by tourists during their travel experiences. It is a concept that has gained significant attention in tourism research, as it represents a higher level of satisfaction beyond mere contentment. The following are some insights into the key dimensions, antecedents, and outcomes of tourist delight.

**Dimensions of Tourist Delight:** Tourist delight is a multidimensional construct. Researchers have identified several key dimensions of tourist delight, including novelty, surprise, enjoyment, fascination, and positive affect (Kim et al., 2012). These dimensions capture the experiential and emotional aspects of delight, highlighting the excitement, engagement, and positive feelings associated with the travel experience.

**Antecedents of Tourist Delight:** Several factors contribute to the occurrence of tourist delight. Research has shown that factors such as destination attributes, service quality, personal motivations, novelty, authenticity, and positive interactions with locals can influence tourist delight (Bigné et al., 2001; Yüksel et al., 2010). Delightful experiences are often characterized by unexpected and positive surprises, unique and memorable encounters, and the fulfillment of tourists' desires and aspirations.

**Emotional and Experiential Factors:** Emotional and experiential factors play a significant role in tourist delight. Positive emotions, such as joy, happiness, and awe, are closely associated with the experience of delight (Kim et al., 2012). Delightful experiences are characterized by a high level of engagement, immersion, and sensory stimulation. The interplay of emotions, senses, and cognitive processes contributes to the overall feeling of delight and enhances the memorability and impact of the travel experience.

**Influence on Tourist Satisfaction and Loyalty:** Tourist delight has a positive impact on tourist satisfaction and loyalty. Delightful experiences go beyond satisfying tourists' expectations and create a lasting impression, leading to higher levels of satisfaction (Wang et al., 2015). Satisfied and delighted tourists are more likely to engage in positive word-of-mouth, make repeat visits, and recommend the destination to others. Delight can also contribute to building emotional connections and fostering long-term loyalty and advocacy.

**Destination Marketing Implications:** Understanding the dimensions and antecedents of tourist delight has important implications for destination marketers. Creating and promoting delightful experiences can differentiate a destination, attract more visitors, and enhance its competitive advantage. Marketers can focus on aspects such as personalized and tailored services, surprise elements, unique attractions, and emotional storytelling to evoke and deliver delightful experiences.

Consequently, tourist delight represents a higher level of satisfaction characterized by positive emotions, novelty, enjoyment, and engagement. It is influenced by factors such as destination attributes, service quality, personal motivations, and positive interactions. Tourist delight contributes to high levels of satisfaction, loyalty, and positive word-of-mouth. Understanding and creating delightful experiences are crucial for destination marketers in attracting and retaining tourists.

#### 1.5 Tourist Re-intentions

Tourist re-intentions refer to the likelihood of tourists revisiting a destination or engaging in repeat visits. Understanding the factors that influence tourist re-intentions is of great importance for destination managers and marketers in fostering destination loyalty and encouraging repeat visitation. Below are some insights into the key factors, models, and outcomes related to tourist re-intentions.

**Factors Influencing Tourist Re-intentions:** Various factors contribute to tourists' intentions to revisit a destination. Research has identified several key factors, including satisfaction, destination image, perceived value, destination loyalty, destination attributes, service quality, word-of-mouth, and personal motivations (Chi and Qu,

2008; Yoon and Uysal, 2005). Positive experiences, favorable destination perceptions, and perceived benefits in terms of value and quality are important drivers of re-intentions.

**Destination Loyalty and Re-intentions:** Destination loyalty plays a crucial role in predicting re-intentions. Tourists who exhibit a strong sense of loyalty towards a destination are more likely to revisit. Loyalty can be fostered through positive experiences, emotional connections, satisfaction, trust, and favorable destination image (Chi and Qu, 2008; Yoon and Uysal, 2005). Repeat visitation is often driven by a desire to maintain or strengthen the emotional bond and relationship with the destination.

**Destination Image and Re-intentions:** Destination image, representing tourists' perceptions and beliefs about a destination, has a significant influence on re-intentions. A positive destination image, including perceptions of safety, attractiveness, authenticity, cultural richness, and unique experiences, enhances the likelihood of tourists' re-intentions (Gallarza et al., 2002; Kim and Richardson, 2003). Effective destination branding and marketing efforts are essential in shaping a positive destination image that encourages repeat visitation.

**Satisfaction and Re-intentions:** Tourist satisfaction is a key determinant of re-intentions. Satisfied tourists are more likely to consider revisiting a destination due to the fulfillment of their expectations and positive experiences (Chi and Qu, 2008). Positive word-of-mouth and recommendations from satisfied tourists can also influence the re-intentions of others. Destination managers should prioritize delivering high-quality services and memorable experiences to ensure tourist satisfaction and increase re-intentions.

**Destination Marketing Implications:** Understanding the factors influencing tourist re-intentions has important implications for destination marketing strategies. Destination marketers should focus on enhancing destination image, building strong emotional connections, fostering satisfaction, and promoting positive word-of-mouth. Offering unique and differentiated experiences, personalized services, and incentives for repeat visitation can also contribute to increasing tourist re-intentions.

In summary, tourist re-intentions are influenced by factors such as satisfaction, destination image, perceived value, loyalty, and personal motivations. Positive destination perceptions, emotional connections, and the fulfillment of tourists' expectations contribute to re-intentions. Understanding these factors and their impact on re-intentions is crucial for destination managers and marketers in fostering destination loyalty and encouraging repeat visitation.

## **2 HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT**

### **2.1 Tourism Application and Tourist Experience**

Tourism applications, particularly mobile applications, have become increasingly popular and influential in shaping tourist experiences. These applications provide tourists with access to various information and services, enhancing their overall travel experience and facilitating interaction with the destination.

Many studies have examined the impact of tourism applications on different aspects of the tourist experience. For example, Xiang, Du, Ma, and Fan (2017) investigated the effects of mobile applications on tourists' destination image and satisfaction. They found that applications offering comprehensive destination information, interactive features, and personalized recommendations positively influenced tourists' perception of the destination and their overall satisfaction.

Furthermore, tourism applications have been shown to enhance tourists' engagement and involvement in the travel experience. Neuhofer et al. (2015) explored the role of mobile applications in facilitating co-creation and co-experience among tourists. They argued that applications that allow tourists to share their experiences, recommendations, and photos in real-time contribute to a sense of community and active participation, ultimately enhancing the overall tourist experience.

Additionally, some studies have focused on the role of augmented reality (AR) applications in transforming the tourist experience. AR applications overlay digital information and virtual objects onto the real-world environment, providing tourists with interactive and immersive experiences. For instance, Li et al. (2020) investigated the effects of AR-based applications on tourists' engagement and satisfaction. They found that AR applications that offer interactive storytelling, virtual tours, and gamification elements significantly enhanced tourists' engagement and satisfaction levels.

Moreover, the personalization of tourism applications has gained attention in the literature. Law and Jogaratnam (2005) examined the impact of personalized information on tourists' decision-making and satisfaction. They found that applications that offer customized recommendations based on tourists' preferences and previous interactions positively influenced their decision-making process and satisfaction levels.

In summary, tourism applications, particularly mobile applications and augmented reality technologies, play a crucial role in shaping and enhancing the tourist experience. These applications provide access to comprehensive destination information, facilitate engagement and co-creation, offer personalized recommendations, and create immersive and interactive experiences. Future research in this area can further explore the specific features and design elements of tourism applications that contribute to positive tourist experiences and their impact on destination marketing and tourist behavior.

**H<sub>1</sub>:** The use of tourism applications is positively related to tourist experience.

## 2.2 Tourist Experience and Tourist Satisfaction

These are two important concepts in the field of tourism and hospitality. The tourist experience refers to the holistic encounter and interaction between tourists and the destination, encompassing various aspects such as activities, attractions, services, and emotions. Tourist satisfaction, on the other hand, reflects the level of fulfillment and contentment that tourists derive from their travel experiences.

Numerous studies have examined the relationship between tourist experience and tourist satisfaction. For example, Oh, Uysal, and Weaver (2001) investigated the influence of various destination attributes on tourist satisfaction. They found that factors such as natural attractions, cultural resources, and hospitality services significantly contributed to tourists' overall satisfaction levels.

Furthermore, the role of emotions in shaping the tourist experience and satisfaction has been explored. Kim et al. (2018) examined the impact of emotional experiences on tourists' satisfaction and loyalty. They found that positive emotional experiences, such as joy and excitement, significantly influenced tourists' overall satisfaction and their intention to revisit or recommend the destination.

Moreover, the interaction between tourists' expectations and their actual experiences has been a focus of research. Beerli, Díaz, and Martín (2004) investigated the influence of disconfirmation (the gap between expectations and experiences) on tourist satisfaction. They found that when tourists' actual experiences exceeded their initial expectations, their satisfaction levels increased.

In addition, the role of service quality in shaping tourist satisfaction and experience has been extensively studied. Cronin and Taylor (1992) proposed the SERVQUAL model, which identifies five dimensions of service quality: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. Numerous studies have used this model to assess the impact of service quality on tourist satisfaction, highlighting the importance of meeting or exceeding tourists' expectations in delivering a satisfactory experience.

Overall, research suggests that the tourist experience is a key determinant of tourist satisfaction. Factors such as destination attributes, emotional experiences, disconfirmation, and service quality play vital roles in shaping tourists' satisfaction levels. Future research in this area can further explore the specific dimensions and components of the tourist experience that contribute to satisfaction, as well as the potential moderating factors that influence this relationship.

**H<sub>2</sub>:** Tourist experience is positively related to tourist satisfaction.

## 2.3 Tourist Satisfaction and Tourist Delight

Tourist satisfaction and tourist delight are two important constructs in the field of tourism and hospitality, both focusing on tourists' experiences and perceptions. While tourist satisfaction refers to the level of contentment or fulfillment that tourists derive from their travel experiences, tourist delight represents a state of extreme satisfaction and joy that exceeds tourists' expectations.

Several studies have explored the relationship between tourist satisfaction and delight. For instance, Chen and Tsai (2007) conducted a study examining the impact of service quality on tourist satisfaction and delight. They



found that higher levels of service quality positively influenced both tourist satisfaction and delight, indicating that the provision of excellent service contributes to heightened levels of satisfaction and delight among tourists.

Moreover, some studies have investigated the antecedents of tourist satisfaction and delight. For example, Chen and Tsai (2008) examined the role of destination image in influencing tourist satisfaction and delight. They found that a positive destination image, characterized by attributes such as natural beauty, cultural richness, and safety, significantly influenced both tourist satisfaction and tourist delight.

Additionally, the role of emotional experiences in shaping tourist satisfaction and delight has been explored. Kim, Kim, and Kim (2012) conducted a study to examine the impact of positive emotions on satisfaction of tourist and delight. They found that positive emotional experiences, such as joy, excitement, and surprise, significantly contributed to higher levels of both tourist satisfaction and delight.

Additionally, the concept of tourist delight has been linked to loyalty and positive word-of-mouth. Kim, Kim, and Kim (2013) investigated the relationship between tourist delight and loyalty intentions. They found that tourist delight had a significant positive effect on tourists' intention to revisit the destination and recommend it to others, highlighting the role of delight in fostering loyalty and positive advocacy.

In summary, tourist satisfaction and delight are interconnected constructs in the tourism and hospitality field. Factors such as service quality, destination image, emotional experiences, and loyalty intentions have been found to significantly influence both tourist satisfaction and tourist delight. Future research in this area can further explore the underlying mechanisms and strategies that tourism stakeholders can employ to enhance tourist satisfaction, exceed expectations, and create delightful experiences.

**H<sub>3</sub>:** Tourist satisfaction is positively related to tourist delight.

## 2.4 Tourist Satisfaction and Tourist Re-consideration

Tourist satisfaction is a key concept in the field of tourism and hospitality, representing the level of contentment or fulfillment that tourists derive from their travel experiences. Tourist re-consideration refers to the intention of tourists to revisit a destination or consider it for future trips. Understanding the factors that influence tourist satisfaction and its relationship with re-consideration is important and significant for travel-site managers and marketers.

Several studies have examined the relationship between tourist satisfaction and re-consideration. Kim, Kim, and Kim (2015) found a strong positive relationship between tourist satisfaction and re-consideration, suggesting that higher levels of satisfaction are likely to lead to a higher likelihood of tourists considering revisiting the destination in the future.

Moreover, destination image in order to shape tourist satisfaction and re-consideration has been explored. Bigne, Sanchez, and Sanchez (2001) investigated the influence of destination image on tourist satisfaction and behavioral intentions. They found that a positive destination image significantly influenced both tourist satisfaction and the likelihood of re-consideration, indicating that a favorable image of the destination can enhance the potential for tourists to consider revisiting.

Additionally, the role of service quality in influencing tourist satisfaction and re-consideration has been studied. Kozak and Rimmington (2000) discovered that higher the levels of service quality positively influenced both tourist satisfaction and re-consideration intentions, highlighting the importance of delivering quality services to enhance satisfaction and foster future visitation.

Furthermore, the concept of perceived value has been linked to both tourist satisfaction and re-consideration. Lee, Lee, and Lee (2011) found that perceived value positively influenced both tourist satisfaction and re-consideration intentions, suggesting that tourists who perceive a higher value in their experiences are more likely to consider revisiting the destination.

In summary, tourist satisfaction plays a crucial role in influencing tourist re-consideration intentions. Factors such as destination image, service quality, and perceived value have been found to significantly influence both tourist satisfaction and the likelihood of re-consideration. Understanding these relationships can help destination managers and marketers in designing strategies to enhance tourist satisfaction and encourage repeat visitation.

**H4:** Tourist satisfaction is positively related to tourist re-consideration.

## 2.5 Tourist Delight and Tourist Re-intentions

Tourist delight signifies a profound sense of joy, excitement, or fulfillment that surpasses tourists' initial expectations. It encapsulates an exceptionally positive and memorable experience that goes well beyond simple satisfaction. In contrast, tourist re-intentions refer to tourists' plans or willingness to return to a destination or engage in future visits. Understanding the link between tourist delight and re-intentions is crucial for destination managers and marketers aiming to promote repeat tourism.

Numerous studies have explored this connection. For instance, Chi and Qu (2008) identified a strong positive correlation between tourist delight and re-intentions, indicating that the more delighted tourists are, the more likely they are to consider revisiting the destination.

Moreover, the role of destination image in shaping tourist delight and re-intentions has been explored. Lee et al. (2005) found that a positive destination image significantly increased both tourist delight and re-intentions.

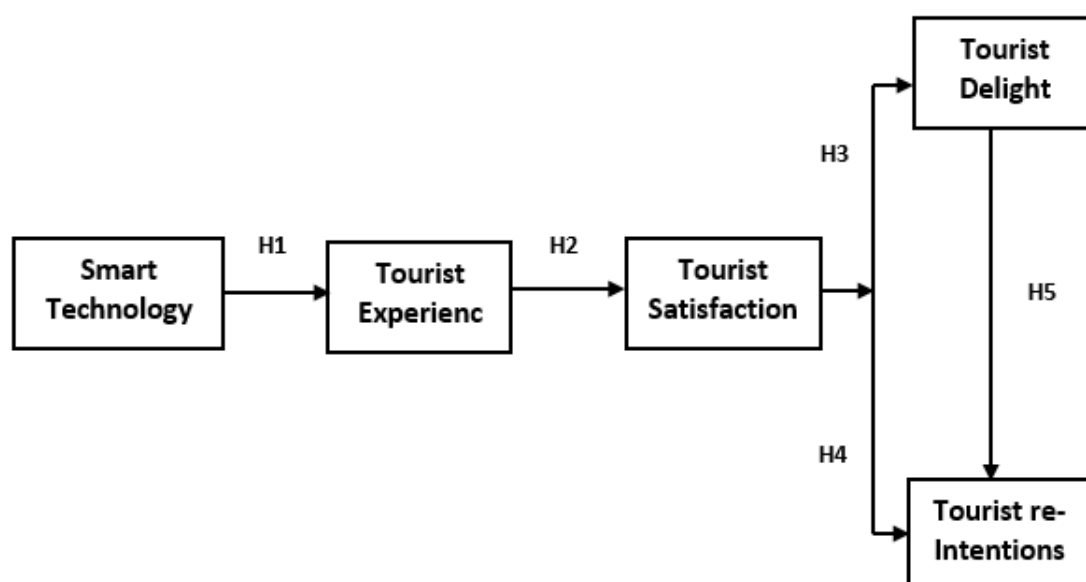
Additionally, the concept of service quality has been linked to both tourist delight and re-intentions. Lai et al. (2017) found that higher levels of service quality positively influenced both tourist delight and re-intentions, highlighting the importance of delivering quality services to create delightful experiences and foster repeat visitation.

Furthermore, the role of emotional experiences in shaping tourist delight and re-intentions has been studied. Kim, Kim, and Kim (2018) found that positive emotional experiences, such as joy, excitement, and surprise significantly contributed to higher levels of both tourist delight and re-intentions.

In summary, tourist delight plays a crucial role in influencing tourist re-intentions. Factors such as destination image, service quality, and emotional experiences have been found to significantly influence both tourist delight and the intention to revisit. Understanding these relationships can help destination managers and marketers in designing strategies to create delightful experiences and encourage repeat visitation.

**H5:** Tourist delight is positively related to tourist re-intentions.

**Figure 1 - Theoretical Framework**



## 3 METHODOLOGY

A questionnaire was utilized in order to test the five study hypotheses. Questions were adopted from previous studies, and pertained to the aforementioned five constructs examined in the study: Smart Technology Applications, Tourist Experience, Tourist Satisfaction, Tourist Delight, and Tourist Re-Intentions. Five-point

Likert response scales were employed, with possible responses ranging from “Strongly Disagree” (1) to “Strongly Agree” (5). Six luxury hotels in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, were randomly chosen as data collection sites from among those with high online rankings and positive reviews. One hundred questionnaires were distributed at each hotel; thus 600 questionnaires were distributed altogether. There were 482 valid responses.

## 4 DATA ANALYSIS

### 4.1 Measurements

In order to justify the response, rate the following study followed the previous recommendations of Hair et al. (2010) and found the response rate of the contemporary as correct number of responses. 5-point Likert-scale were used i.e. ranging from (1) =Strongly Disagree and (5) = Strongly Agree.

### 4.2 Descriptive Analysis

These analyses also consider respondents’ nationality, occupation, age group, monthly income, marital status, education level, and gender.. Of the 482 respondents who provided valid responses, 277 were male and 205 were female; 123 respondents were Saudis and 359 were from other countries. The majority of the respondents (288) were between 31-40 years old, and the majority of respondents (322) were married as well; most of the respondents were also college graduates. A plurality of respondents was business owners, and the majority of the remainder was full-time employees. See Table 1 for more details.

**Table 1 - Respondents Demographics**

| Demographics          | Options (if any)         | Frequency Total = 482 | Percentage % |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| <b>Gender</b>         | Male                     | 277                   | 57.46        |
|                       | Female                   | 205                   | 42.53        |
|                       |                          | N=482                 | 100%         |
| <b>Nationality</b>    | Saudi Nationals          | 123                   | 25.51        |
|                       | Non- Saudi Nationals     | 359                   | 74.48        |
|                       |                          | N=482                 | 100%         |
| <b>Age</b>            | Up to 20 Years           | 14                    | 02.90        |
|                       | 21-30                    | 132                   | 27.38        |
|                       | 31-40                    | 288                   | 59.75        |
|                       | 41-50                    | 22                    | 04.56        |
|                       | 50 & above               | 26                    | 05.39        |
|                       |                          | N=482                 | 100%         |
| <b>Marital Status</b> | Married                  | 322                   | 66.80        |
|                       | Non-Married              | 160                   | 33.19        |
|                       |                          | N=482                 | 100%         |
| <b>Education</b>      | Diploma/Certificate/etc. | 36                    | 07.46        |
|                       | Undergraduate            | 113                   | 23.44        |
|                       | Graduate                 | 286                   | 59.33        |

|                        |                    |       |       |
|------------------------|--------------------|-------|-------|
|                        | PhD                | 16    | 03.31 |
|                        | None of them       | 31    | 06.43 |
|                        |                    | N=482 | 100%  |
| <b>Occupation/work</b> | Full-time Employee | 161   | 33.40 |
|                        | Part-Time Employee | 28    | 05.80 |
|                        | Business           | 221   | 45.85 |
|                        | Retired            | 61    | 12.65 |
|                        | Un-employed        | 11    | 02.28 |
|                        |                    | N=482 | 100%  |
| <b>Monthly Income</b>  | Less than 1000 SR  | 8     | 01.65 |
|                        | 1001-5000          | 20    | 04.14 |
|                        | 5001-10000         | 27    | 05.60 |
|                        | 10001-15000        | 72    | 14.93 |
|                        | 15001-20000        | 186   | 38.58 |
|                        | 20001 & Above      | 169   | 35.06 |
|                        |                    | N=482 | 100%  |

### 4.3 Measurement Validity and Reliability Analysis

Cronbach's alpha is widely recognized as the most commonly used method for assessing measurement reliability in social science research. Accordingly, this study employed Cronbach's alpha to evaluate the reliability of the items used for each construct (Cronbach, 1951). Also referred to as coefficient alpha, it is a statistical tool used to determine the internal consistency reliability of a scale or questionnaire. It is a widely used method for evaluating the extent to which the items in a scale are measuring the same underlying construct or attribute. Cronbach's alpha is based on the average inter-item correlation, which measures the degree of relationship between different items in a scale. It takes into account the number of items in the scale, the variability of responses, and the average inter-item correlation to estimate the reliability of the scale.

More elaborately, the value of Cronbach's alpha ranges from 0 to 1. A higher alpha value indicates greater internal consistency or reliability of the scale. Typically, a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.70 or higher is considered acceptable for most research purposes. All the values are greater than .70. Results are shown below in Table 2.

**Table 2 - Cronbach's Alpha values**

| <b>Constructs</b>                   | <b>Value of Cronbach Alpha</b> |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Smart Technology Applications (STA) | 0.901                          |
| Tourist Experience (TE)             | 0.989                          |
| Tourist Satisfaction (TS)           | 0.981                          |
| Tourist Delight (TD)                | 0.830                          |
| Tourist Re-Intentions (TR-I)        | 0.899                          |

#### 4.4 Mean Value and Standard Deviation

The mean value for (STA) was calculated as 4.892, with a standard deviation of 0.813, indicating a moderate level relative to the mean. Likewise, the mean value for (TE) was found to be 6.182, with a standard deviation of 0.937, also reflecting a moderate level. For (TS), the mean was recorded as 2.327, and the standard deviation was 0.910, again falling within the moderate range. Similarly, (TD) had a mean value of 4.176 and a standard deviation of 0.892, which is also considered moderate. Lastly, the mean value for (TR-I) was calculated as 4.501, with a standard deviation of 0.679, indicating a moderate level as well. All values are presented in the table below.

**Table 3 - Means & Standard Deviation**

| Constructs                          | Mean  | St. Deviation | Mean Level |
|-------------------------------------|-------|---------------|------------|
| Smart Technology Applications (STA) | 4.892 | 0.813         | Middle     |
| Tourist Experience (TE)             | 6.182 | 0.937         | Middle     |
| Tourist Satisfaction (TS)           | 2.327 | 0.910         | Middle     |
| Tourist Delight (TD)                | 4.176 | 0.892         | Middle     |
| Tourist Re-Intentions (TR-I)        | 4.501 | 0.679         | Middle     |

#### 4.5 Tests of Hypotheses

To test the links among the constructs, Pearson correlation coefficients were computed. Outcomes of the conducted tests are shown in Table 4. All correlations were significant at  $p < .01$  (2 tailed).

**Table 4 - Correlation of Variables**

|                                       |                        | <b>Smart<br/>Technology<br/>Apps.</b> | <b>Tourist<br/>Experience</b> | <b>Tourist<br/>Satisfaction</b> | <b>Tourist<br/>Delight</b> | <b>Tourist Re-<br/>Intentions</b> |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <b>Smart<br/>Technology<br/>Apps.</b> | Pearson<br>Correlation | .628**                                | .612**                        | .504**                          | .552**                     | .322**                            |
|                                       | Sig. (2-tailed)        |                                       | .01                           | .000                            | .000                       | .000                              |
|                                       | N =                    | 482                                   | 482                           | 482                             | 482                        | 482                               |
| <b>Tourist<br/>Experience</b>         | Pearson<br>Correlation | .759**                                | .535**                        | .511**                          | .658**                     | .498**                            |
|                                       | Sig. (2-tailed)        | .000                                  |                               | .000                            | .000                       | .000                              |
|                                       | N =                    | 482                                   | 482                           | 482                             | 482                        | 482                               |
| <b>Tourist<br/>Satisfaction</b>       | Pearson<br>Correlation | .671**                                | .588**                        | .581**                          | .689**                     | .773**                            |
|                                       | Sig. (2-tailed)        | .000                                  | .000                          |                                 | .000                       | .000                              |
|                                       | N =                    | 482                                   | 482                           | 482                             | 482                        | 482                               |
| <b>Tourist<br/>Delight</b>            | Pearson<br>Correlation | .835**                                | .313**                        | .478**                          | .717**                     | .531**                            |
|                                       | Sig. (2-tailed)        | .000                                  | .000                          | .000                            |                            | .000                              |
|                                       | N =                    | 482                                   | 482                           | 482                             | 482                        | 482                               |
| <b>Tourist Re-<br/>Intentions</b>     | Pearson<br>Correlation | .878**                                | .591**                        | .515**                          | .943**                     | .811**                            |
|                                       | Sig. (2-tailed)        | .000                                  | .000                          | .000                            | .000                       |                                   |
|                                       | N =                    | 482                                   | 482                           | 482                             | 482                        | 482                               |

\*\*Correlations are significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed)

## 4.6 Hypotheses Results

The results of the hypothesis testing are presented in Table 5. The first hypothesis (H1), which examines the relationship between (STA) and (TE), was found to be significant at the 0.000 level, with a t-value of 9.322, indicating a positive association. Similarly, H2, which tests the link between (TE) and (TS), was also significant at 0.000 with a t-value of 9.554, confirming a positive relationship.

Hypothesis H3, assessing the relationship between (TS) and (TD), showed significance at the 0.000 level, with a t-value of 8.124, indicating a positive connection. Additionally, H4, which explores the relationship between (TS) and (TR-I), was significant at 0.000 with a t-value of 9.123, also suggesting a positive link. Finally, H5, examining the connection between (TD) and (TR-I), was found to be significant at 0.000 with a t-value of 8.182, confirming a positive relationship between the constructs.

**Table 5 - Hypotheses Results**

|                | <b>Constructs</b>                           | <b>t-value</b> | <b>Significant</b> | <b>Result</b> |
|----------------|---|----------------|--------------------|---------------|
| H <sub>1</sub> | Smart technology app. — Tourist Experience  | 9.322          | 0.000              | Positive      |
| H <sub>2</sub> | Tourist Experience — Tourist Satisfaction   | 9.554          | 0.000              | Positive      |
| H <sub>3</sub> | Tourist Satisfaction — Tourist Delight      | 8.124          | 0.000              | Positive      |
| H <sub>4</sub> | Tourist Satisfaction — Tourist Re-intention | 9.123          | 0.000              | Positive      |
| H <sub>5</sub> | Tourist Delight — Tourist Re-intention      | 8.182          | 0.000              | Positive      |

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The use of smart technology has become increasingly prevalent in the tourism industry, offering new opportunities to enhance tourist experiences and improve destination management. The aim of this study is to investigate the relationship between smart technology, tourist delight, and tourist re-intentions. All of the hypothesized relationships between these variables were found to be significant. Specifically, the use of smart technology apps was positively correlated with having a positive tourist experience (H<sub>1</sub>), tourist experience was positively correlated with tourist satisfaction (H<sub>2</sub>), tourist satisfaction was positively related to tourist delight (H<sub>3</sub>) and to tourist intentions to revisit the destination (Riyadh) (H<sub>4</sub>), and tourist delight was also positively related to tourist intentions to revisit the destination (H<sub>5</sub>).

Thus, the study results suggest new insights for tourists and also for the tourism industry owners. Tourist perspectives are such as augmented reality and mobile guides, in delivering personalized and interactive experiences to tourists. Tourist delight perspectives since it is a crucial factor that influences satisfaction and re-intentions the findings suggested that smart technology adoption positively impacted tourist delight and, in turn, increased satisfaction levels. Consequently, tourist re-intentions, including revisit intentions and word-of-mouth recommendations, are essential for destination sustainability and growth. Consequently, the study results also indicated that tourists who had positive experiences with smart technology were more likely to express intentions to revisit a destination.

Thus, the findings of the present study show that the relationship between smart technology, satisfaction, delight and other had aspects have positive encounters with smart technologies and are more likely to engage in positive word-of-mouth communication.

### Study limitations

It is important to acknowledge and address potential limitations of the study. Firstly, the generalizability of research findings may be limited if the sample size is small or not representative of the target population. It is essential to ensure an adequate sample size and consider the diversity of tourists in terms of demographics, travel preferences, and technological proficiency. Secondly, studies relying on self-reported data, such as surveys or interviews, are susceptible to response bias. Tourists may provide socially desirable responses or inaccurately recall their experiences, potentially affecting the validity of the findings. Researchers should employ proper data collection techniques, minimize biases, and consider using objective measures wherever possible. Thirdly, establishing causality in the relationship between smart technology, tourist delight, and re-intentions was not possible given the design of the current study. It is difficult to determine whether smart technology directly leads to increased delight and re-intentions or if other factors mediate this relationship. Longitudinal studies or experimental designs could help address this limitation. Fourthly, the impact of smart technology on tourist delight and re-intentions may vary depending on the specific destination, tourism context, and cultural factors. It is essential to consider these contextual factors when interpreting research findings and to account for potential variations across different tourism settings. Fifthly, the effectiveness of smart technology in influencing tourist experiences and intentions may be influenced by the availability and quality of technological infrastructure in the destination. Disparities in technology access and proficiency among tourists could also impact the results. Researchers should

consider these factors and their potential influence on the study outcomes. Sixthly, the rapid advancements in technology can make research findings quickly outdated. The effectiveness and impact of specific smart technologies may change over time as new innovations emerge. Researchers should be mindful of the time sensitivity of their findings and consider conducting updated studies to capture the evolving nature of smart technology in the tourism industry.

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