

## THE IMPACT OF HEALTH FACTORS ON THE BRAND IMAGE OF TOURIST DESTINATIONS—PUTUO MOUNTAIN MEDITATION TOURISM BASED ON THE PERSPECTIVE OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS

### *O IMPACTO DOS FATORES DE SAÚDE NA IMAGEM DE MARCA DOS DESTINOS TURÍSTICOS—O TURISMO DE MEDITAÇÃO NA MONTANHA DE PUTUO A PARTIR DA PERSPECTIVA DA SAÚDE E DO BEM-ESTAR*

Article received on: 12/11/2025

Article accepted on: 3/10/2026

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The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest

#### **Abstract**

The demand for health tourism market has surged after the COVID-19 pandemic, but whether health factors will affect the brand image of tourist destinations is rare in this field. This paper takes Putuo Mountain meditation and health care tourists as the research object, and uses SPSS and AMOS systems to establish a structural model between health factors, tourism experience, comprehensive satisfaction and destination brand image to understand the brand image of health factors on the destination brand image degree of impact. The research results show that health factors significantly affect tourism experience and comprehensive satisfaction, which in turn affects the establishment of brand image of tourism destinations. This study contributes to the literature on health and wellness meditation tourism, and provides management reference for establishing a good image management of meditation health and wellness tourism destinations. Through structural model analysis, most of the studies showed significant correlations between parameters, and error term analysis also supported the accuracy of the results.

**Keywords:** Destination Brand Image. Putuo Mountain Meditation Tourism.

#### **Resumo**

*A demanda pelo mercado de turismo de saúde cresceu significativamente após a pandemia da COVID-19, mas ainda há poucos estudos neste campo que analisem se os fatores de saúde afetam a imagem de marca dos destinos turísticos. Este artigo toma como objeto de pesquisa os turistas que visitam a Montanha Putuo para meditação e cuidados de saúde e utiliza os sistemas SPSS e AMOS para estabelecer um modelo estrutural entre fatores de saúde, experiência turística, satisfação global e imagem de marca do destino, com o objetivo de compreender o grau de impacto dos fatores de saúde sobre a imagem de marca do destino. Os resultados da pesquisa mostram que os fatores de saúde afetam significativamente a experiência turística e a satisfação geral, o que, por sua vez, influencia a construção da imagem de marca dos destinos turísticos. Este estudo contribui para a literatura sobre turismo de meditação, saúde e bem-estar, e fornece referências de gestão para o estabelecimento de uma boa gestão de imagem dos destinos de turismo de meditação, saúde e bem-estar. Por meio da análise do modelo estrutural, a maioria dos estudos mostrou correlações significativas entre os parâmetros, e a análise do termo de erro também confirmou a precisão dos resultados.*

**Palavras-chave:** Imagem De Marca Do Destino. Turismo De Meditação Na Montanha Putuo.



## **1 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background**

Mount Putuo, located in the eastern sea area of the Zhoushan Archipelago, covers a total area of 11.82 square kilometers. As one of the four sacred Buddhist mountains in China, it is renowned as the bodhimanda of Guanyin (the Goddess of Mercy), a religious sanctuary, and a national key scenic spot, often referred to as the "Buddhist Paradise." The mountain is home to over 40 temples, with the most prominent being Puji Temple, Fayu Temple, and Huiji Temple. Its most iconic landmark is the South Sea Guanyin Buddha statue.

### **1.2 Research questions and objective**

1. The research questions for this study is: Will the impact of health factors in tourism on the experience of meditation tourists in Putuo Mountain lead to an improvement in their experience, thereby enhancing their sense of happiness.
2. Will health care factors affect the overall satisfaction of Putuo Mountain meditation tourists and will improve their overall satisfaction?
3. Whether health care factors will eventually have a significant impact on Putuoshan Tourism's brand image.

The main objectives of this study is: The impact of health factors on tourism experience, overall satisfaction, and thus on the establishment of destination image.

### **1.3 Significance of the study**

Meditation, originating from ancient East India, is a religious practice aimed at maintaining awareness and deep contemplation. In China, over 200 meditation camps integrate culture, wellness, and life aesthetics, offering self-reflection and mental soothing through traditional methods. Meditation tourism, a product of spiritual

tourism, has gained popularity, especially post-COVID-19, with temples becoming youth destinations. This study explores three aspects: the health value of meditation tourism, its social functions, and the concept of wellness in religious tourism. It examines meditation tourists' satisfaction and intentions, focusing on Putuo Mountain, a renowned Buddhist site. By analyzing tourists' behavioral paths, the study aims to uncover meditation tourism's healing and health values, addressing gaps in understanding young tourists' motivations and spiritual needs.

## **2 LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Health and wellness tourism and meditation**

Health tourism refers to the sum of various tourism activities that can achieve a natural harmony and excellent state in body, mind and spirit through various means such as nourishing the skin, nourishing the body, nourishing the mind, cultivating the nature, caring for the environment (2016, National Health and wellness tourism base). Healthy tourism refers to a way of traveling, including a range of travel experiences, including health products, appropriate infrastructure, and natural and wellness resources of the destination (Sheldon & Bushell, 2009). The evolution of tourists' health needs has also brought about the evolution and expansion of concepts, which has evolved from a narrow perspective based on physical health and happiness to the category of comprehensive health (Dini & Pencarell, 2021). This holistic concept and method have also been fully utilized and studied by tourism-related departments. Its research includes fields such as medical care (Wang et al., 2020), mental healing, natural environment (Li & Wen, 2024), physical fitness (He & Luo, 2020). It can be seen that "spiritual experience" is also considered an important part of health tourism (Buzinde, 2020). People seek spiritual experience through different meditation channels, such as "meditation" and "yoga".

Meditation is a method of practice derived from Buddhist Zen. It cultivates inner peace and awareness through concentration and meditation. The main purpose of meditation is to achieve liberation and awakening of the mind through introspection, transcending the bondage of thinking and desires (Mourtazina, 2020). Meditation is thought to help reduce stress, increase concentration and enhance inner peace and happiness. Health and wellness tourism integrates the two fields of health and tourism (Konu, 2015), which meets people's dual needs for health and tourism. As a kind of spiritual tourism, research has shown that it has the ability to improve mental illness and heal the body and mind. The effect of stress may become the corresponding treatment method. Therefore, it is becoming increasingly important to integrate health into meditation tourism, to use meditation as a way of physical and mental transformation, to change and promote positive changes in people's attitudes and values, and to meet people's needs for health and happiness.

## **2.2 Health factors and tourists experience**

Health factors not only affect tourists' physical condition, but also directly affect their psychological and emotional experiences, making these experiences more profound and memorable. Health needs drive tourists to choose health tourism, and this need to meet significantly improves the overall tourism experience through participation in health services and activities (Smith & Puczko, 2014). The overall satisfaction of tourists is significantly improved when health tourism destinations are able to effectively provide services and activities that meet health needs (Mak et al., 2018). This has been validated in several health tourism studies, especially in destinations that provide abundant health activities, where visitors' positive experiences have been significantly enhanced ( Han & Hyun, 2015 ). Escape from social stress is another key factor, and visitors gain psychological relaxation by staying away from stress in their daily lives, thereby enhancing their overall experience (Kim et al., 2017). “Relaxation” health activities such as meditation and hot spring therapy can improve the physiological and psychological state of tourists, further enhance their experience

satisfaction and enhance the overall experience of tourists (Han et al., 2019). These studies provide a theoretical basis for further exploring the role of health factors in health tourism. Based on the above analysis, we propose hypothetical relationships.

H1: There is a significant positive correlation between health factors and the overall experience of visitors.

### **2.3 Health factors and tourist satisfaction**

Health factors are widely regarded as the core attraction in wellness tourism. There is a significant positive correlation between high-quality health experiences and tourist satisfaction, and these factors are closely related to overall satisfaction (Kim et al., 2012). Tourists who engage in health-related experiences typically report higher satisfaction with the destination, particularly regarding health-related services and activities (Voigt & Pforr, 2014). Post-pandemic, tourists are increasingly inclined to choose destinations that offer comprehensive health experiences (Wang & Lin, 2021). Therefore, health needs are a key driver behind tourists' choice of wellness tourism, and tourists' satisfaction significantly increases once their health needs are met during their visit (Chen & Petrick, 2013). Based on the above analysis, the following hypothesis can be formulated:

H2: There is a significant positive correlation between health factors (health needs, social escape, and relaxation) and tourist satisfaction.

### **2.4 Tourist experience, satisfaction, and destination brand image development**

Tourist experience significantly influences visitor satisfaction, primarily through the direct impact of natural environments. Research indicates that scenic natural landscapes and pleasant climatic conditions substantially enhance tourist satisfaction. When immersed in such environments, tourists' overall satisfaction with their travel experience significantly improves (Prayag & Ryan, 2012). Simultaneously,

the cultural environment plays a crucial role in boosting satisfaction, particularly through local culture, historical heritage, and community atmosphere. Unique cultural experiences can increase tourists' emotional identification, thereby enhancing their satisfaction (Yuksel *et al.*, 2010). Diverse activity programs and high-quality service value also significantly impact tourist satisfaction. Specifically, varied activities provide deeper experiences, while superior services can exceed expectations, leading to greater overall satisfaction (Ryu *et al.*, 2008).

Tourist experience is also a critical factor in shaping destination brand image. The natural environment not only directly affects visitor satisfaction but also lays the foundation for brand image development by enhancing tourists' positive perceptions of the destination (Prayag & Ryan, 2012). The appeal of cultural environments manifests in their ability to strengthen emotional connections, which can translate into brand identification (Zhou *et al.*, 2013). The diversity and innovation of activity programs contribute to brand image formation by enhancing visitor engagement and overall satisfaction, thereby reinforcing brand loyalty (Bigné *et al.*, 2001). Service value, as a crucial component of the experience, not only boosts tourist satisfaction but also strengthens brand trust, playing an active role in brand image development.

Based on the above analysis, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H3: There is a significant positive correlation between tourist experience and visitor satisfaction.

H4: There is a significant positive correlation between tourist experience (natural environment, cultural environment, activity programs, and service value) and destination brand image development.

## **2.5 The relationship between tourist satisfaction and destination brand image development**

Tourist satisfaction plays a pivotal role in the establishment of destination brand image. Empirical studies demonstrate that visitor satisfaction directly influences their perception of destination brand image. When tourists' experiences meet or exceed

expectations, they are more likely to develop positive brand image perceptions, exhibit higher intention to recommend the destination, and demonstrate greater willingness for repeat visits, thereby enhancing the destination's brand image (Lee *et al.*, 2014). Furthermore, a positive correlation exists between tourist satisfaction and brand image evaluation, where higher satisfaction levels correspond to more favorable assessments of the destination's overall brand image. Satisfaction not only influences tourists' emotional responses but also reinforces brand image through enhanced destination loyalty (Prayag, 2009).

The long-term impact of tourist satisfaction on brand image has gained substantial recognition in academic research. Multiple studies confirm that positive tourist experiences can be effectively transformed into brand loyalty, which contributes to the maintenance and enhancement of destination brand image. This established relationship underscores the critical role of tourist satisfaction in the brand image development process (González, Comesaña, & Brea, 2007).

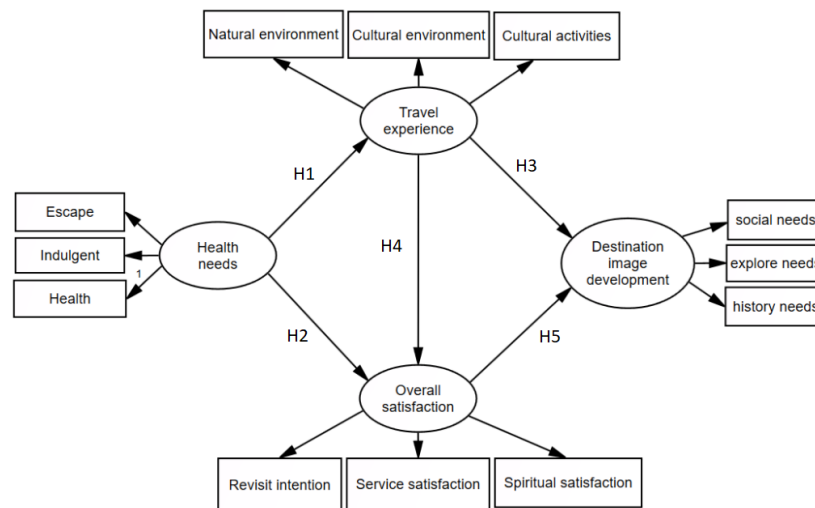
Based on the theoretical framework and empirical evidence presented, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H5: There is a significant positive correlation between tourist satisfaction and destination brand image development.

## **2.6 Research framework**

The conceptual framework features one independent variable: health factors. The two mediating variables are travel experience and tourist satisfaction, which are used to examine their relationships with the destination brand image. Each variable is measured through items that capture multiple dimensions of the respective concepts. The framework is illustrated as follows.

This structured approach allows for a comprehensive analysis of how health factors influence destination brand image through the mediating roles of travel experience and tourist satisfaction, providing a clear pathway for understanding the underlying mechanisms in wellness tourism.

**Figure 1***Conceptual framework***3 METHODS****3.1 Research Instrument**

The proposed model in this study (Figure 1) was measured using scales adapted from previous research. The questionnaire consisted of two parts: basic demographic information and multi-item scales. The measurement of health factors was adapted from Smith and Puczko (2009), comprising 9 items across three dimensions (health needs, escape from society, and relaxation). Tourist experience was measured using a scale adapted from Su and Swanson (2019) and Kim (2014), consisting of 12 items across three dimensions (natural environment, cultural activities, and humanistic activities), with all items rated on a 5-point Likert scale. Tourist satisfaction was measured using a scale adapted from Lee (2015), including 9 items across three dimensions (revisit intention, service value, and exceeding expectations). Finally, destination brand image development was measured using a scale adapted from Chen and Rahman (2018), with three dimensions (social interaction, curiosity, and historical significance).

### 3.2 Research sample

Due to constraints in time and financial resources, a convenience sampling method was employed to collect quantitative data. In 2023, Mount Putuo received 12.08 million visitors, primarily from domestic tourist markets in the Yangtze River Delta and Pearl River Delta regions, which have a combined population of approximately 315 million, indicating significant market potential. Based on the 2023 visitor statistics, the total number of tourists to Mount Putuo was estimated at 12 million.

Assuming an annual tourist volume of 12 million, with 60% being meditation tourists, the sample size was determined at a 95% confidence level with a  $\pm 5\%$  margin of error using the following formula:

$$n = N \times n_0 / (N + n_0 - 1)$$
$$n = 7200000 \times 369.664 / (7200000 + 369.664 - 1) \approx 369 \quad (1)$$

Thus, using a simple random sampling method, a sample size of approximately 369 meditation tourists was required to study Mount Putuo at a 95% confidence level with a  $\pm 5\%$  margin of error.

The survey was reviewed by a panel of five experts to ensure its validity, and minor revisions were made based on their feedback. Data collection was conducted over 27 weeks, from June 1 to December 30, 2024, at key locations on Mount Putuo Island, including the three major temples, the South Sea Guanyin Statue Square, ferry terminals, and departure plazas. By the end of the data collection period, 427 responses were received, of which 27 were discarded due to significant missing data. The remaining 400 valid responses met the minimum sample size requirement and were used for further analysis.

### 3.3 Data analysis

This study employed two primary analytical tools. Descriptive statistics and preliminary analyses were conducted using SPSS to assess validity and reliability.

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was then performed using AMOS, a method validated in numerous tourism studies and deemed suitable for analyzing complex model relationships and hypotheses, making it appropriate for this research.

## 4 RESULTS

### 4.1 Demographic profile of surveyed tourists

**Table 1**

*Descriptive statistics of meditation and wellness tourists in Putuo*

Category	Subcategory	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Valid (%)	Percentage
Gender	Male	167	41.8	41.8	
	Female	233	58.2	58.2	
Age Group	Under 18	7	1.8	1.8	
	18-30	77	19.3	19.3	
	31-40	94	23.5	23.5	
	41-50	150	37.5	37.5	
	51-60	59	14.8	14.8	
	Over 60	13	3.3	3.3	
	Marital Status	Single	174	43.5	43.5
Married		226	56.5	56.5	
Income Level	<5,000 RMB	190	47.5	47.5	
	5,000-10,000 RMB	136	34.0	34.0	
	10,000-30,000 RMB	51	12.8	12.8	
	>30,000 RMB	23	5.8	5.8	
Occupation	Enterprise	136	34.0	34.0	
	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing	61	15.2	15.2	
	Retired	46	11.5	11.5	
	Administrative/Institutional	75	18.8	18.8	
	Student	30	7.5	7.5	
	Other	52	13.0	13.0	

From a statistical perspective, the gender distribution reveals that females constitute 58.2% of the sample, while males account for 41.8%. The age distribution indicates that individuals aged 31-50 represent the largest proportion at 51%, whereas those under 18 and over 60 constitute smaller percentages, suggesting that the sample is predominantly composed of middle-aged and younger adults. In terms of marital status, married individuals make up 56.5% of the sample, slightly higher than the 43.5%

of single individuals. Regarding income levels, 82.5% of respondents report a monthly income of 10,000 RMB or below, while only 5.8% earn more than 30,000 RMB monthly, indicating that the majority of the sample falls within the low to middle-income range. In the occupational distribution, enterprise employees (including state-owned, private, and self-employed) represent the largest group at 34.0%, followed by administrative and institutional personnel at 18.8%. This reflects a relatively diverse occupational composition within the sample.

#### **4.2 Pearson correlation coefficient analysis**

Prior to conducting hypothesis testing, this study employed the Pearson correlation coefficient to assess the linear relationships between the variables.

**Table 2***Pearson coefficient test of questionnaire*

	Escape	Health	Transcendence	Indulgence	Curiosity	Socialization	Natural Environment	Activity Program	Cultural Activities	Service Value	Historical Heritage	Revisit Intention
<b>Escape</b>	1											
<b>Health</b>	.683**	1										
<b>Transcendence</b>	.667**	.924**	1									
<b>Indulgence</b>	.604**	.585**	.606**	1								
<b>Curiosity</b>	.653**	.785**	.811**	.692**	1							
<b>Socialization</b>	.672**	.845**	.862**	.660**	.892**	1						
<b>Natural Environment</b>	.603**	.812**	.831**	.569**	.821**	.875**	1					
<b>Activity Program</b>	.613**	.852**	.863**	.605**	.839**	.900**	.873**	1				
<b>Cultural Activities</b>	.634**	.823**	.852**	.611**	.786**	.867**	.840**	.853**	1			
<b>Service Value</b>	.607**	.779**	.817**	.602**	.807**	.843**	.834**	.848**	.847**	1		
<b>Historical Heritage</b>	.566**	.774**	.796**	.481**	.717**	.747**	.798**	.776**	.781**	.849**	1	
<b>Revisit Intention</b>	.568**	.794**	.817**	.543**	.776**	.816**	.830**	.860**	.787**	.888**	.834**	1

This paper employs Pearson correlation coefficients to examine the linear relationships among various variables. The analysis reveals strong positive correlations (with most correlation coefficients  $r > 0.8$  (\*\* $p < 0.01$ )), between health, transcendence, social interaction, natural environment, activity programs, serene atmosphere, cultural activities, service value, historical significance, information promotion, overall satisfaction, and revisit intention. Notably, the correlation between transcendence and health is  $r = 0.924$ , indicating that the sense of self-transcendence in wellness retreats significantly influences visitors' perception of health. The correlation between service value and revisit intention is  $r = 0.888$ , suggesting that service value strongly and positively affects revisit intention. Additionally, the correlation between activity programs and social interaction is  $r = 0.900$ , demonstrating that activity programs significantly enhance visitors' social value. The correlation between natural environment and activity programs is  $r = 0.873$ , further underscoring the critical role of the natural environment in shaping visitor experiences.

### 4.3 Cloning bach alpha test

**Table 3**

*Variable Cronbach's coefficient*

variable	Escape	Health	Transcendence	Indulgence	Curiosity	Socialization
Cronbachs Alpha ( $\alpha$ )	0.696	0.979	0.976	0.691	0.913	0.928
variable	Activity Program	Cultural Activities	Service Value	Historical Heritage	Natural Environment	Revisit Intention
Cronbachs Alpha ( $\alpha$ )	0.949	0.959	0.963	0.931	0.978	0.985

The Cronbach's Alpha values for the 12 dimensions are exceptionally high, with 10 dimensions exceeding 0.9 ( $\alpha \geq 0.9$ ), indicating excellent internal consistency and high reliability. These dimensions demonstrate strong stability and consistency in measuring the related constructs. In particular, the dimensions of Health ( $\alpha = .979$ ,  $n = 400$ ), Transcendence ( $\alpha = .976$ ,  $n = 400$ ), Cultural Activities ( $\alpha = .959$ ,  $n = 400$ ), Service Value ( $\alpha = .963$ ,  $n = 400$ ), Natural Environment ( $\alpha = .978$ ,  $n = 400$ ), and Revisit Intention ( $\alpha = .985$ ,  $n = 400$ ) all have Cronbach's Alpha values above 0.95, reflecting extremely high

reliability. This suggests that the measurement tools for these dimensions possess robust internal consistency and can reliably and accurately capture the intended constructs.

In contrast, the dimensions of Escape ( $\alpha = .696$ ) and Indulgence ( $\alpha = .691$ ) have Cronbach's Alpha values slightly below 0.7, though they remain within an acceptable range. While these two dimensions show relatively lower internal consistency compared to the others, they still meet the threshold for acceptable reliability, indicating that their measurement tools are reasonably consistent, albeit with some room for improvement.

Overall, the high Cronbach's Alpha values across most dimensions underscore the reliability and stability of the measurement instruments used in this study, ensuring that the constructs are measured consistently and accurately. For the dimensions with slightly lower reliability, further refinement of the measurement tools may be considered to enhance their internal consistency.

#### 4.4 Analysis of influencing factors

**Table 4**

*Analysis of Influencing Factors*

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.935a	.875	.870	.29907
a. Predictors: (Constant), Revisit Intention, Escape, Curiosity, Historical Significance, Cultural Activities, Natural Environment, Transcendence, Activity Programs, Service Value, Health, Social Interaction				

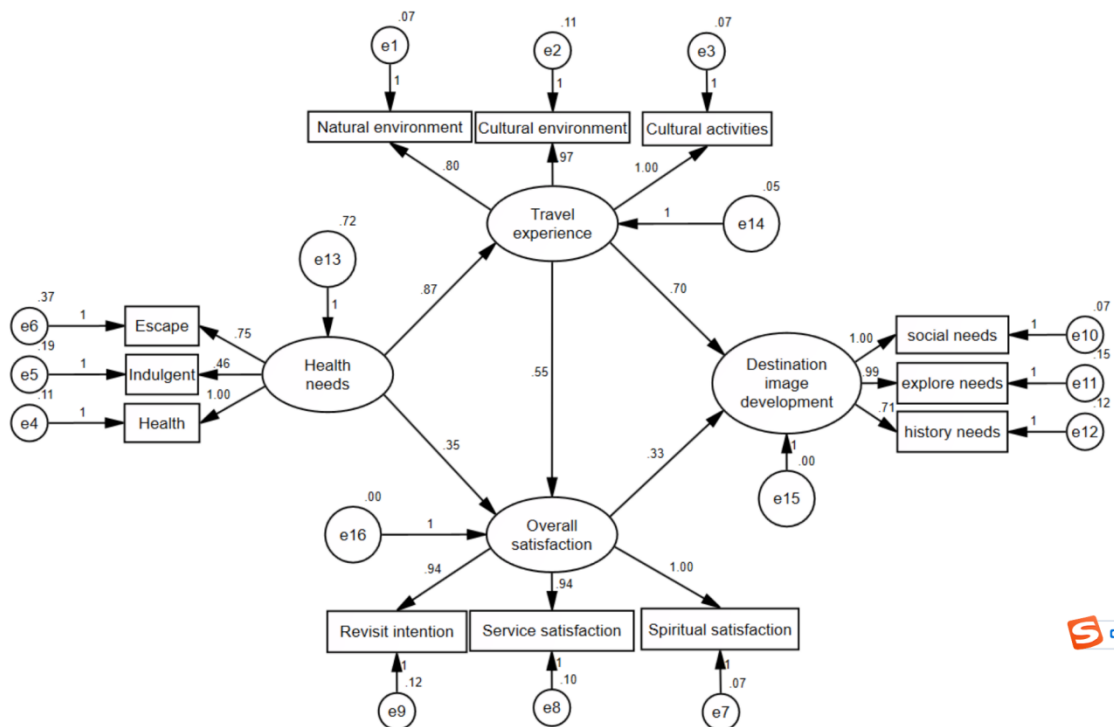
The model's R-value (multiple correlation coefficient) is 0.935, indicating a strong correlation between the independent variables (such as revisit intention, indulgence, escape, etc.) and the dependent variable. The R-squared (coefficient of determination) is 0.875, meaning the model explains 87.5% of the variance in the dependent variable, demonstrating the model's strong explanatory power. The adjusted R-squared is 0.870, which is close to the R-squared value, suggesting that the number of independent variables in the model is appropriate and there is no overfitting. The standard error of the estimate is 0.29907, indicating that the model has a relatively small prediction

error and provides accurate predictions. Overall, the model exhibits a high degree of fit, with excellent predictive and explanatory capabilities.

#### 4.5 Structural model analysis

**Figure 2**

*Path analysis results*



##### 4.5.1 Overview of the model structure

The structural model delineates the relationships among multiple variables, primarily categorized into exogenous variables (independent variables) and endogenous variables (mediating and dependent variables), such as "travel experience," "overall satisfaction," and "travel intention." The model employs path coefficients (e.g., 0.80, 0.97, 0.75) to illustrate both direct and indirect influence relationships between these variables. This framework provides a comprehensive understanding of how the variables interact, highlighting the strength and direction of their relationships and offering insights into the underlying mechanisms driving the outcomes.

**Table 5**

*Structural Model Coefficients*

Independent Variable	Coefficient	P-value	Result
Travel Experience	0.80	0.000	Significant
Overall Satisfaction	0.97	0.000	Significant
Travel Intention	0.75	0.000	Significant

*4.5.2 Analysis of key paths*

1) The variables of natural environment, cultural activities, and activity programs have a significant positive impact on "travel experience," with particularly strong effects from cultural activities and activity programs (path coefficients close to or equal to 1.00). This indicates that visitors' experiences with the natural environment and cultural activities at the destination are crucial to their overall travel experience. These findings highlight the importance of enhancing both the natural and cultural offerings of a destination to create a more engaging and memorable experience for tourists.

**Table 6**

*Impact of Natural Environment, Cultural Activities, and Activity Programs on "Travel Experience"*

Independent Variable	Coefficient	P-value	Result
Activity Programs	1.00	0.000	Significant
Cultural Activities	0.97	0.000	Significant
Natural Environment	0.80	0.000	Significant

2) Among the variables of escape, indulgence, and health needs, health needs have the strongest impact on "health factors" (path coefficient = 1.00), followed by escape (0.75), while the influence of indulgence is relatively weaker (0.46). This suggests that tourists' health conditions and psychological needs (such as the desire to escape from reality) play a significant role in shaping their health-related factors. These findings underscore the importance of addressing both physical health and mental well-being in tourism experiences, as they are key drivers of visitors' overall health perceptions.

**Table 7***Effects of Avoidance, Indulgence, and Health Factors on "Health Factors"*

Independent Variable	Coefficient	P-value	Result
Health	1.00	0.000	Significant
Escape	0.75	0.000	stronger
indulge	0.46	0.000	general

3) Among the variables of transcendence, service value, and revisit intention, transcendence has the strongest impact on "overall satisfaction" (path coefficient = 1.00), while both service value and revisit intention also exert significant influence (0.94). This indicates that these three dimensions play a crucial role in shaping tourists' overall satisfaction. The findings highlight the importance of providing transcendent experiences, high-quality services, and fostering revisit intentions to enhance visitors' satisfaction levels, ultimately contributing to a more fulfilling and memorable travel experience.

**Table 8***The impact of surpassing, service value, and willingness to revisit on "comprehensive satisfaction"*

Independent Variable	Coefficient	P-value	Result
Service Value	1.00	0.000	Significant
Transcendence,	0.94	0.000	Significant
Revisit Intention	0.94	0.000	Significant

Among the variables of social interaction, curiosity, and historical significance, social interaction has the strongest impact on "destination image formation" (path coefficient = 1.00), followed by curiosity (0.99), while the influence of historical significance is relatively lower (0.71). This suggests that social interactions and the sense of curiosity play a pivotal role in shaping tourists' perceptions of a destination's image, whereas historical significance, though still important, has a comparatively lesser impact. These findings emphasize the importance of fostering social engagement and stimulating curiosity to enhance the overall image and appeal of a destination.

**Table 9**

*The Influence of Social, Curiosity, and Historical Bearing on the Establishment of Destination Image*

Independent Variable	Coefficient	P-value	Result
Social Interaction	1.00	0.000	Significant
Curiosity	0.99	0.000	Significant
Historical Significance	0.71	0.000	stronger

Indirect Effects, Travel Experience → Overall Satisfaction: Travel experience has a strong positive impact on "overall satisfaction" (path coefficient = 0.55), indicating that the better the travel experience, the higher the overall satisfaction of tourists. Overall Satisfaction → Destination Image Formation: Overall satisfaction exerts a moderately strong positive influence on "destination image formation" (0.33), suggesting that higher overall satisfaction among tourists contributes significantly to the establishment of a positive destination image. Travel Experience → Destination Image Formation: Travel experience also has a strong positive impact on "destination image formation" (path coefficient = 0.70). Variables such as the natural environment, cultural activities, and activity programs directly reflect the functional image of the destination, further enhancing its appeal.

**Table 10**

*Indirect Effects*

Independent Variable	Coefficient	P-value	Result
Tourist experience → Overall Satisfaction	0.55	0.000	general
Overall Satisfaction → Establishment of destination image	0.33	0.000	weak
Establishment of destination image → Establishment of destination image	0.70	0.000	stronger

*4.5.3 Error term analysis*

The error terms in the model (e.g., e1, e2, e3, etc.) represent the portion of variance not explained by the model. The relatively small values of the error terms (e.g., 0.07, 0.37) indicate that the model has strong explanatory power, as most of the variance is accounted for by the variables included in the model.

#### 4.5.4 Overall model evaluation

**Model Fit:** Based on the path coefficients and error terms, the model demonstrates a high degree of fit, with strong explanatory power for the relationships among the variables.

**Key Influencing Factors:**

The variables with the greatest impact on "travel experience" are cultural activities and health factors.

The variables with the greatest impact on "overall satisfaction" are service value and curiosity.

"Overall satisfaction" has a significant impact on both the functional image (e.g., service value) and emotional image (e.g., transcendence, curiosity) of "destination image formation."

"Travel experience" exerts a strong positive influence on "destination image formation."

#### 4.6 Research hypothesis findings

To enhance travel experiences, focus should be placed on the design of cultural activities and activity programs, while also addressing tourists' health needs. To improve satisfaction, it is essential to elevate service quality and design tourism programs that stimulate visitors' curiosity. To strengthen revisit intention, increasing overall satisfaction can effectively boost tourists' willingness to revisit or recommend the destination. This structural model offers valuable theoretical insights and practical guidance for the management and optimization of destination image.

### 5 CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

This study explores how tourists' health factors—such as health needs, desire for escape, and relaxation—impact wellness tourism development at Putuo Mountain. These factors not only shape travel decisions but also enhance experiences through natural and cultural environments, boosting well-being, satisfaction, and loyalty. Tourist satisfaction

mediates the link between health factors and brand image, with relaxation and health needs strengthening brand perception. Improving satisfaction thus bolsters loyalty and solidifies Putuo Mountain's market position.

To enhance wellness tourism, developers should prioritize health needs by enriching natural and cultural environments, fostering tranquility, and integrating historical elements. Personalized services like tailored wellness programs and counseling can address diverse needs. Regular satisfaction surveys and service optimizations based on feedback can further meet health demands and elevate the brand.

Study limitations include narrow sample scope and cross-sectional data. Future research should expand samples across seasons and demographics, adopt longitudinal designs, and incorporate variables like personality traits and socioeconomic factors. Investigating how these traits influence health service demand and brand loyalty will offer deeper insights, guiding the sustainable development of Putuo Mountain's wellness tourism.

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### **Authors' Contribution**

All authors contributed equally to the development of this article.

### **Data availability**

All datasets relevant to this study's findings are fully available within the article.

### **How to cite this article (APA)**

Yang, Q., & Tipayatikumporn, U.-U. (2026). THE IMPACT OF HEALTH FACTORS ON THE BRAND IMAGE OF TOURIST DESTINATIONS—PUTUO MOUNTAIN MEDITATION TOURISM BASED ON THE PERSPECTIVE OF HEALTH AND

WELLNESS. *Veredas Do Direito*, 23(6), e235796.  
<https://doi.org/10.18623/rvd.v23.5796>