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Examining the Impact of Cultural Diversity on Tourist Satisfaction: An Empirical Study in Ghana's Western Region Hospitality and Tourism Industry

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the impact of cultural diversity on tourist satisfaction in Ghana's Western Region, a destination known for its rich traditions and heritage. Specifically, examining the tourists' perception of cultural diversity and how the phenomenon affects their travel experience, vis-à-vis satisfaction. It is acknowledged that while cultural diversity enhanced visitor experiences, it also presented challenges such as language barriers and differing service expectations. Using a mixed method approach, data were collected from 150 tourists, four destinations and hospitality facilities through structured questionnaires and interview guides to solicit data. Again, SPSS version 27.0 was used analyzed the data. Findings indicated that cultural diversity positively influenced tourist satisfaction through fostering emotional connections and deeper cultural appreciation. However, variations in satisfaction levels due to communication challenges highlighted the need for personalized engagement strategies. ANOVA results further revealed significant differences among tourist segments, emphasizing the importance of tailored cultural experiences. Additionally, factors like cleanliness, accessibility, and infrastructure were crucial in balancing cultural preservation with modern service quality. The study recommended segment-specific strategies, personalized engagement programmes, and improved infrastructure to enhance inclusivity and overall visitor satisfaction in the hospitality and tourism industry.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism plays a vital role in economic growth and cultural exchange, particularly in developing economies where it serves as a key driver of socio-economic development (Buzinde, 2020). In Ghana, significant investments have been made to strengthen the tourism sector, positioning it as one of the top foreign exchange earners (Akonga, 2020). Beyond its economic benefits, tourism fosters cultural interactions by bringing together people from different backgrounds, shaping visitor experiences and perceptions of destinations (Kramvig & Flemmen, 2016). The hospitality industry, as an important component of tourism, reflects these cultural interactions through service delivery, local cuisine, music, and historical narratives.

Cultural diversity is a fundamental aspect of tourism, influencing visitor experiences through exposure to different traditions, languages, and lifestyles (Eslami & Namdar, 2022). In Ghana's Western Region, a rich blend of ethnic groups, traditional festivals, and historical sites enhances the destination's uniqueness. However, while cultural diversity can enhance tourism appeal, it may also present challenges, such as language barriers, differences in service expectations, and cultural misunderstandings (Manoharan *et al.*, 2021). Tourist satisfaction is greatly influenced by the hospitality and tourism businesses ability to successfully handle these cultural dynamics.

Despite the recognized importance of cultural diversity in tourism, limited empirical research has examined its impact on visitor satisfaction in Ghana's Western Region (Adam, 2024). Existing studies (Hosany *et al.*,

2022; Amoako *et al.*, 2022; Guri *et al.*, 2021; Amissah *et al.*, 2021) have predominantly focused on economic and infrastructural aspects of tourism development, leaving a gap in understanding how cultural elements influence the total tourist experience. The lack of insight into this aspect may hinder the development of culturally inclusive service strategies, potentially affecting destination competitiveness and visitor retention (Alamineh *et al.*, 2023).

In response to the limited empirical exploration of cultural diversity's role in tourism, this study seeks to bridge the knowledge gap by investigating its influence on tourist satisfaction within Ghana's Western Region. The study, which is grounded on experiential consumption theory, explores the deeper emotional, sensory, and symbolic experiences that embody meaningful travel rather than the practical provision of services.

The research not only advances scholarly understanding of the intersection between cultural diversity and experiential tourism but also delivers actionable insights for practitioners. Ultimately, the findings aim to inform culturally responsive strategies that elevate visitor satisfaction and reinforce Ghana's Western Region as a dynamic and competitive cultural tourism destination.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptualisation of Cultural Diversity

The interaction and existence of various cultural groups within a given geographical area, impacting professional setting and social activities is known as cultural diversity (Raeff *et al.*, 2020). According to Paulus

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et al. (2016), cultural diversity can be understood through three key dimensions. The first, known as the primary dimension, includes visible characteristics such as age, gender, sexual orientation, and physical abilities, which are easily recognizable in social interactions. The second, or secondary dimension, consists of less visible aspects, such as communication styles, educational background, ethnicity, nationality, and religion (Malik *et al.*, 2017). While these elements play a crucial role in shaping identities and relationships, they often do not receive the same level of attention as primary characteristics despite their impact on interpersonal and workplace dynamics. Expanding on this framework, Vamvaka *et al.* (2020) introduced a third dimension, tertiary diversity which encompasses deeper, more abstract attributes such as beliefs, assumptions, perceptions, attitudes, feelings, and values. These elements influence an individual's worldview and interactions, further shaping organizational and societal relationships. Historically, diversity discussions were primarily centered around visible aspects such as race, ethnicity, and nationality (Mutz, 2018; Rosenbaum *et al.*, 2017). However, Harper and Snowden (2017) argue that cultural diversity is more than just demographic differences, it involves the continuous exchange of ideas, traditions, and perspectives between different societies. This broader understanding highlights the complexity of cultural diversity and its role in enriching social interactions, fostering inclusivity, and promoting cultural awareness.

Cultural diversity extends beyond mere coexistence; it requires recognition, appreciation, and meaningful integration of different cultural perspectives, particularly in industries such as hospitality and tourism (Zia *et al.*, 2023). Alamineh *et al.* (2023) emphasize the importance of moving beyond passive acceptance to actively embracing diverse cultural expressions. In tourism, diversity enhances visitor experiences while preserving local heritage and traditions (Arvid *et al.*, 2021; Gewinner, 2020). A culturally inclusive tourism industry fosters mutual respect, cross-cultural exchange, and economic empowerment for local communities (Qiu *et al.*, 2022). Furthermore, involving indigenous communities in tourism initiatives ensures that they benefit equitably and sustainably from cultural tourism activities (Cloquet, 2018). Therefore, this study defines cultural diversity as the recognition and appreciation of multiple cultural identities, contributing to the richness and complexity of human experiences within society.

Tourist Perception of Cultural Diversity

Perception is the process of interpreting and understanding the world, shaping how individuals evaluate social characteristics and interactions (Osgood, 2017; Tankard & Paluci, 2016). It is a pre-behavioral mechanism that influences human actions and decision-making (Ajzen, 2020). Through the senses, individuals gather, filter, and organise external information, forming subjective interpretations of reality. However, these interpretations are not objective reflections but are

shaped by personal values, experiences, cultural norms, and societal influences (Lin & Kuo, 2016). McDermott *et al.* (2015) highlight those cultural backgrounds act as filters, shaping what individuals see, hear, and experience, ultimately influencing their responses to the world. This process plays a vital role in shaping first impressions, guiding decision-making, and influencing how individuals engage with their surroundings (Kyodo, 2015).

In tourism, perception significantly shapes travelers' expectations and experiences of cultural diversity at a destination (Khoshkhoo & Farahani, 2019). The way tourists perceive a location influences their satisfaction, willingness to revisit, and the likelihood of recommending it to others (Hasan *et al.*, 2017). Positive perceptions enhance a destination's appeal, while negative perceptions can deter future visitors through word-of-mouth influence. Huczynski and Buchanan (2017) note that tourists' impressions are often shaped by prior experiences or external information, which can sometimes be misleading. Myers (2019) further explains that perceptions can be deliberately shaped to influence opinions and behaviours. Within the context of cultural diversity, tourists value authentic cultural experiences that provide meaningful engagement with a destination's traditions, lifestyle, and heritage. By preserving and promoting these cultural elements, destinations can create enriching experiences that foster cross-cultural appreciation while ensuring respectful and sustainable tourism development.

Cultural dimension theory, propounded by Geert Hofstede in the year 1973, has become an essential framework for understanding cultural differences and their impact on tourist behaviour across industries, including hospitality and tourism. The application of Hofstede's cultural dimension theory in these sectors focuses on how the theory aids in managing diverse cultural expectations, behaviours, and interactions among stakeholders and tourists. As global tourism continues to grow, understanding the effect of cultural diversity on tourist behaviour has become increasingly crucial for the hospitality and tourism industry. Cultural dimension theory offers a valuable framework for analysing how cultural differences shape tourist perceptions, behaviours, and expectations. Likewise, Hofstede's theory explains how cultural dimensions influence tourist behaviour and affect service delivery, tourist satisfaction, and marketing strategies in the hospitality and tourism industries.

Factors Influencing Tourist Perception of Cultural Diversity

Cultural diversity plays a critical role in shaping tourists' experiences, influencing how they engage with different cultures and environments. Tourists' perceptions of cultural diversity affect their satisfaction, motivations, and travel behaviour, making it a key area of study in hospitality and tourism management (Dayour & Adongo, 2015). Several factors shape these perceptions, including cultural identity and familiarity, destination image,

personal motivation, prior travel experiences, cultural competence, openness to new experiences, marketing strategies, and host-guest interactions (Dujmović & Vitasović, 2022). The perception of cultural diversity in a destination is significantly influenced by its image. This image comprises both physical features, such as iconic landmarks, and intangible elements, including cultural heritage and the social environment (Barnes *et al.*, 2016). Destinations that promote their multicultural heritage, rich traditions, and diverse experiences such as historical sites, local cuisine, and artistic expressions tend to attract travelers seeking cultural exploration (Chandralal & Valenzuela, 2015). A strong and positive destination image enhances appreciation for cultural diversity, leading to more meaningful travel experiences (Hair *et al.*, 2019). Similarly, cultural identity and familiarity influence how tourists engage with different cultures. Some travelers seek destinations that reflect their own cultural background, while others with a more global outlook prefer exploring unfamiliar traditions and lifestyles (Semrad & Rivera, 2018; Zhang *et al.*, 2018).

Tourists' personal motivations and prior travel experiences also shape their perceptions of cultural diversity. Those who travel for novelty, learning, and social engagement are more likely to appreciate diverse cultural encounters and enjoy exposure to new languages, traditions, and customs (Tsai, 2016). In contrast, travelers primarily seeking relaxation may prioritize natural landscapes and leisure amenities over cultural experiences (Kim, 2018). Previous travel experiences contribute to cultural competence the ability to understand and navigate cultural differences effectively (Oh *et al.*, 2019). Tourists with extensive exposure to different cultures tend to embrace diversity more readily than those with limited travel backgrounds (Pandey & Sahu, 2020). Additionally, interactions between tourists and local communities play a significant role in shaping perceptions. Positive and meaningful engagement with residents enhances appreciation for cultural diversity, while negative or limited interactions may weaken a traveller's perception of a destination's cultural richness (Seyfi *et al.*, 2019; Lee, 2015). Recognizing these factors enables tourism stakeholders to create authentic and culturally immersive experiences that foster deeper cross-cultural connections and enrich overall tourist satisfaction.

Tourist Satisfaction

Tourist satisfaction is a critical indicator of a destination's ability to meet or exceed visitor expectations, influencing its overall success (Braumah *et al.*, 2024). It is a multidimensional concept that encompasses emotional, cognitive, and behavioural components, each shaping tourist experiences in distinct ways (Zhou *et al.*, 2024). On an emotional level, satisfaction is driven by the positive feelings tourists associate with their travel experiences, such as joy, contentment, or excitement. Akhooonejad (2016) emphasizes that these emotions arise from engaging in specific tourism activities, underscoring

the importance of attractions, services, and cultural experiences in enhancing visitor fulfilment. Positive emotions not only improve the memorability of a trip but also foster a lasting connection between tourists and destinations, increasing the likelihood of repeat visits (Sihombing *et al.*, 2024).

Beyond emotional responses, tourist satisfaction is also shaped by cognitive evaluations, which involve comparing expectations with actual experiences (Ryan & Zhang, 2024). Akwei *et al.* (2020) describe this as the process through which tourists assess the quality of services, cultural authenticity, accessibility, and overall value for money. A destination's ability to fulfil its promises significantly influence tourist perceptions, directly impacting their level of satisfaction. Additionally, satisfaction manifests behaviourally, extending beyond the travel experience itself to influence future decisions. As Adu-Ampong (2018) notes, satisfied tourists are more likely to revisit a destination and recommend it to others, reinforcing destination loyalty and driving positive word-of-mouth promotion. This behavioural dimension highlights the strategic importance of tourist satisfaction for destination managers, as it directly affects repeat visitation rates, reputation, and long-term competitiveness.

Ultimately, tourist satisfaction is not a singular or momentary occurrence but a holistic process that spans the entire travel journey, from pre-visit expectations to on-site experiences and post-visit reflections (Way, 2023). Its significance extends beyond personal enjoyment to shaping the overall success of tourism destinations. Understanding the emotional, cognitive, and behavioural dimensions of satisfaction allows stakeholders to implement strategies that enhance visitor experiences, ensuring long-term sustainability and competitiveness in the tourism industry (Barreto & Mayya, 2024). By fostering meaningful interactions, delivering high-quality services, and maintaining cultural authenticity, destinations can position themselves as attractive and fulfilling travel choices, ultimately securing a loyal and satisfied tourist base.

Effects of Cultural Diversity on Tourist Satisfaction

Cultural diversity plays a crucial role in shaping tourists' perceptions and satisfaction during their travel experiences (Lin *et al.*, 2021). The exposure to diverse cultural environments, including museums, festivals, and culinary experiences, enhances visitor satisfaction (Chen *et al.*, 2021). By promoting cultural attractions and fostering an inclusive atmosphere, destinations can improve their overall visitor experience and position themselves as premier cultural tourism hubs. This underscores the need for integrating cultural diversity into destination marketing and management strategies to maximize the potential of cultural tourism and support sustainable growth in the industry. However, while cultural diversity is a key driver of satisfaction, it must be complemented by essential amenities and infrastructure to ensure a seamless

travel experience (Zhang *et al.*, 2024).

In assessing the factors influencing tourist satisfaction, Kim and Park (2023) highlighted that infrastructure, amenities, and service quality are equally important alongside cultural diversity. Tourists appreciate the authenticity of rural cultural experiences but often express concerns about accessibility, particularly in terms of transportation and road infrastructure. Additionally, Thirumalesh-Madanaguli *et al.* (2021) posits that hospitality and service delivery in rural areas are frequently identified as areas requiring improvement. To enhance visitor experiences, rural destinations must strike a balance between preserving cultural authenticity and providing essential services. Furthermore, cross-cultural differences influence satisfaction levels, as Western tourists tend to prioritize authenticity and cultural diversity, whereas Asian tourists emphasize convenience, safety, and cleanliness (Wang *et al.*, 2023). These variations emphasize the importance of tailoring destination management strategies to meet the expectations of different tourist segments.

Despite these differences, common themes emerge across studies, including the influence of cultural interactions, authenticity, and service quality on tourist satisfaction (Engeset & Elvekrok, 2015). Wu *et al.* (2023) further argue that while diverse cultural narratives enhance satisfaction, issues such as overcrowding and commercialization can hinder the overall experience. Similarly, destinations must balance heritage preservation with effective visitor management to ensure sustainability. In the competitive tourism industry, factors such as conformity to expectations, revisit intention, and willingness to recommend play a critical role in maintaining a competitive advantage (Arowosafe & Emmanuel, 2017). Therefore, a balanced approach to destination management where cultural offerings are supported by robust infrastructure and quality service remains essential for delivering a well-rounded and fulfilling travel experience.

Cultural Immersion and Tourist Satisfaction

Cultural immersion is a transformative process where tourists actively engage with local cultures, fostering curiosity, respect, and cross-cultural understanding (Zhou, 2020). This engagement often involves experiencing a destination's traditions, daily life, and beliefs, allowing tourists to connect meaningfully with local communities (Risager, 2018). As a result, cultural immersion shapes tourist behaviour by encouraging deeper interactions and appreciation of cultural diversity. Whether through language exchange, participation in local festivals, or embracing indigenous customs, such experiences create authentic and memorable encounters that enhance the overall travel experience. The impact of cultural immersion on tourist satisfaction is significant, as it offers opportunities for deeper emotional and social connections (Braumah *et al.*, 2024). Tourists who actively participate in traditional practices, such as dancing to indigenous music, tasting local cuisine, or wearing traditional attire, often find themselves warmly embraced

by locals, fostering a sense of belonging and admiration (Reguero, 2020). These interactions elevate the overall enjoyment of travel by allowing tourists to experience first-hand the cultural uniqueness of a destination (Hu *et al.*, 2023). Furthermore, engaging in cultural activities provides a sense of distinctiveness and fulfilment, reinforcing the perception that tourism is not merely about sightseeing but about meaningful engagement and personal enrichment (Sthapit *et al.*, 2021).

Beyond enhancing satisfaction, cultural immersion facilitates learning, personal growth, and cross-cultural understanding. By interacting with diverse communities and experiencing different worldviews, tourists develop a greater appreciation for cultural diversity and dispel misconceptions about certain destinations (Bideci & Bideci, 2023). This process encourages openness and global awareness, allowing individuals to build strong emotional connections with local cultures while fostering mutual respect and acceptance (Carvalho *et al.*, 2022). Ultimately, cultural immersion not only enriches the travel experience but also contributes to long-term personal and social development, making tourism a bridge for cultural exchange and global unity (Selvakumar *et al.*, 2024).

Theoretical Review Using Experiential Consumption Theory

Experiential Consumption Theory is a framework that explains how consumers seek experiences that provide emotional, sensory, and symbolic satisfaction rather than focusing solely on the functional or utilitarian benefits of products and services. The theory developed by Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) emphasises that the desire for pleasure, feelings, and personal meaning drives consumption. Compared to traditional consumption models focusing on rational decision-making and the practical aspects of consumption, experiential consumption highlights the importance of emotional responses, sensory engagement, and symbolic meaning. Consumers are motivated by an experience's emotional impact, such as excitement, joy, nostalgia or relaxation. Likewise, experiences that engage multiple senses, such as sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch, make them more immersive and memorable. Again, consumers often choose experiences that reflect their identity, values, or cultural connections, using the experience as a form of self-expression.

Experiential consumption theory is particularly relevant in sectors like tourism and hospitality because it helps explain why tourists seek memorable, meaningful experiences beyond mere service provision. For example, tourists choose destinations for their attractions and the emotional and sensory experiences that enrich their lives and leave lasting impressions.

This theory has been used by several researchers (Chan *et al.*, 2016; Fu *et al.*, 2018; Fatma, 2014). Hwang (2016) argued that consumers are emotional beings and seek a pleasurable experience as an outcome of consumption. It identifies several key factors that influence consumer

experience in the hospitality and tourism industry which include demographic factors, past experience, customer engagement, cultural differences, service quality and brand loyalty collectively impact tourist experience in the hospitality and tourism industry. The framework used

some of the variables of (Hen *et al.*, 2017) and others from the literature. The adapted framework fits the study as it captures basic aspects that will help in achieving the research objectives.

The internal factors in the framework include social-

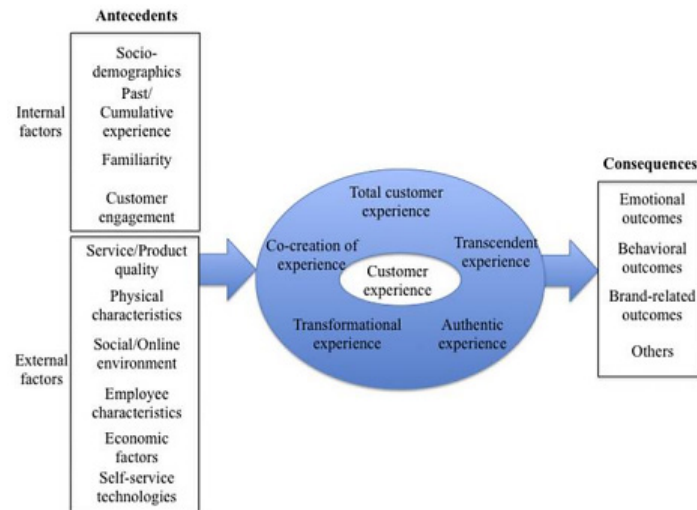


Figure 1: Experiential Consumption Model by Hwang, 2016

demographic, past experience, familiarity and consumer engagement. Hwang (2016) contested elements influence how tourists perceive a destination and consume tourism products at that location. This shows that internal factors directly influence tourist behaviour (Debashish *et al.*, 2017). For Anderson (2015), internal factors are the key determinants of tourist behaviour. In addition, it is suggested that internal factors specifically, socio-demographic variables are the main factors that affect tourist travel-associated behaviour. The destination choice and type of tourism activity a tourist participates in can be influenced by cultural background.

According to Hwang (2016), the external factors for tourist experience in tourism are diverse and consist of service/product quality, social environment, physical characteristics, employee characteristics and economic factors. Roy *et al.* (2018) suggested that tourist satisfaction with a particular destination is based on these external factors (service/product quality, social environment, physical characteristics, employee characteristics and economic factors) since tourists perceive value for money, and welcoming and inclusive attributes in terms of purchasing a tourism product. Therefore, the inspiration to travel to enjoy those experiences. This idea resonates with the argument of Watzl (2017), that perception is motivated when there is a need to be satisfied and action must be taken to achieve it (McClelland & Jorba, 2023). Hwang *et al.* (2016) relate tourist travel behaviour to the interaction relation to the physical environment, employee characteristics, social environment and cultural background are the key factors that influence tourist behaviour.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study adopted a descriptive design and used the mixed method research approach; which enabled the researchers to combine the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative approaches, providing a more comprehensive, valid understanding of the research. Both primary and secondary data were collected from the respondents and key informants in the hospitality and tourism sector in the Western region of Ghana, and books, journals and reports respectively. Questionnaires and interview guides subjected to the objectives of the study were used to elicit data from the respondents. The population of the study were tourists and managers within tourism attraction and hotel facilities. A convenience sampling technique was adopted for the study to select 150 respondents considering the characteristics of the respondents and unavailable sample frame (Golzar *et al.*, 2022). Purposive was used to select 4 participants (managers) for the study. The IBM's statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) software, version 27.0, was used to analyse the quantitative data. To remove incomplete questionnaires that could impair the validity of the findings, the field data was carefully edited, cleaned and coded. In the descriptive analysis, means, the mean error, percentages and standard deviations were used, likewise analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to analyse the data for the study. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the qualitative data; where the transcripts were systematically reviewed, coded and categorized into emerging themes that reflect the objectives of the study. Ethical considerations for the study were centered on participants' informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This analysis of the quantitative transcriptions and qualitative data examines the various factors, such as how exposure to diverse cultures enhance or challenge tourist satisfaction, how cultural norms and values shape travellers’ expectations and behaviours, and how embracing cultural diversity can lead to more sustainable tourism practices on tourist visiting tourist destinations in the context of cultural diversity and tourist satisfaction. The results presented in Table 1 highlight the significant

effect of cultural diversity on tourist satisfaction, with an overwhelming agreement among respondents across all statements. This aligns with existing literature that underscores the important role of cultural diversity in shaping tourist experiences. The mean values, ranging from 1.880 to 1.953, indicate strong positive perceptions of cultural diversity’s impact, while the low standard deviations reinforce the consistency of responses, reflecting a shared understanding among tourists regarding its importance.

Table 1: The Effect of Cultural Diversity on Tourist Satisfaction

	Disagree (%)	Agree (%)		
	N= 150		Mean	Std. Deviation
Different cultures can lead to tourist satisfaction.	8.7	91.3	1.913	0.282
Diverse cultures have (positive and negative) impacts on your travel experience.	5.3	94.7	1.947	0.225
Culture norms and values change your expectations and behaviour.	8.0	92.0	1.920	0.272
Embracing cultural diversity can lead to more sustainable tourism practices.	10.7	89.3	1.893	0.310
The hospitality and tourism industry can leverage cultural diversity to enhance the tourist experience.	4.7	95.3	1.953	0.211
Different cultures contribute to the appeal of a destination.	9.3	90.7	1.907	0.292
Interacting with diverse cultures made my travel experience more enjoyable.	12.0	88.0	1.880	0.326

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The mean score of 1.913 supports the notion that exposure to diverse cultural elements enhances the overall travel experience. Buttressing Chen *et al.* (2021) studies that tourists who engage with diverse cultural offerings, such as museums, festivals, and culinary experiences, report heightened levels of satisfaction. These findings reinforce existing literature, which highlights cultural diversity as a critical factor in shaping tourist experiences and satisfaction levels. The result underscores the necessity for tourism stakeholders to integrate cultural diversity into destination marketing and management strategies to optimize tourist satisfaction and position destinations as premier cultural hubs. Additionally, Kim and Park (2023) noted that while cultural diversity is a key contributor to tourist satisfaction, other factors such as infrastructure, amenities, and service quality play a significant role. Thus, there is a need for rural destinations to balance cultural authenticity with essential amenities to enhance the visitor experience.

Cross-cultural tourist satisfaction is another critical dimension in understanding the travel experience. Wang *et al.* (2023) compared Western and Asian tourists’ perceptions of multicultural destinations, highlighting that Western tourists prioritize authentic cultural experiences, while Asian tourists place greater emphasis

on convenience, safety, and cleanliness. This insight complements the study results, particularly regarding the influence of cultural norms and values on tourist expectations and behaviours, which received a 92.0% agreement and mean score of 1.920. The variation in cultural preferences suggests the necessity for tailored tourism strategies that cater for diverse visitor expectations and necessitate targeted destination management strategies for different tourist demographics. Similarly, Wu *et al.* (2023) emphasised that cultural diversity enhances tourist satisfaction in heritage destinations but warned that overcrowding and commercialization could diminish the overall experience. The study results support this assertion, with 95.3% of respondents agreeing that the hospitality and tourism industry can leverage cultural diversity to enhance the tourist experience. However, this requires a strategic approach to visitor management to balance preservation efforts with accessibility, ensuring a sustainable and satisfying experience.

Beyond individual experiences, broader implications emerge regarding the sustainability of tourism. The study found that 89.3% of the respondents agreed that embracing cultural diversity leads to more sustainable tourism practices. This aligns with the perspective of Engeset and Elvekrok (2015), who argued that cultural

interactions and authentic experiences are integral to enriching travel and ensures sustainability. However, they also stressed the importance of complementary factors such as infrastructure, amenities, and effective visitor management. While the strong agreement in this study underscores the general recognition of cultural diversity's role in sustainable tourism, the slight variability in responses suggests that individual experiences and destination-specific factors influence tourists' perspectives on sustainability. Another crucial insight from the study is the role of cultural diversity in destination appeal. With 90.7% of respondents agreeing to different cultures contribution to a destination's attractiveness, the findings support the argument that cultural diversity enhances a location's competitive advantage. This is consistent with previous research, which highlights how cultural elements shape tourism demand and influence visitor preferences (Braumah *et al.*, 2024).

Despite the positive impact of cultural diversity, certain challenges remain. The study recorded the lowest agreement (88.0%) regarding travel enjoyment, suggesting that while tourists appreciate cultural diversity, factors such as language barriers and cultural misunderstandings may occasionally hinder satisfaction. The slightly lower mean (1.880) and the highest standard deviation (0.326) indicates that while cultural diversity is largely appreciated, these challenges may contribute to variations in satisfaction levels. This finding echo previous studies, which stress the need for effective cross-cultural communication strategies to enhance tourist experiences (Darmayanti *et al.*, 2024). In the same vein, managers of tourist destinations and hotels showed their diverse perceptions of cultural diversity and tourist satisfaction.

The responses as narrated as

A 35-year-old Male, Destination Manager narratively expressed that “At our attraction, cultural diversity has a predominantly positive impact on tourist experiences. Many of our visitors arrive in groups, including families, friends, church congregations, and school excursions. Their presence fosters a lively and dynamic atmosphere, which enhances the overall guest experience. This diversity encourages us to continuously refine and tailor our tour packages to better accommodate their specific needs”

“Cultural diversity is mostly beneficial; however, it does present challenges occasionally. One of the most common challenges is communication barriers, which sometimes

lead to misunderstandings. Some tourists are reserved and uncomfortable interacting with others. Meanwhile, those unfamiliar with our cultural norms experience discomfort if their expectations are not met exactly as envisioned” (37-year-old Male Destination Manager).

“Cultural diversity affects not only individual tourists but also the overall operations of our business. For instance, in Ghanaian culture, loud music, whether from a live band or traditional drumming is a common and enjoyable feature of entertainment. However, some European tourists find loud music disruptive, especially when performances extend late into the night. Similarly, cultural differences in dining practices present unique challenges. Some guests are familiar with eating with their hands, which is culturally acceptable in their tradition; however, this creates hygiene concerns in shared buffet settings. As our buffet is open to all guests” (47 year old, Male Hotel Manager)

Further to cultural diversity impacting tourist satisfaction, it affects business operations in the tourism and hospitality industry in terms of product packaging, service delivery and decision making. These perceived assertions were portrayed by managers of tourist destinations and hotels, which were narrated as such:

“Tourists are drawn to unique cultural elements, leading to the introduction of themed restaurants, music festivals, and cultural retreats at my hotel. Even local tourists enjoy exploring unfamiliar traditional cuisines and cultures. This makes cultural diversity a key factor in shaping tourist behaviour” (30 Years Old Female Hotel Manager). “Collaborating with local artisans to craft and sell cultural artefacts enhances the authenticity of the tourist experience. Some long-stay guests show interest in hands-on activities, prompting us to organise cultural workshops for a fee. These workshops provide richer experiences while supporting local businesses.” (35 Years Old Male Destination Manager).

Differences in Satisfaction Between and Within the Tourist

Tourist satisfaction has been described as varied and of different levels (Bratucu *et al.*, 2017). Table 2 presents the results conducted to examine differences in cultural satisfaction levels among tourist groups using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The results compared the variances between groups (low, medium, and high satisfaction levels) with the variance within groups to determine if there are statistically significant differences in satisfaction.

Table 2: ANOVA for Cultural Diversity and Tourists' Satisfaction

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	11.036	2	5.518	9.4	0.000
Within Groups	86.297	147	0.587		
Total	97.333	149			

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The analysis of cultural satisfaction variance through ANOVA testing revealed compelling insights into tourist behaviour patterns. The statistical results, yielding a Between Groups sum of squares of 11.036 and Within Groups sum of squares of (86.297, produced a substantial F-statistic of 9.400 with a corresponding p-value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$) is less than 0.05. This indicates that there are statistically significant differences in culture satisfaction between the Low, Medium, and High groups. The analysis suggests that tourists in the medium group report significantly higher satisfaction than those in the Low group, and the differences between groups are not random but meaningful. Therefore, the study rejects the null hypothesis

The empirical evidence presents several critical implications for both theoretical frameworks and practical applications in cultural tourism management. From a theoretical perspective, these findings contribute to the existing body of knowledge by challenging the assumption of homogeneous cultural satisfaction across tourist segments. The significant variations between groups suggest that cultural satisfaction is a complex construct influenced by distinct factors that manifest differently across tourist segments, thereby extending our understanding of tourist behaviour theory.

These findings also have substantial practical implications for tourism stakeholders and destination managers. The clear differentiation in satisfaction levels, particularly between medium and low groups, indicates the presence of specific factors that enhance cultural experiences for certain tourists while potentially being insufficient for others. This understanding provides an empirical foundation for developing targeted intervention strategies aimed at elevating the experience of tourists in the low-satisfaction segment by identifying and implementing successful elements from the medium group's experience. From a strategic management perspective, these results underscore the necessity for a more nuanced, segment-specific approach to cultural tourism management. The statistical significance of these differences validates the need for differentiated strategies rather than a uniform approach. Tourism managers and stakeholders should consider investigating the specific factors contributing to higher satisfaction in the medium group to develop evidence-based interventions to enhance the experience of those in the low satisfaction category. This could involve examining various aspects, such as service delivery, cultural interpretation methods, and engagement strategies that might be more effectively tailored to different tourist segments.

CONCLUSIONS

The study concluded that diverse cultural elements influenced tourist satisfaction. A large proportion (94.7%) of respondents affirmed that cultural diversity had a positive impact on their experience, enhancing their enjoyment and emotional connection at destinations. While most respondents viewed cultural diversity positively,

slight variations in experiences such as communication challenges and differing cultural norms highlighted the need for personalized approaches to maximize inclusivity and satisfaction. ANOVA analysis further revealed significant differences in cultural satisfaction among tourist groups, underscoring the importance of segment-specific strategies to enhance experiences across varying satisfaction levels. Furthermore, immersive experiences and exposure to diverse traditions contributed to deeper cultural appreciation. Factors such as cultural expectations, cleanliness, accessibility, and infrastructure also influenced satisfaction, emphasizing the need to balance cultural preservation with modern service quality. In light of these findings, it was recommended that tourism authorities and destination managers implement segment-specific cultural experience strategies to address the diverse satisfaction levels of tourists. Hospitality and tourism operators are encouraged to develop personalized cultural engagement programs to mitigate communication challenges and cultural differences, fostering greater inclusivity. Additionally, policymakers and local authorities are advised to ensure a balance between cultural preservation and modern service quality by enhancing accessibility, cleanliness, and infrastructure at cultural sites.

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