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Exploring the relationships among nature-based tourists' subjective well-being, travel motivation and revisit intentions within the scope of self-determination theory

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Abstract: This study aims to examine the relationships between tourists' travel motivations, subjective well-being and revisit intentions in the context of self-determination theory. Igneada, with its unexplored tourism potential and natural richness, is the focus of this study and represents an area that has been less addressed in the literature. In this context, studies on destinations such as Igneada, which have tourism potential but are not well-known, are crucial for developing effective tourism strategies. To achieve the research aim, an online survey was conducted among local tourists travelling to Igneada. The purposive sampling method was adopted, and 386 usable data points were obtained during the data collection process, which were then analysed. The study's findings indicated notable positive relationships among participants' travel motivations, subjective well-being, and their intentions to revisit. It was observed that travel motivation played a role in enhancing subjective well-being, while both travel motivation and subjective well-being influenced revisit intentions. These insights shed light on the significance of such destinations, offering valuable implications for advancing their appeal within the tourism industry.

Keywords: Nature-Based Tourism, Self-Determination Theory, Self-Determined Travel Motivation, Subjective Well-Being, Revisit Intention

1 Introduction

Nature-based tourism (NBT) is a form of travel that involves individuals interacting with natural environments and exploring biodiversity, ecosystems, and natural landscapes (Frost et al., 2014). This type of tourism aims to minimize environmental impact while reinforcing visitors' connection with nature (Budeanu, 2005). The activities offered by NBT range from hiking to bird watching and canoeing, providing not only entertainment but also personal and social benefits (Mehmetoglu, 2007). This form of tourism seeks to strike a balance between economic returns and the conservation of natural resources (Lanfranchi et al., 2014).

This study draws on Self-Determination Theory (SDT) to explain the motivations of nature-based tourists. NBT provides an ideal theoretical framework for individuals to satisfy these needs (Arnegger et al., 2010). Tourists have the opportunity to act freely by making their own decisions in activities in a natural environment; this allows individuals to fulfil their autonomy needs (Aicher & Brenner, 2015). For example, in activities such as hiking, camping or exploring an ecological region, individuals can strengthen their sense of competence by gaining knowledge about the environment and gaining new experiences of nature (Martin, 2004). At the same time, interactions with other participants or guides during these activities contribute to individuals developing meaningful social bonds and satisfy their need for relationship building.

Self-Determination Theory (SDT) provides a basic theoretical framework for understanding individuals' motivation and psychological needs (Deci & Ryan, 2000). According to this theory, people have a higher level of well-being when their needs for autonomy (making their own decisions freely), competence (feeling effective and capable) and relatedness (forming meaningful

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connections with others) are fulfilled (Deci et al., 1989). Accordingly, it is essential to consider NBT within the framework of this theory to understand tourists' travel motivations towards NBT destinations and how these experiences contribute to their subjective well-being (Qiu et al., 2021). This study examined whether participation in NBT activities has a direct, positive effect on individuals' subjective well-being and whether this interaction influences their intention to revisit. In this context, SDT plays a critical role in shaping NBT strategies and enriching tourist experiences.

Previous research has revealed that motivation to participate in NBT activities is closely related to subjective well-being and intention to revisit a destination (Karagöz et al., 2023; Kim et al., 2015; Lee & Kim, 2017; Luo & Deng, 2007). In this study, it is aimed to examine the relationships between tourists' travel motivations, subjective well-being and revisit intentions within the scope of SDT. In line with the aim of the research, a questionnaire was applied to Turkish tourists visiting Igneada town. While Turkey's natural beauties, ranging from coastlines to mountainous regions, unique geological formations to various flora and fauna, offer a great potential for NBT (Şekercioğlu et al., 2011), in this context, Igneada stands out as a remarkable destination, especially as a research site, although it is little known.

In the literature section of the study, the concept of NBT was first explained. Then, subjective well-being and Self-Determination Theory (SDT) were discussed. Finally, the development of the research hypotheses was presented, and then the methodology section of the research was started. In the fourth section, the findings obtained from the research analysis are presented. The research is completed with the conclusion section and a discussion of the limitations of the research.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Nature-Based Tourism

NBT is a form of tourism that is fundamentally based on the natural attractions and environment of a destination (Naidoo et al., 2011). These regions, which possess environmental assets, have the potential to encourage visitors to stay longer, thereby enhancing the tourist experience and generating economic benefits for the region (Job & Paesler, 2013). Tyrväinen et al. (2014) emphasise the central role of a destination's natural environment

in attracting NBT. The attraction of NBT stems from its pristine and untouched natural environment (Olafsdottir, 2013). This type of tourism is often characterised by activities that allow tourists to immerse themselves in natural environments such as wildlife watching, hiking and camping (Çiki & Tanriverdi, 2024).

NBT is a multifaceted concept that is widely accepted in sustainable tourism and environmental studies, although there is no universally accepted definition. Tyrväinen et al. (2014) emphasise that NBT is not limited to a single definition but covers a wide range of activities. NBT can encompass a variety of touristic activities that take place in relatively unspoiled natural areas outside of urban environments (Margaryan & Fredman, 2017). In simpler terms, NBT is defined as activities carried out by individuals in natural environments outside their normal habitats (Derek et al., 2017). Despite the different definitions, there is a common understanding that NBT activities can occur in various types of tourism, including adventure tourism, sustainable tourism, and eco-tourism, as long as the activities take place in a natural environment (Margaryan & Fredman, 2017).

NBT, which is more than just being in nature, often overlaps with outdoor recreational activities. Outdoor recreation encompasses leisure activities that take place outdoors in both rural and urban settings (Cheung & Fok, 2013). NBT thus combines a wide range of experiences, all of which are united by their setting in the natural world and their potential for a deeper connection with nature (Hehir, 2021). This connection is crucial for raising environmental awareness and promoting sustainable practices in the tourism industry.

2.2 Subjective Well-being

Subjective well-being stands out as a psychological concept that evaluates the quality of life and happiness levels of individuals (Diener et al., 1999). Subjective well-being is a dynamic process that expresses psychological and emotional well-being in a holistic manner, in which the individual shapes their life through the dimensions of happiness, satisfaction, and meaning, as subjectively evaluated (Diener, 2009). The basic components of subjective well-being include life satisfaction evaluations, positive affect and negative affect (Diener, 2000; Khan et al., 2022). Diener (1984) suggested that these components enable individuals to comprehensively evaluate their level of subjective well-being.

Factors affecting subjective well-being encompass various aspects of life, including economic status, social

support, work, and education (Azizan & Mahmud, 2018). In particular, it is stated that strong social relationships and meaningful social ties can significantly increase individuals' subjective well-being levels (Diener & Seligman, 2002). Therefore, it is thought that strategies to improve individuals' social environment may contribute to improving their subjective well-being (Diener et al., 2018).

The tourism sector stands out as a concept that has a significant impact on subjective well-being (Holm et al., 2017). Travel and tourism offer unique opportunities for individuals to discover new places, interact with diverse cultures, and escape the stresses of daily life (Thal & Hudson, 2019). These interactions can significantly increase individuals' subjective well-being. In summary, having new and diverse experiences has the potential to enhance life satisfaction and subjective well-being (Thal & Hudson, 2019).

The impact of tourism on subjective well-being is not limited to the relaxing and regenerative experiences that individuals have during their vacation; these effects may continue after the trip (Neal et al., 2007). Travellers return to their daily lives with new perspectives and more happiness. These gains can improve individuals' ability to cope with challenges and increase overall life satisfaction (Thal & Hudson, 2019). At the same time, the positive effects of tourism and travel on subjective well-being can also be realized through the strengthening of social relationships (Çiki & Tanrıverdi, 2023). Travel offers opportunities for families and groups of friends to spend quality time and strengthen ties (Su et al., 2016a). Such social interactions are among the key factors that contribute to people's subjective well-being.

Travel within the framework of ecotourism, NBT and sustainable tourism can increase individuals' environmental awareness and contribute to their subjective well-being (Üzülmez et al., 2023). NBT activities strengthen people's ties with nature and provide psychological relaxation by offering experiences of being in touch with nature and exploring in an environmentally respectful way (Qiu et al., 2021).

In order to maximize the effects of tourism on subjective well-being, destinations and tourism service providers should guide visitors in a way that will enrich their overall experience and encourage sustainable tourism practices (Uysal et al., 2016). In this way, while increasing the subjective well-being of individuals, it also yields results that positively impact the region's tourism, such as destination loyalty and revisiting the destination (Wang et al., 2019).

2.3 Self-Determination Theory

NBT is a journey of discovery where individuals immerse themselves in the natural environment (Sneha & Nagarjuna, 2023). This form of tourism focuses as much on the individual experiences of visitors as on the conservation of biodiversity and ecosystems (Wolf et al., 2019). SDT examines the psychological elements that underpin these experiences, including the needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Deci et al., 2017). NBT provides a platform for visitors to satisfy these basic needs, as time spent in nature allows the individual to interact with their own choices and rhythms (Farkić et al., 2023).

The autonomy dimension of SDT involves allowing individuals to choose their own activities, such as taking nature walks or bird-watching (Deci & Ryan, 2000). This gives visitors the chance for self-actualisation, while at the same time reinforcing a sense of being in harmony with the natural world. The need for competence is met through learning and skill development opportunities (Çiki et al., 2024; Deci et al., 2001). For instance, a tour with a nature guide offers participants the chance to learn about the ecosystem and apply this knowledge.

In NBT, the need for connection is fulfilled through the bonds that individuals form with nature and with other people (Strzelecka et al., 2021). Participating in group activities or environmental protection projects strengthens interpersonal relationships while increasing attachment to nature. Such interactions make individuals' relationships with nature more meaningful and reinforce their awareness of the importance of nature conservation.

Within this framework, the research in Igneada examines the effects of Self-Determination Theory (SDT) on NBT, addressing the links between visitors' travel motivations, subjective well-being, and intentions to return to the destination. In this context, Igneada's unique natural beauty offers visitors a range of opportunities to satisfy these three basic needs, thereby enriching their overall experience and enhancing the attractiveness of Igneada as a tourism destination.

2.4 Hypothesis Development

In this study, travel motivations, subjective well-being and revisit intentions of Turkish tourists visiting Igneada town are examined in the context of NBT. On this basis, a conceptual model that suggests that Turkish tourists' travel motivations affect their subjective well-being and revisit

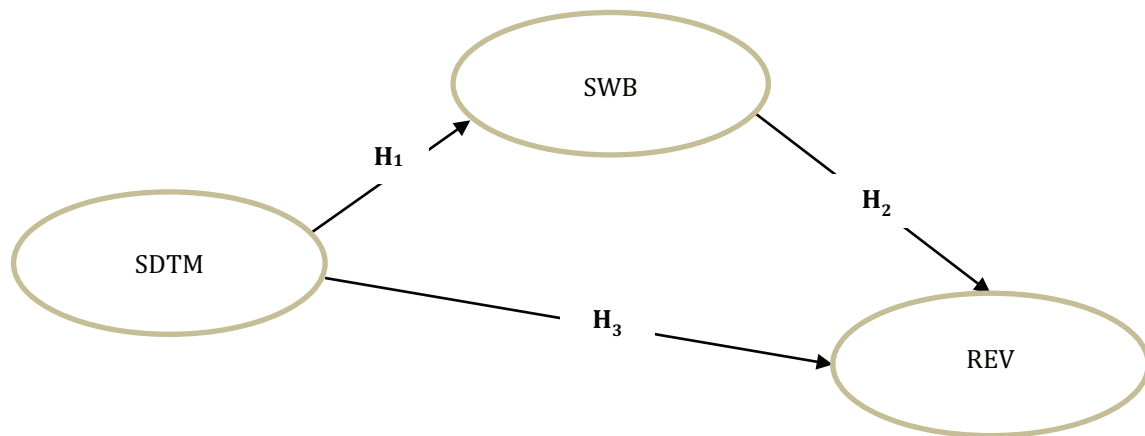


Figure 1: Model of the research

intentions, and that their subjective well-being affects their revisit intentions, is used. In the study, a ‘relational research model’ was adopted in order to analyze the relationships between variables and predict potential outcomes (Karasar, 2011). The research model is given in Figure 1.

Although behavioural intentions have often been the main focus of tourism research (Tunde-Ajayi, 2021), the impact of tourist motivation on subjective well-being has also been recognised as an important outcome (Kim et al., 2015). Iso-Ahola (1989) argued that tourism motivations support subjective well-being, including elements such as escape purpose and desire to learn. Çiki and Tanrıverdi (2024) found that the travel motivations of visitors travelling to ‘Dilek Peninsula Big Menderes Delta National Park’ to participate in NBT activities positively affected their subjective well-being. Cini et al. (2012), who studied tourists visiting Kruger National Park, found a significant relationship between visitors’ motivations and their subjective well-being. Kim et al. (2015) found a significant relationship between the motivations and subjective well-being of tourists travelling for hiking. H1 was developed in line with previous research.

H1: Self-determined travel motivation of tourists visiting Igneada positively affects their subjective well-being.

Diener and Emmons (1985) defined subjective well-being as ‘the feelings that individuals have about their lives or their perceptions of achieving what they want in life’. Mannell and Kleiber (1997) concluded that an individual’s subjective well-being affects future behaviours. The study conducted by Kim et al. (2015) found that subjective well-being influences revisit intention. A study conducted by Lin (2012) found that the well-being of tourists visiting hot springs has a positive effect on their intention to

revisit. On the other hand, the existence of a relationship between well-being and behavioural intentions has been revealed in various studies (Çiki et al., 2025; Kim et al., 2020; Reitsamer & Brunner-Sperdin, 2015). In this context, this thesis examines the relationship between subjective well-being and behavioural intentions and proposes the following hypothesis:

H2: Tourists’ subjective well-being positively affects their intention to revisit the destination.

Motivation has been modelled in the literature as an antecedent of possible future behaviours such as revisit intention (Jang et al., 2009). Baloglu (2000) confirmed that travel motivation is a determinant of visit intention. Hsu and Lam (2003) revealed that motivation, which they described as the main trigger of tourist behaviour, affects the intention to revisit. Lin’s 2012 study examined how specific tourism motivations, especially culinary experiences, shape tourists’ revisit intentions. Similarly, Khuong and Ha (2014) found that push and pull motivations have a strong positive relationship with tourists’ behavioural intentions. Chi and Phuong (2021), who collected data in three major cities in northern Vietnam, found that tourists’ travel motivations are significantly and positively related to their revisit intentions in the context of urban tourism. Hosany et al. (2019), who investigated the determinants of tourists’ intention to visit a destination using Heidi, a famous literary and television series character, as a stimulus, surveyed 410 Spanish tourists and found a significant relationship between tourists’ travel motivations and visit intentions. Therefore, this research proposes the following hypothesis:

H3: Travel motivation of tourists visiting Igneada positively affects the intention to visit again.

3 Methodology

This research aims to reveal the relationships between tourists' travel motivations, subjective well-being and revisit intentions. In this context, Igneada was found to be one of the most suitable destinations for this research. Igneada is a little-known but potential touristic destination with its natural beauties, rich biodiversity and nature-based activities. Despite this potential, there is no research examining how this destination affects tourists' travel motivation, subjective well-being and revisit intentions.

3.1 Research Area: Igneada

Igneada is a settlement on the Black Sea coast of the Thrace Region, located in Demirkoy district of Kırklareli. This town has a wide coastline and is approximately 100 kilometres from the provincial centre of Kırklareli. The historical figure 'İne Bey', who gave his name to the region, annexed this region to Turkish lands and in time it was named Igneada (Igneada Municipality, 2023).

Igneada has a rich natural heritage and is home to the region's unique floodplain forests, fed by water from the Istranca Mountains. These forests are home to a variety of tree species such as beech, oak, ash and alder and, depending on the seasons, they experience periods when they are flooded or covered by lakes. Nearly 500 plant and animal species are observed in this ecosystem; it is the habitat of species such as wild cats, otters and swans (Demirkoy Municipality, 2023).

Floodplain Forests, located in the town of Igneada, are one of the 11 floodplain forests in the world. Floodplain forests are special ecosystems that usually form where rivers meet the sea. Igneada Floodplain Forests are one of the largest and best preserved floodplain forests in Europe. The town of Igneada and the Floodplain Forests National Park stand out with the various nature-based activities they offer to their visitors. In this touristic destination, visitors first have the opportunity to explore the unique floodplain forests and the floodplain ecosystem of the region (Uslu & Keceli, 2019).

3.2 Sample of The Study

When the international literature is examined, it is seen that various studies have been conducted to understand

the revisit intentions of tourists and to reveal their subjective well-being (Kim et al., 2015; Su et al., 2016b). However, the number of studies conducted in this context for touristic destinations with lower recognition in Turkish and international literature is more limited. In this context, it was planned to choose a destination that is not yet widely known as a research site, and Igneada was chosen as the research site.

The population of this research consists of both local and foreign tourists visiting Igneada. The sample of the research is limited to local tourists coming to Igneada. Statistics on tourists visiting Igneada, the seaside resort of Thrace, could not be obtained. However, it is seen in the data shared by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism that the number of visitors to the facilities operating in the Demirkoy district, where Igneada is located (Demirkoy tourism management certified and municipality certified facilities), was 14,739 in 2022 (Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2023).

In this context, considering the number of visits to the facility in the Demirkoy district, 374 valid questionnaires were determined to be sufficient for the research.

3.3 Data Collection Instruments

In line with the aim of the study, the survey technique was used among quantitative research methods. The questionnaire form consists of 4 sections. In the first part of the questionnaire, questions to determine the demographic characteristics of the visitors are included. The second section includes the 19-item travel motivation scale developed by Mehmetoglu (2007). In the following section, a 4-item subjective well-being scale developed by Kim et al. (2015) is presented. The last part of the questionnaire includes the scale of revisit intention developed by Jeong et al. (2019), and this scale consists of 3 items. In the fourth and final section, a scale is included to measure visitors' intention to revisit. The scale created by Jeong et al. (2019) consists of 3 items. The scales used in the research are graded on a 5-point Likert scale (1- Strongly disagree - 3- Neither agree nor disagree - 5 - Strongly agree).

3.4 Data Collection Process

Before collecting the data for the study, the approval of the ethics committee was obtained from Selcuk University

with the decision number 190 dated 06.11.2023. After the permission from the ethics committee, the data collection process started. Since the data were collected online, a text was prepared in the online questionnaire emphasizing that the anonymity of the participants was guaranteed and explaining that participation in the survey was voluntary.

This research adopted the purposive sampling method, which is one of the non-probability sampling approaches (Etikan et al., 2016). Purposive sampling method, which is used to consciously select participants with high potential to provide information in accordance with the needs of the research, is one of the non-probability sampling methods and is frequently preferred in tourism research and research in various fields (Ural & Kilic, 2018).

The survey application of the research was carried out between 15.11.2023 and 05.02.2024 on Turkish-local tourists who had previously visited Igneada town. In this study, the data collection process was conducted online, taking into account that tourist flows to the Igneada region decrease during this period. Since winter is a period of low tourism activity, the online data collection process facilitated data collection.

On the other hand, the online collection of questionnaires offers several advantages to researchers, thanks to modern technological capabilities. Firstly, online surveys overcome geographical limitations, allowing a wider pool of respondents to be reached. This broadens the scope of the research and provides the opportunity to collect data from more diverse demographic groups. Secondly, online surveys allow respondents to complete the survey at their own pace and convenience. As a result of implementing the survey, 386 usable questionnaires were obtained.

3.5 Data Analysis

The research utilised two different statistical software programs to analyse the demographic characteristics of the participants and hypothesis tests. SPSS was used to analyze demographic data such as gender, age, monthly income, marital status, level of education, and how often they visit. AMOS was used to evaluate the hypotheses and examine the relationships between variables (Öğretmenoğlu et al., 2025); structural equation modelling and path coefficients were estimated through this platform to test whether the research hypotheses were supported.

3.6 Characteristics of Participants

Among the local visitors visiting Igneada town, 58.8% of the participants included in the research were male. However, 51% of the visitors participating in the research are married. When the age groups of the participants were analyzed, it was determined that the highest participation was from the 26-31 age group with 29.5%. When the education levels of the research participants who came to Igneada town are examined, 40.9% of them have a bachelor's degree. Of the remaining participants, 22.2% had an associate's degree and 19.1% had high school education. The lowest participation is in the graduate group (17.6%). 26.6% of the respondents have a monthly income between 12,001-20,000 TL, and this is the largest group.

Table 1: Participants' demographics

Individual Characteristics	f	%
Gender		
Male	227	58.8
Female	159	41.2
Total	386	100
Age Group		
18-25	77	19.95
26-31	114	29.53
32-37	64	16.59
38-43	58	15.02
44-49	46	11.92
50 years and over	27	7
Total	386	100
Education Level		
High School	74	19.17
Associate degree	86	22.28
Bachelor's degree	158	40.93
Master's/Doctoral Degree	68	17.62
Total	386	100
Marital Status		
Single	189	48.96
Married	197	51.04
Total	386	100
Monthly Income		
12.000 TL and below	58	15.02
12.001-20.000	103	26.68
20.001-28.000	77	19.95
28.001-36.000	68	17.67
36.001-44.000	44	11.4
44.001 TL and over	36	9.33
Total	386	100

The group with the lowest participation is the group with an income of 44,001 TL and above, with 9.3%.

4 Results

Table 2 shows the results of measurement items, reliability testing of items, and factor loadings. The Cronbach's alpha values for each construct were greater than 0.7, indicating high reliability and credibility of the measurement scales. Composite reliability (CR) refers to all the measure-

ment items that constantly measure the same construct. The CR values for each construct were acceptable, confirming the inter-item reliability (Hair et al., 2014). The factor loadings of the variables are greater than 0.6, indicating that the items contribute to measuring the construct.

Table 3 shows the discriminant validity of the scales used in the study. The square roots of AVE (Average Variance Extracted) calculated for SWB (0.57), SDTM (0.67), and REV (0.79) constructs were higher than the correlation values of these constructs with other latent variables in the model. As stated by Hair et al. (2014), the square root of the AVE calculated for a construct should be greater than the correlations with other constructs in the model. In line with this criterion, the results show that discriminant validity is sufficient. Therefore, it is concluded that these measurement constructs are independent and reliable.

Table 2: The results of the measurement items

Items	Factor Loadings
SWB-1	0.885
SWB-2	0.859
SWB-3	0.758
SWB-4	0.717
<i>Subjective well-being: $\alpha=0.867$, CR=0.905, AVE=0.656</i>	
SDTM-1	0.841
SDTM-2	0.836
SDTM-3	0.765
SDTM-4	0.723
SDTM-5	0.751
SDTM-6	0.612
SDTM-7	0.680
SDTM-8	0.719
SDTM-9	0.622
SDTM-10	0.574
SDTM-11	0.563
SDTM-12	0.615
SDTM-13	0.571
SDTM-14	0.603
SDTM-15	0.556
SDTM-16	0.543
SDTM-17	0.566
SDTM-18	0.527
SDTM-19	0.548
<i>Self-determined travel motivation: $\alpha=0.891$, CR=0.904, AVE=0.635</i>	
REV-1	0.918
REV-2	0.907
REV-3	0.882
<i>Intention to revisit: $\alpha=0.897$, CR=0.903, AVE=0.642</i>	

Table 3: Discriminant Validity

Constructs	1	2	3
1. SWB	0.57		
2. SDTM	0.42	0.67	
3. REV	0.34	0.46	0.79

4.1 Hypothesis Testing

In this study, the bootstrapping procedure was used to test whether the path coefficients are statistically significant. Different goodness-of-fit indices were used to evaluate the model. As a result of the analysis, the degrees of freedom for chi-square (χ^2/sd) were found to be at an acceptable level of 2.91. In addition, RMSEA value is 0.071, CFI value is 0.90, GFI value is 0.91, and NFI values are within acceptable ranges with 0.92.

As a result of the analysis, it was determined that self-determined travel motivation had a positive and significant effect on participants' subjective well-being ($\beta_{(SDTM \rightarrow SWB)} = 0.369$, $p < 0.000$). On the other hand, the present study suggests that subjective well-being has an effect on revisit intention. In this context, H2 (Subjective well-being of local tourists visiting Igneada positively affects revisit intention) was supported ($\beta_{(SWB \rightarrow REV)} = 0.396$, $p < 0.000$).

Another hypothesis of the study suggests that travel motivation affects revisit intention, and H3

Table 4: The results of hypotheses testing

Hypothesis	Path	Direct Effect	t-values	P-values	Results
H1	SDTM> SWB	0.369	1.327	0.000*	Supported
H2	SWB> REV	0.396	1.965	0.000*	Supported
H3	SDTM> REV	0.486	2.723	0.000*	Supported

* $p < 0.01$

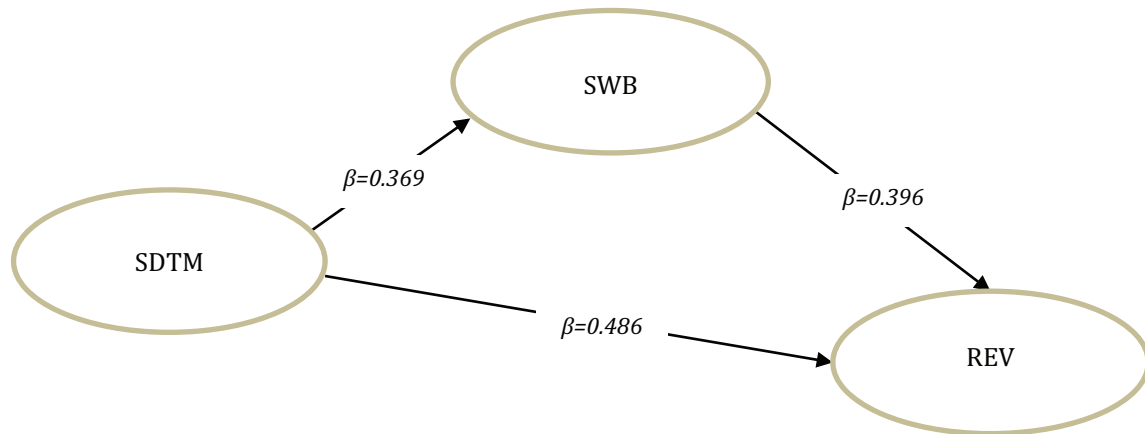


Figure 2: Structural model

(Self-determined travel motivation of local tourists to Igneada positively affects revisit intention) was supported ($\beta_{\text{(SDTM} \rightarrow \text{REV)}} = 0.486$, $p < 0.000$). In this context, all hypotheses put forward in line with the research objectives were supported.

5 Discussion

This study found that self-determined travel motivation has a positive influence on the subjective well-being of local tourists visiting Igneada. This finding underlines the importance of understanding the psychological aspects of travel experiences and emphasises the role of travel motivation in enhancing tourists' subjective well-being (Jang et al., 2009). This hypothesis, which is consistent with the research in the literature (Cini et al., 2012; Çiki & Tanriverdi, 2024; Kim et al., 2015) and supported in this study, contributes to the existing literature by emphasizing the psychological benefits of travel motivation for individuals.

The present study confirms that subjective well-being has a significant influence on revisit intention. This finding aligns with earlier studies that highlight the role of subjective well-being in shaping tourists' behavioural intentions (Karagöz & Ramkissoon, 2023; Kim et al., 2015; Lin, 2012; Mannell & Kleiber, 1997; Neal et al., 2007; Park et al., 2018; Reitsamer & Brunner-Sperdin, 2015). Notably, the results extend this relationship beyond well-known tourist destinations, demonstrating that even lesser-known regions can cultivate positive well-being experiences that encourage repeat visits.

Finally, the findings of this study confirm that self-determined travel motivation has a direct effect on revisit intention, consistent with previous research (Hosany

et al., 2019; Hsu & Lam, 2003; Huang & Hsu, 2009; Khuong & Ha, 2014; Lin, 2012). This result indicates that travel motivation is not solely related to the immediate travel experience but also plays a crucial role in shaping tourists' future behavioural intentions. In other words, individuals who are intrinsically motivated to visit a destination are more likely to develop a lasting connection and a stronger intention to return.

6 Conclusion

This research aims to explore the relationships between travel motivation, subjective well-being, and revisit intentions among tourists who travel to participate in NBT activities within the context of SDT. To achieve the study's aim, it was determined that Igneada, which has tourism potential but is relatively unknown, is one of the most suitable destinations. Igneada is an ideal destination for bird watching and nature photography, thanks to its rich forested areas and lakes. It also offers various tourism activities, including canoeing, ATV safari tours, camping, hiking, water sports, and beach activities. In this context, an online survey was conducted among Turkish tourists visiting Igneada, which was selected as the research site.

The findings of this study indicate that there are positive relationships between subjective well-being, travel motivation, and behavioural intentions of domestic tourists visiting Igneada. These results are consistent with the existing literature, including studies by Hsu and Lam (2003), Iso-Ahola (1989), Lin (2012), Çiki and Tanriverdi (2024) and Cini et al. (2012). Furthermore, this study provides empirical support for the interaction between the relationships among motivation,

subjective well-being and behavioural intentions in the context of NBT activities.

Although the number of studies conducted in the context of NBT is increasing, it can be stated that there are still gaps in the international literature, especially in Turkish. In line with the literature review and the findings obtained from the research, some implications for future studies are presented. First of all, this study focused only on Turkish visitors. To expand the context of the findings, foreign tourists could be considered in future studies and compared with the results of this study. In addition, the sample of this study consists of visitors travelling to participate in nature-based activities. Therefore, the opinions of different tourist types on the subject may differ. In future studies, the scope of the research can be expanded and compared with different types of tourists.

For a little-known destination, recognising potential visitor groups and providing them with relevant content is critical to increasing engagement and visitor numbers. In this context, although this study provides some clues, the need for further research is clear. The variables of this study are travel motivation, subjective well-being and intention to revisit. In addition to these variables, empirical studies can be conducted with many other variables, such as recommendation intention, satisfaction, destination loyalty, and destination image. Mediating or moderating variables can also be used. In this context, gaps in the literature can be filled. In addition, different dimensions of the variables used in this study can be reconsidered. For example, the travel motivation and subjective well-being scales used in this study contain no negative statements. Researchers can also investigate the negative aspects of travel motivation and subjective well-being scales.

The direct involvement and benefit of local communities strengthen the sustainability of NBT. Local people taking an active role in tourism activities, marketing local products, and promoting local culture both provide economic benefits and contribute to the protection of cultural heritage. In this context, it is recommended that more attention be paid to studies on the effects of NBT on local people and their perspectives on this type of tourism.

The research results confirm that individuals who visit tourist destinations with low awareness tend to have positive experiences, which highlights the importance of increasing the destination's awareness, particularly through targeted advertising and promotion. The deficiencies in advertising and promotional activities stand out clearly in increasing the recognition of the destination. This situation emphasises the need for an effective marketing

strategy and comprehensive planning. In this context, destination managers and tourism marketers should turn to more innovative promotional methods to reach potential visitors and attract their attention to the destination.

Thematic marketing campaigns that emphasise Igneada's natural and cultural features can be developed. For example, a "Biodiversity Festival" could be organized to highlight Igneada's endemic plant species and bird diversity. Such a festival could attract nature lovers and environmentally conscious tourists and would also be an important promotional material.

The natural beauties of Igneada can be introduced to potential visitors with the help of virtual reality (VR) technology and an official website. Especially in the post-pandemic period, people have become more open to exploring destinations virtually before travelling. Presenting natural areas such as Igneada's forests, lakes and beaches through VR tours can attract people's interest and motivate them to make a real visit (Tanriverdi & Çiki, 2024).

Creating interactive content on platforms such as Instagram and YouTube that showcases the natural and cultural richness of Igneada is crucial for any destination, but especially so for those with low awareness. Live broadcasts, interviews with guides familiar with the region and opportunities to encourage users to share their own experiences can be created. Visitor experiences can also be highlighted by using photos and videos taken by visitors.

Marketing strategies based on environmental sustainability can be developed for Igneada, which boasts significant natural attractions. For example, initiatives such as reducing plastic use, projects to protect local flora and fauna, and environmental clean-up events can be effective in attracting eco-friendly tourists.

Special events and festivals on the beaches of Igneada can be a great way to attract visitors. For example, movie screenings under the stars, beach volleyball tournaments or small concerts with local bands. In this way, the flow of tourists as well as locals to the destination can increase.

Tourism businesses can design customized experiences based on visitors' personal interests and needs. For instance, in Igneada Floodplain Forests, meditation, mindfulness, and forest bathing programs can be offered that are designed to address the spiritual and mental needs of visitors. Such programs enable individuals to establish a deeper connection with nature and maximize their subjective well-being.

Regular monitoring and evaluation of tourism activities can help assess the impact of NBT on the

environment, local communities and visitor experiences. By collecting data and feedback, destination managers can make informed decisions to improve sustainability practices and increase visitor satisfaction.

6.1 Limitations and Future Studies

This study, which aims to reveal the relationships between travel motivations, subjective well-being and revisit intentions of Turkish tourists visiting Igneada town, has some limitations. One of the most significant limitations of the study is that the sample consists only of Turkish tourists visiting Igneada. The survey technique was used in the research, and the inability to obtain the personal opinions of the participants in this way is another limitation of the research. As in the majority of scientific studies, time and financial constraints are among the limitations of the study.

This study, which examines the relationships between nature-based tourists' travel motivations, subjective well-being and revisit intentions, was designed with a quantitative method and a survey was conducted. However, it is essential to complement research conducted with quantitative methods with qualitative methods to gain a deeper understanding of the subject. In this direction, a specific sample can be selected and interviews can be conducted with visitors to the region and local people. In this way, tourism activities in lesser-known regions can be improved.

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