



The effect of landscape authenticity, nature-based experiences, tourist participation in the preservation of tourist villages in Sipispis district

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
Article history: Received Jul 15, 2026 Revised Jul 24, 2026 Accepted Aug 2, 2026 Keywords: Landscape Authenticity; Nature-Based Experience; Tourist Participation; Tourist Village Preservation.	This study aims to analyze the effect of landscape authenticity, nature-based experience, and tourist participation on the preservation of tourist villages in Sipispis District. This research uses a quantitative approach with Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) based on Partial Least Square (SmartPLS). The sample was obtained through questionnaires distributed to tourists visiting tourist villages. The results show that landscape authenticity, nature-based experience, and tourist participation have a positive and significant effect on the preservation of tourist villages. Landscape authenticity is the most dominant variable. The R-Square value of 0.654 indicates that the model has moderate explanatory power. This study implies that tourist village management should maintain landscape authenticity, improve nature-based tourism experiences, and encourage active tourist participation to support sustainability. <i>This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC license.</i> 

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1. INTRODUCTION

The development of tourism villages has become a key strategy for advancing sustainable tourism in Indonesia. By integrating natural, cultural, and social resources, tourism villages empower local communities while supporting economic growth as well as environmental and cultural preservation. (Dewi, 2022). From a sustainable tourism perspective, preserving tourist villages is a crucial element of tourism development. Preservation involves not only maintaining the quality of the physical environment but also protecting local cultural values, social traditions, and community wisdom. Failure to preserve these aspects may result in environmental degradation, cultural change, and a decline in the long-term attractiveness and competitiveness of tourist villages (Susanto et al., 2019).

Landscape authenticity is an important factor in preserving tourist villages. It reflects the natural and cultural environment that retains its original characteristics, providing a unique tourism experience while strengthening the identity of the destination. As a result, authentic landscapes form a key foundation for the development of sustainable nature-based tourism (Arnaiz-Schmitz, 2021). Tourists' perceptions of landscape authenticity positively influence their attitudes and behaviors. Destinations that preserve their environmental and cultural authenticity are generally evaluated more favorably, increasing tourist satisfaction, emotional attachment, and support for local environmental and cultural conservation efforts (Kou & Xue, 2024).

Nature-based experience is another important factor in tourist village development. As tourism trends shift toward more meaningful and participatory travel, tourists increasingly seek direct interaction with nature and local communities through activities such as farming, nature exploration, and cultural experiences. These interactions enhance the quality of the tourist experience while supporting sustainable tourism development (Mandić & Mccool, 2023). Tourists' experiences influence not only their satisfaction but also their environmental and cultural awareness. Direct participation in nature-based activities enhances their understanding of conservation, encouraging responsible behaviors such as respecting local culture, maintaining cleanliness, and supporting community conservation initiatives (Breiby et al., 2020).

Tourist participation is also a crucial factor in efforts to preserve tourism villages. Within the framework of sustainable tourism, tourists are no longer viewed merely as consumers but also as stakeholders who share responsibility for the destination's sustainability. Tourist participation is expected to influence the preservation of tourism villages, as the behavior of visitors during their stay directly impacts environmental conditions, cultural preservation, and the continuity of tourism activities. Tourists who participate actively for instance, by adhering to destination rules, maintaining cleanliness, respecting local customs, purchasing local products, and engaging in conservation activities can help mitigate the negative impacts of tourism while reinforcing the preservation efforts undertaken by the local community and tourism village management (Ode et al., 2025). High levels of tourist participation are expected to enhance the effectiveness of tourism village conservation efforts by fostering harmonious relationships between tourists and local communities. Such relationships cultivate mutual respect, raise awareness regarding the local environment and culture, and strengthen collaboration in maintaining the destination's sustainability. Consequently, the greater the tourist participation, the higher the likelihood of achieving sustainable conservation for the tourism village (Raharja & Mahyuni, 2021).

Local communities also play a vital role in sustaining tourist villages. As the primary stakeholders, they contribute to the planning, management, and evaluation of tourism activities, helping to ensure effective resource management and reduce the risk of environmental and cultural degradation (Sutarya et al., 2024). Sipispis District has strong potential for tourism village development due to its attractive natural landscapes, preserved local traditions, and rich cultural diversity. However, sustaining this potential requires maintaining landscape authenticity, providing meaningful nature-based tourism experiences, and encouraging the active participation of tourists and local communities in destination conservation (Dai, 2025).

Various previous studies have shown that the preservation of tourist villages is influenced by several factors related to tourist behavior and the quality of destination management. Sari and Kurniawan (2020) stated that preserving tourist villages can improve community welfare by strengthening community-based economies. (Ma et al., 2023) found that environmental and cultural preservation are key factors in maintaining the sustainability of tourist villages. (Kurnia, 2025) revealed that low attention to conservation aspects can lead to environmental damage and reduce the quality of tourist attractions. Furthermore, (Darmayanti, 2020) explained that the active involvement of tourists and the community is a crucial factor in supporting the preservation of tourist villages. Meanwhile, (Junaid et al., 2022) emphasized that successful preservation of tourist villages requires synergy between managers, local communities, and tourists to ensure the long-term sustainability of the destination.

However, previous studies have generally examined these factors in isolation. Research on landscape authenticity has focused on destination appeal, satisfaction, and tourist visitation intentions, whereas studies on nature-based experiences have emphasized experience quality, satisfaction, and tourist loyalty. Meanwhile, research on tourist participation has largely addressed responsible behavior and tourist engagement in tourism activities (Zakiah, 2025). Consequently, studies simultaneously examining the impact of these three variables on the preservation of tourism villages remain limited, particularly regarding tourism villages at the sub-district level, such as Sipispis Sub-district. This study aims to address this gap by analyzing the influence of landscape

authenticity, nature-based experiences, and tourist participation on the preservation of tourism villages.

Based on the above description, this research is crucial to address the existing research gap. This study aims to analyze the influence of landscape authenticity, nature-based experiences, and tourist participation on the preservation of tourist villages in Sipispis District. Theoretically, this research is expected to contribute to the development of sustainable tourism studies, particularly those related to nature- and culture-based tourist villages. Practically, the results of this study are expected to provide input for tourist village managers and local governments in formulating policies and management strategies that support environmental preservation, local culture, and the sustainability of tourist destinations.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a quantitative approach with an explanatory research design, aiming to empirically examine the causal relationships among landscape authenticity, nature-based experiences, and tourist participation in the preservation of a tourism village. A quantitative approach was selected because the study focuses on statistically testing the relationships between variables based on formulated hypotheses (Creswell & Creswell, 2023; Sugiyono, 2019). The research was conducted in a tourism village in Sipispis District, Serdang Bedagai Regency, which was purposively selected due to its relatively authentic rural landscape characteristics and nature-based tourism potential that align with the study's variables. The study population comprises all tourists visiting tourism villages in Sipispis District, with an unknown total size (infinite population). Therefore, the sample size was determined using the Lemeshow formula (Lemeshow et al., 1990, cited in Umar, 2021) with a 95% confidence level ($Z = 1.96$), an estimated proportion of 0.5, and a 10% margin of error, resulting in a minimum sample size of 96 respondents. A 10% margin of error was adopted because this exploratory study targeted an infinite population, making it appropriate for obtaining a representative sample under time and resource constraints (Sugiyono, 2019; Umar, 2021). Data were successfully collected from 104 respondents, exceeding the required minimum sample size, using a purposive sampling technique (Sugiyono, 2019).

Research data consists of primary data obtained through distributing questionnaires using a Likert scale (1–5) and secondary data sourced from scientific journals and relevant books (Ghozali, 2021). Research variables include landscape authenticity, nature-based experiences, and tourist participation as independent variables, as well as preserving tourist villages as the dependent variable. Indicators of landscape authenticity include environmental naturalness, authenticity of traditional spatial planning, environmental sustainability, harmony of buildings with the environment, and uniqueness of the landscape. Indicators of nature-based experiences include direct interaction with nature, involvement in nature-based activities, comfort in traveling, memorable experiences, and learning about nature and culture. Indicators of tourist participation include compliance with rules, concern for cleanliness, support for the local economy, concern for facilities and the environment, and respect for local culture. Meanwhile, indicators for preserving tourist villages include environmental sustainability, cultural preservation, sustainability of tourist activities, sustainability of tourist attractions, and collaboration in conservation. All these indicators were compiled based on previous research, namely (Nur Afria Nanda Safitri, 2023), (Apriani, 2025), (Anwar, 2023), (Sulistyo et al., 2023), (Lewomada et al., 2025), and (Lubis, 2023). Data analysis was conducted using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with the aid of SmartPLS, involving an evaluation of the outer model to assess validity and reliability, and the inner model to examine relationships between variables based on R-square values, path coefficients, and predictive relevance (Q^2) (Hair et al., 2022).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Research Overview

This research was conducted in a tourist village in Sipispis District, Serdang Bedagai Regency, an area known for its nature- and culture-based tourism potential. Its authentic landscapes

and preserved local culture provide unique tourist experiences while supporting sustainable tourism through landscape conservation and nature-based tourism development (Maharani, 2024).

Tourist villages in Sipispis District provide nature-based experiences that enable tourists to interact with the environment and local communities. These experiences enhance environmental and cultural awareness while encouraging responsible behavior that supports destination sustainability (Rosari, 2023).

In this study, tourists are seen as having a crucial role in supporting the sustainability of tourist villages through their participation in maintaining environmental cleanliness, complying with regulations, and respecting local culture. This participation is expected to mitigate the negative impacts of tourism activities while supporting the preservation of tourist villages (Diwyarthi, 2024). Therefore, this study aims to analyze the influence of landscape authenticity, nature-based experiences, and tourist participation on the preservation of tourist villages in Sipispis District. The results are expected to serve as a basis for formulating sustainable tourism village management strategies.

Respondent Characteristics

Respondent characteristics describe the profile of tourists visiting tourist villages in Sipispis District based on gender, age, region of origin, and visit frequency. These data provide background information for understanding perceptions of landscape authenticity, nature-based experiences, tourist participation, and tourist village preservation (Sugiyono, 2020).

Table 1. Respondent characteristics

Characteristic	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	39	37.5
	Female	65	62.5
Age	17–20 years	24	23.1
	21–25 years	61	58.7
	26–30 years	13	12.5
	>35 years	6	5.7
Place of Residence	Sipispis	33	31.73
	Outside Sipispis	71	68.27
Visit Frequency	Once	27	26
	2–3 times	27	26
	More than 4 times	50	48
Total Respondents		104	100

Based on Table 1, most respondents were female (62.5%), aged 21–25 years (58.7%), originated from outside Sipispis District (68.27%), and had visited more than four times (48%). These characteristics indicate that tourist villages in Sipispis District attract diverse visitors and encourage repeat visits, reflecting positive tourism experiences (Novara et al., 2025). The diversity of respondent characteristics also provides a representative basis for analyzing the effects of landscape authenticity, nature-based experiences, and tourist participation on tourist village preservation (Apriani, 2025).

SmartPLS Results

A total of 104 tourists visiting tourist villages in Sipispis District participated in this study. Data were analyzed using PLS-SEM with SmartPLS, including measurement model (outer model) evaluation to assess reliability and validity, and structural model (inner model) evaluation to examine the relationships among variables (Anwar, 2023).

a. Outer Model

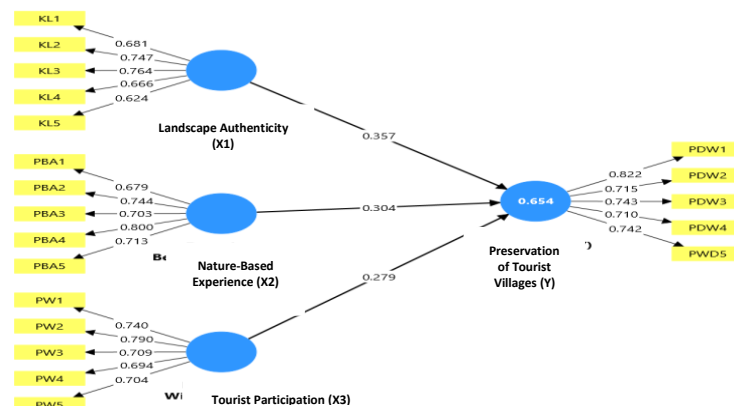


Figure 1. Research measurement model (outer model)

Convergent validity testing showed that all variable indicators recorded outer loading weights exceeding the minimum limit of 0.6. This high loading value indicates the indicators' accuracy in representing their constructs. Referring to Hair et al. (2022), all indicators were declared valid and therefore suitable for inclusion in the next data processing stage.

An examination of the outer model confirmed that all indicator attributes had loading values above 0.6, indicating they were able to accurately measure their respective variables. For the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values, the majority of variables successfully exceeded the 0.5 threshold—although the landscape authenticity variable fell slightly below this criterion, the figure was still within tolerable limits. Furthermore, the instrument's internal reliability was proven to be excellent, as evidenced by Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values exceeding 0.7 for all variables. Supported by the results of the discriminant validity test, which confirmed the clear separation between constructs, all measurement models were officially declared valid and reliable.

1. Convergent Validity

Table 2. Results of loading factor, Mean, ST, and AVE tests

Indicator	Landscape Authenticity (X1)	Tourist Participation (X3)	Tourism Village Preservation (Y)	Nature-Based Experience (X2)	AVE
KL1	0.681				0.488
KL2	0.747				
KL3	0.764				
KL4	0.666				
KL5	0.624				
PBA1				0.679	0.531
PBA2				0.744	
PBA3				0.703	
PBA4				0.8	
PBA5				0.713	
PDW1			0.822		0.559
PDW2			0.715		
PDW3			0.743		
PDW4			0.71		
PDW5			0.742		
PW1		0.74			0.531
PW2		0.79			
PW3		0.709			
PW4		0.694			
PW5		0.704			

The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) test results show that the majority of variables in this study recorded values above 0.5, indicating that convergent validity requirements were met. An AVE

value exceeding 0.5 indicates the construct's ability to predict and explain more than half of the variance in its indicators (Hair et al., 2022).

However, the landscape authenticity variable had an AVE value of 0.488, which is slightly below the ideal limit. However, this construct is still acceptable because the indicator's outer loading value meets the criteria and is supported by a Composite Reliability value of greater than 0.7. This is consistent with Hair et al.'s (2022) opinion, which states that AVE values below 0.5 are still tolerable as long as the indicators have good reliability.

2. Reliability

Table 3. Results of reliability and validity tests

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability (rho_c)
Landscape Authenticity (X ₁)	0.735	0.826
Tourist Participation (X ₃)	0.78	0.849
Tourism Village Preservation (Y)	0.802	0.863
Nature-Based Experience (X ₂)	0.781	0.85

Referring to the reliability test data in Table 3, the Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability for each variable consistently exceeded 0.7. This indicates that all constructs have an adequate degree of internal consistency. This reliability validity includes the variables landscape authenticity, nature-based experiences, tourist participation, and tourism village preservation. These results confirm the instrument's suitability and validity for further analysis.

3. Discriminant Validity

Table 4. Fornell larcker test results

Variabels	Landscape Authenticity (X ₁)	Tourist Participation (X ₃)	Tourism Village Preservation (Y)	Nature-Based Experience (X ₂)
Landscape Authenticity (X ₁)	0.698			
Tourist Participation (X ₃)	0.524	0.728		
Tourism Village Preservation (Y)	0.699	0.667	0.747	
Nature-Based Experience (X ₂)	0.644	0.662	0.719	0.729

The discriminant validity test in Table 4 shows that the square root of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value for each variable exceeds the correlation coefficient with other variables. This finding confirms the unique characteristics of each variable, preventing overlap between constructs. Based on these results, the measurement model has been proven to meet the criteria for discriminant validity and is able to measure each concept separately and explicitly.

b. Inner Model

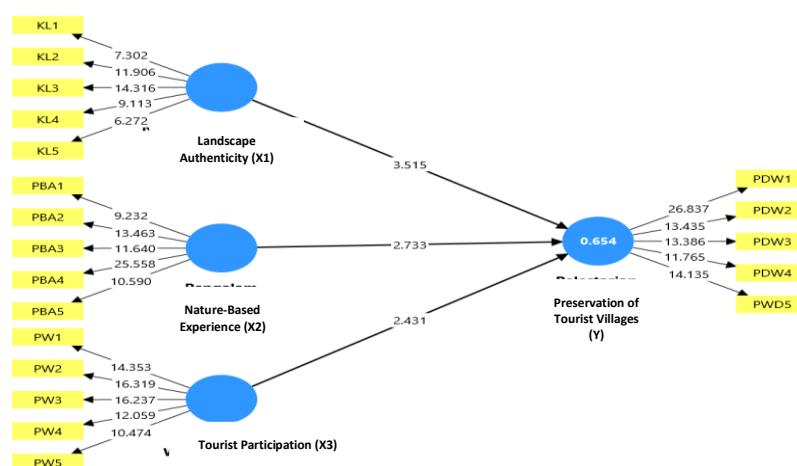


Figure 2. Inner model test results

Inner model evaluation is conducted to determine the model's ability to explain the dependent variable and to examine the relationships between variables in the study. This analysis includes R-square values, path coefficients, and hypothesis testing.

1. R-Square (R^2)

Table 5. R-square (r^2) test results

	R-square	R-square adjusted
Preservation of Tourist Villages (Y)	0.654	0.643

Referring to the R-Square evaluation in Table 5, the R^2 score for the tourism village preservation construct was 0.654. This demonstrates the interconnectedness of three independent variables landscape authenticity, nature-based experiences, and tourist participation in predicting 65.4% of the diversity of tourism village preservation variables, while the remaining 34.6% came from variables outside the scope of the study. This moderate value qualification indicates the model's strong effectiveness in explaining the phenomenon. The R-square value of 0.654 indicates that the research model possesses a strong capacity to explain the preservation of tourism villages; thus, landscape authenticity, nature-based experiences, and tourist participation are significant factors contributing to this preservation. Nevertheless, 34.6% of the variation in tourism village preservation is influenced by factors outside the model such as the role of local communities, government support, the quality of destination management, and tourism policy aspects which were not analyzed in this study.

2. path coefficients

Table 6. Path coefficients test results

	Landscape Authenticity (X_1)	Tourist Participation (X_3)	Tourism Village Preservation (Y)	Nature-Based Experience (X_2)
Landscape Authenticity (X_1)			0.357	
Tourist Participation (X_3)			0.279	
Tourism Village Preservation (Y)				
Nature-Based Experience (X_2)			0.304	

Based on the results of the path coefficient test in Table 6, all independent variables have a positive influence on the preservation of tourist villages. Landscape authenticity has a coefficient of 0.357, nature-based experience is 0.304, and tourist participation is 0.279. The coefficient value shows that landscape authenticity has the greatest influence compared to other variables. This indicates that authentic landscape conditions are the main factor in supporting the preservation of tourist villages.

3. Hypothesis testing

Table 7. Hypothesis testing (bootstrapping)

	Path Coefficient	T statistics	P values
Landscape Authenticity (X_1) -> Tourism Village Preservation (Y)	0.357	3.515	0.000
Tourist Participation (X_3) -> Tourism Village Conservation (Y)	0.279	2.431	0.015
Nature-Based Experience (X_2) -> Tourism Village Conservation (Y)	0.304	2.733	0.006

The results of the hypothesis testing indicate that all independent variables have a positive and significant effect on tourism village preservation. Landscape authenticity has the largest effect, with a coefficient of 0.357 ($t = 3.515$; $p < 0.05$), followed by nature-based experiences with a coefficient of 0.304 ($t = 2.733$; $p < 0.05$), and tourist participation with a coefficient of 0.279 ($t = 2.431$; $p < 0.05$).

These findings indicate that the higher the quality of landscape authenticity, the quality of nature-based experiences, and tourist participation, the higher the level of tourism village preservation. These results align with previous research that suggests that environmental authenticity, tourist experiences, and tourist engagement are important factors in supporting the sustainability of tourism destinations (Eraku et al., 2023).

Discussion

The Influence of Landscape Authenticity on the Preservation of Tourist Villages

Research results indicate that landscape authenticity has a positive and significant impact on the preservation of tourism villages. These findings suggest that natural and authentic landscapes are key factors in maintaining the sustainability of tourism villages. Well-maintained landscapes not only provide aesthetic value but also shape positive tourist perceptions regarding the quality of the destination (Sitanggang, 2025). Research results indicate that landscape authenticity has a positive and significant impact on the preservation of tourism villages. These findings suggest that natural and authentic landscapes are key factors in maintaining the sustainability of tourism villages. Well-maintained landscapes not only provide aesthetic value but also shape positive tourist perceptions regarding the quality of the destination.

These results align with research by (Rifdah & Kusdiwanggo, 2024), which states that landscape authenticity is a primary attraction for tourism villages and plays a crucial role in supporting destination sustainability. Furthermore, (Wijaya et al., 2022) emphasize that environmental authenticity contributes to the long-term sustainability of tourism villages. These research findings reinforce the results of previous studies by demonstrating that landscape authenticity serves not only as a tourist attraction but also as a factor directly influencing preservation efforts in tourism villages. Thus, the findings provide empirical evidence that the preservation of the original landscape is a crucial component of implementing sustainable tourism in tourism villages.

The Influence of Nature-Based Experiences on Preserving Tourism Villages

Research findings indicate that nature-based experiences have a positive and significant impact on the preservation of tourism villages. This suggests that the direct involvement of tourists in nature-based activities can enhance ecological awareness and understanding of local cultural values. Tourists who gain meaningful experiences tend to adopt a more caring attitude toward the environment and the sustainability of the destination.

These findings align with research by (Azizah, 2023), which states that nature-based tourism experiences can enhance tourist engagement and satisfaction. Furthermore, (Putri et al., 2024) also found that direct experiences with the natural environment can foster more responsible tourist behavior. Compared to previous studies that primarily focused on the impact on tourist satisfaction and loyalty, the results of this study extend those findings by demonstrating that nature-based experiences also contribute directly to the preservation of tourism villages. This underscores the fact that nature-based tourism experiences not only yield benefits for tourists but also support the implementation of sustainable tourism practices.

The Influence of Tourist Participation on the Preservation of Tourist Villages

Research findings indicate that tourist participation has a positive and significant impact on the preservation of tourism villages. This suggests that the active involvement of tourists in maintaining cleanliness, adhering to regulations, and supporting local community activities is a crucial factor for the sustainability of tourism villages. Tourists play a role not merely as visitors, but also as participants in efforts to preserve the destination.

These results are in line with research by (Sulistyo et al., 2023) which states that tourist participation contributes to maintaining the quality of the destination environment. Apart from that, (Permatasari, 2022) also confirmed that tourists who participate actively tend to behave more responsibly towards the environment. This finding is supported by (Dai, 2025) who shows that tourist participation has a direct influence on the success of preserving tourist villages. The findings of this study are consistent with previous research but reinforce the fact that tourist participation is a key factor supporting the successful preservation of tourism villages within the context of sustainable tourism. Consequently, tourists are no longer viewed merely as consumers of tourism services but also as strategic partners in safeguarding the local environment and culture.

Implications of Research Results for the Preservation of Tourist Villages

Overall, the findings of this study indicate that landscape authenticity, nature-based experiences, and tourist participation are complementary factors in supporting the preservation of tourism villages. Landscape authenticity serves as the primary foundation for maintaining the destination's appeal, nature-based experiences enhance tourist engagement, and tourist participation provides tangible support for sustainability.

These findings align with research by (Yuni et al., 2023), which states that the sustainability of tourism villages requires synergy among environmental conditions, tourist experiences, and tourist behavior. Compared to previous studies, the results of this research provide empirical evidence that these three factors not only exert an individual influence but also collectively contribute to the preservation of tourism villages. These findings reinforce the concept of sustainable tourism, which emphasizes the importance of balancing environmental preservation, high-quality tourism experiences, and the involvement of all stakeholders.

The practical implication of this study is that tourism village managers need to implement an integrated management strategy to ensure the destination's sustainability. Managers can maintain landscape authenticity by protecting the natural environment and preserving local character; develop educational, nature-based tourism packages that offer meaningful experiences to visitors; and encourage active tourist participation through environmental conservation activities, education on responsible tourism behavior, and collaboration with the local community. Implementing these strategies is expected to enhance the tourism village's competitiveness while simultaneously safeguarding environmental, social, and cultural sustainability in the long term.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that landscape authenticity, nature-based experiences, and tourist participation have a positive and significant impact on the preservation of tourism villages in Sipispis Regency. Landscape authenticity is the most dominant factor, while the three variables collectively explain 65.4% of the variation in tourism village preservation. This study contributes to strengthening the concept of sustainable tourism village preservation by demonstrating that the sustainability of tourism villages is influenced by the synergy between landscape authenticity, nature-based experiences, and active tourist participation.

These findings imply that local governments need to strengthen policies for the preservation and development of sustainable tourism villages, while tourism village managers need to maintain landscape authenticity, enhance nature-based tourism experiences, and encourage tourist participation in environmental and cultural preservation. Future research is advised to incorporate variables such as government support, tourism facilities, community empowerment, or economic aspects to make the tourism village preservation model more comprehensive.

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