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Push and Pull Factors Motivating Backpacker Tourists to Travel to the City of Bandung

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Abstract

Bandung City is one of Indonesia's leading urban tourism destinations and continues to attract a growing number of domestic tourists, including an increasing segment of backpacker tourists whose travel motivations differ from those of conventional, package-based tourists. This study aims to describe the internal (push) and external (pull) factors that motivate backpacker tourists to visit Bandung City and to compare descriptively which group of factors obtains a higher average score in this sample. A cross-sectional descriptive quantitative design was used, with data collected through a closed-ended questionnaire distributed to 114 backpacker tourists selected through purposive sampling and analyzed using a scoring technique with continuum-line categorization. Push factors, calculated as the unweighted mean of eight dimension-level percentages, fell into the high-to-very-high category with a mean score of 84%; Self Evaluation was the highest-scoring dimension (88%), followed by Escape (87%) and Regression (86%). Pull factors obtained a marginally higher unweighted mean of 86% across nine dimensions, with Environment scoring highest (89%), followed by Safety and Atmosphere (87% each), while Cleanliness recorded the lowest score among all eighteen dimensions (79%). A paired-samples t-test on respondent-level composite scores confirmed that this difference is statistically significant, $t(113) = 3.38$, $p = .001$, though the effect size is small (Cohen's $d = 0.32$), indicating that pull factors scored marginally but consistently higher than push factors within respondents rather than substantially outweighing them. Both push and pull factors nonetheless play a complementary role in shaping backpacker travel motivation, with implications for how destination managers in Bandung City might prioritize environmental comfort, public safety, and cleanliness for this segment.

Keywords: *push factors; pull factors; motivation; backpacker tourists; Bandung City*

INTRODUCTION

Independent, budget-conscious travel has become one of the most visible segments within Indonesia's growing domestic tourism market, and Bandung City sits squarely within this shift as one of West Java's leading urban destinations. Tourism remains a major contributor to the national economy, absorbing 25.01 million workers and generating 1.02 billion domestic trips in 2024 (Coordinating Ministry for Economic Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2025), and West Java was recorded as the province of origin of the highest number of domestic tourist trips nationally, accounting for 112.3 million trips, or 18.3% of the national total, during January–June 2025 (GoodStats, 2025). Within this broader picture, urban tourism remains one of the main motivations for domestic tourists, and Bandung is consistently ranked among Java's favorite urban destinations for its combination of colonial-era architecture, a dense culinary and creative-industry scene, and walkable public spaces (Wardhani, 2012; Sudaryanti et al., 2015).

One segment that continues to grow within this independent-travel style is the backpacker tourist. A 2019 industry survey found that 79% of Indonesian tourists had undertaken or

considered solo traveling (Klook, 2019), and backpacker communities such as Backpacker International have grown to more than 123,794 members (Susanti et al., 2022). This growth has accelerated in the post-pandemic period, as independent travelers increasingly plan trips through peer recommendations, social media, and travel-vlogger content rather than conventional travel agents (Hassan et al., 2022). This shift has also reshaped how solo and independent travel decisions are made more broadly (Nirkow & Abbasian, 2024). Backpacker tourists themselves are characterized by a cost-effective travel style, independent and flexible itinerary planning, use of local services, and an orientation toward interaction with local communities and authentic experiences (Hyde & Lawson, 2003; Maoz, 2007), a character closely related to the ease of exploring a city and the accessibility of its tourism areas that Bandung offers as an urban destination.

Nevertheless, this potential is accompanied by several destination-level challenges that connect directly to the pull dimensions examined in this study. Visitor concentration in heritage areas such as Braga and Asia Afrika triggers congestion during long holidays (iNews, 2025; Radar Bandung, 2026), a condition most relevant to the Accessibility and Atmosphere dimensions used below. Backpacker reviews shared on social media and travel platforms have also raised concerns about personal comfort and noted that Bandung's backpacker community is thinner than that of cities such as Yogyakarta (Kruseman, 2026), which bears on the Social Interaction (push) and Safety (pull) dimensions. Waste management is a further, well-documented challenge for the city's public-space maintenance: the Bandung City Environmental Agency (DLH) reported a shortfall of roughly 30 collection trips per day against an ideal daily need of about 110 trips — equivalent to around 210 tons — constrained mainly by limited disposal-site capacity (Radar Bandung, 2025), and the city's daily waste generation of 1,200–1,500 tons continues to outstrip its in-city processing capacity, leaving it reliant on the regional Sarimukti landfill and prone to visible pileups at high-traffic points such as Tegallega whenever that landfill's intake quota is constrained (AyoBandung.id, 2026). This is a real and continuing constraint on public-space Cleanliness even as a clean, well-maintained environment remains one of the main considerations for backpacker tourists when choosing a destination (Jang & Cai, 2002); this concern is captured directly by the Cleanliness dimension in the pull-factor framework used here.

These conditions indicate a gap between the potential of Bandung City as an urban tourism destination and the experience of backpacker tourists. Studies that specifically examine backpacker motivation using a push and pull factors approach in Bandung remain limited: the most closely related recent study examined gender disparity in Couchsurfing use among Bandung backpackers through a qualitative phenomenological lens (Kamarani et al., 2025), a specific practice and subsegment rather than a broader descriptive comparison of push and pull dimensions. This study addresses that more precise gap by referring to the push and pull factors theory of Dann (1977, 1981) and Crompton (1979) to: (1) describe the internal factors (push factors) that motivate backpacker tourists to visit Bandung City; (2) describe the external factors (pull factors) that motivate backpacker tourists to choose Bandung City as a destination; and (3) compare descriptively which group of factors obtains a higher average score among this sample of respondents.

The study's contribution is primarily contextual and managerial rather than theoretical: it does not propose a new motivational model but instead provides an updated, empirically grounded profile of backpacker motivation specific to Bandung City, intended as a practical basis for segment-oriented destination management rather than as a generalizable causal account. The findings are expected to inform destination managers and local government seeking to design tourism products and public-space interventions that meet the needs of independent, budget-conscious tourists.

Understanding backpacker motivation matters for destination management because this segment behaves differently from conventional, package-based tourists in ways that affect how

a city should be planned and promoted. Backpackers typically spend a longer period exploring a destination, rely heavily on word-of-mouth and peer reviews rather than travel agents, and distribute their spending across small, local businesses such as homestays, street food vendors, and independent tour guides rather than large hotel chains (Hyde & Lawson, 2003; Maoz, 2007). This spending pattern means that a destination able to satisfy backpacker motivations is also likely to strengthen its micro and small tourism enterprises. At the same time, because backpackers plan their own itineraries, their satisfaction depends more directly on the destination's actual environmental quality, safety, and ease of access than on the marketing promises of a travel package, making an accurate understanding of their push and pull motivations especially useful for local government and destination managers seeking to design interventions that genuinely match this segment's needs.

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LITERATURE REVIEW

Urban Tourism and Backpacker Tourists

Law No. 10 of 2009 concerning Tourism defines tourism as a range of tourism activities supported by facilities and services provided by the community, businesses, and local and central government. Destination competitiveness is commonly analyzed through the "Six A's" framework — Attractions, Accessibility, Amenities, Available packages, Activities, and Ancillary services — developed by Buhalis (2000) to synthesize the core components tourists evaluate when choosing a destination. This study draws on four of these six components — attraction, accessibility, amenities, and ancillary services — as the most directly relevant to how backpacker tourists experience an urban destination such as Bandung City. Tourists can also be classified by the level of interaction they seek during a trip into four typologies — drifter, explorer, individual mass tourist, and organized mass tourist — originating from Cohen's (1972) sociological classification of tourist roles, later discussed within the Indonesian tourism literature by Pitana (2005). Backpacker tourists correspond most closely to the explorer type, as they arrange their own trips, seek uncommon experiences, and interact intensively with local communities (Maoz, 2007).

As a service industry, tourism cannot be separated from the principles of marketing management. Kotler and Keller (2016) define marketing as the process of creating, communicating, and delivering value to customers and of managing customer relationships in ways that benefit both the organization and its stakeholders. Within this perspective, understanding what motivates a specific tourist segment, such as backpackers, is essential for destination managers seeking to design products and services that match visitors' actual needs and expectations. Urban tourism refers to tourism activity that takes place within a city and is built primarily on the city's own multifunctional character — its architecture, history, commerce, culinary scene, and public spaces — rather than on a single, purpose-built attraction (Wardhani, 2012). Bandung City exemplifies this pattern, combining colonial-era architecture along Braga and Asia Afrika streets, a dense culinary and creative-industry scene, and numerous accessible

public spaces that together allow visitors to construct their own walking routes and experiences (Sudaryanti et al., 2015). This flexible, self-directed structure of urban tourism aligns with how backpacker tourists typically travel, providing the practical basis for framing this study around the push and pull factors that shape backpacker motivation within an urban setting.

Operational Definition of Backpacker Tourists

Because the term "backpacker" can otherwise be applied loosely to any independent traveler, this study adopts an operational definition combining conceptual and measurable criteria. Conceptually, backpackers are independent, flexible, cost-conscious, and locally engaged travelers who value autonomy over convenience and direct engagement with local life over curated tours (Hyde & Lawson, 2003; Maoz, 2007). Distinguishing this segment from the closely related but distinct category of solo travelers is also necessary: backpacking and solo travel overlap but are not synonymous, since backpackers may travel alone or with companions, whereas solo travel is defined primarily by a traveler's arrival status rather than by budget or itinerary style (Nirkow & Abbasian, 2024). Operationally, respondents in this study were screened against the following criteria before completing the main questionnaire: (1) independent itinerary planning without a travel agent or fixed package tour; (2) use of budget accommodation (e.g., hostels, budget hotels, homestays); (3) a self-reported budget-conscious spending pattern; (4) a flexible, self-directed schedule; and (5) self-identification as a backpacker. Applying this definition also clarifies that the solo-travel growth statistics cited in the Introduction (Klook, 2019) support the broader trend toward independent travel rather than serving as direct evidence of backpacker-specific market growth, since backpackers in this sample predominantly travelled with companions rather than alone (see Respondent Profile below).

Push and Pull Factor Theory of Tourist Motivation

Crompton (1979) explains that a tourist's interest in visiting a particular place is shaped by the interaction between motivations that originate from within the tourist and the attractions offered by the destination itself. Building on this idea, Dann (1977, 1981) frames tourist motivation through push and pull factors: push factors are internal drivers rooted in an individual's psychological or emotional needs, such as the wish to escape daily pressure, to relax, to broaden one's outlook, or to fulfil social needs; pull factors are external attractions of a destination, such as natural beauty, cultural uniqueness, destination image, and supporting facilities, that help shape a positive destination image in the tourist's mind (Febrianto et al., 2025). This push–pull framework continues to be applied and refined in recent tourism research, including studies of emotional arousal in coastal destinations (Güzel et al., 2020), the motivational dimensions of adventure tourism (Janowski et al., 2021), and the travel motivations of young Indonesian tourists choosing an international urban destination (Latifah et al., 2024), confirming its continued relevance for segment-specific motivation studies such as this one.

Crompton (1979) identifies eight socio-psychological push dimensions that are widely used to measure tourist motivation: (1) Escape, the desire to get away from a perceived monotonous daily environment; (2) Exploration, the desire to explore and discover new things; (3) Self Evaluation, the opportunity to assess and learn about oneself through new experiences; (4) Relaxation, travelling to relieve physical and mental fatigue; (5) Prestige, the view that travel signals a certain lifestyle and brings social recognition; (6) Regression, the opportunity to engage in activities not normally possible in daily life, evoking nostalgia; (7) Enhancement of Kinship, using travel to strengthen family relationships; and (8) Social Interaction, using travel as a means to meet new people and build social relationships.

In addition to these internal drivers, visiting decisions are also shaped by pull factors originating from the destination itself. This study uses nine pull dimensions established in previous tourism research: Cleanliness, the Cleanliness and upkeep of the destination

environment, which relates directly to visitor comfort (Jang & Cai, 2002); Safety, the sense of security from crime, traffic, and social conditions (Jang & Cai, 2002); Destination Facility, the availability of accommodation, dining, and supporting facilities such as parking, public transport, signage, and restrooms (Nuryadin & Sugiri, 2023); Cost, the affordability of travel, accommodation, and consumption, a particular concern for budget-conscious backpackers (Kozak, 2002); Urban Attraction, distinctive urban elements such as landmarks, districts, paths, edges, and nodes that draw visitors through a city (Wiyoso & Pramitasari, 2021); Historical and Cultural attraction, the richness of a destination's heritage and culture; Accessibility, the ease of reaching and moving around the destination; Environment, the overall quality and comfort of the destination's spatial arrangement; and atmosphere, the ambience felt by visitors while exploring the destination.

The pull dimensions above were assembled from several distinct studies rather than adopted as a single validated instrument. Table 1 below sets out each dimension's operational definition, item count, and source in one place so this composition is transparent; the full wording of every item is reported in Appendix A.

Table 1. Push and Pull Factor Dimensions: Operational Definitions and Sources

Group	Dimension	Operational Definition	Items	Source
Push	Escape	Desire to get away from a perceived monotonous daily environment	2	Crompton (1979)
Push	Exploration	Desire to explore and discover new things	2	Crompton (1979)
Push	Self Evaluation	Opportunity to assess and learn about oneself through new experiences	2	Crompton (1979)
Push	Relaxation	Travelling to relieve physical and mental fatigue	2	Crompton (1979)
Push	Prestige	View that travel signals a lifestyle and brings social recognition	2	Crompton (1979)
Push	Regression	Opportunity for activities not normally possible in daily life; nostalgia	2	Crompton (1979)
Push	Enhancement of Kinship	Using travel to strengthen family relationships	2	Crompton (1979)
Push	Social Interaction	Using travel to meet new people and build relationships	2	Crompton (1979)
Pull	Cleanliness	Cleanliness and upkeep of the destination environment	2	Jang & Cai (2002)
Pull	Safety	Sense of security from crime, traffic, and social conditions	2	Jang & Cai (2002)
Pull	Destination Facility	Availability of accommodation, dining, and supporting amenities	3	Nuryadin & Sugiri (2023)
Pull	Cost	Affordability of travel, accommodation, and consumption	2	Kozak (2002)
Pull	Urban Attraction	Distinctive urban landmarks, districts, paths, edges, and nodes	2	Wiyoso & Pramitasari (2021)
Pull	Historical and Cultural	Richness of the destination's heritage and culture	2	Sudaryanti et al. (2015)
Pull	Accessibility	Ease of reaching and moving around the destination	2	Nuryadin & Sugiri (2023)
Pull	Environment	Overall quality and comfort of the destination's spatial arrangement	2	Wardhani (2012)
Pull	Atmosphere	Ambience felt by visitors while exploring the destination	2	Sudaryanti et al. (2015)

Source: Research data, 2026

Prior Research and Research Gap

Widiati and Utami (2023) used factor analysis to examine tourists' motivation to visit Labuan Bajo during the COVID-19 pandemic and found that financial security, recreation, escape, attraction, and social interaction significantly influenced visiting decisions. Suryawati et al. (2025) examined push and pull factors among tourists in Sasak Ende Village using a qualitative descriptive approach and found that the need for recreation, social interaction, attractions, facilities, and accessibility all influenced visiting decisions. Kamarani et al. (2025) examined gender disparity in the use of Couchsurfing among backpacker tourists in Bandung City using a qualitative phenomenological approach, finding that female tourists tend to prioritize safety and comfort more than male tourists when travelling. Sirait and Dewi (2025) examined the characteristics and memorable tourist experience of millennial foreign solo travelers in Badung Regency using a quantitative descriptive approach, finding that the level of social engagement tended to be low, indicating that the travel experience centered on self-recovery and cultural exploration.

Taken together, these studies show that push and pull motivation research is well established in Indonesian tourism generally, but that research specifically examining backpacker motivation through a push and pull lens in Bandung City remains limited to a single, subsegment-focused qualitative study of Couchsurfing use (Kamarani et al., 2025), rather than a broader, dimension-level descriptive comparison of push and pull factors among domestic backpackers. This study addresses that more precisely defined gap.

METHODS

Research Design

This study uses a cross-sectional descriptive quantitative design, which relies on measurable data collection and descriptive statistical analysis to profile a phenomenon at a single point in time (Sugiyono, 2013). Descriptive statistics were used to present the distribution, frequency, percentage, and scoring values that describe backpacker tourists' motivation. Because the design is descriptive and the sample was drawn through non-probability purposive sampling, the results describe this specific sample and are not intended to support causal inference, statistical generalization to the broader backpacker population, or formal hypothesis testing (Siyoto & Sodik, 2015).

Population and Sample

The accessible population of this study is backpacker tourists who were reachable through backpacker-oriented online communities during February–June 2026. Because the size of the broader backpacker population visiting Bandung City is unknown, a non-probability purposive sampling technique was used, with respondents selected based on the operational screening criteria described above (Sugiyono, 2013). Group-tour and travel-agent-assisted tourists were excluded.

The minimum sample size was benchmarked using Cochran's formula, $n = Z^2\, p(1-p) / e^2$, where Z is the z-score conventionally associated with a 95% confidence level (1.96), p is the estimated population proportion (0.5), and e is a 10% margin of error. This calculation yields $n = (1.96)^2(0.5)(0.5)/(0.1)^2 = 96.04$, rounded up to 97 respondents. Because the sample was drawn through purposive, non-probability sampling rather than random sampling, this figure should not be interpreted as implying a genuine 95% confidence level or 10% margin of error for the study's estimates; it is reported only as a conventional, pragmatic benchmark for a minimally adequate sample size, consistent with common practice in applied tourism research using non-probability samples. The study ultimately collected data from 114 respondents, exceeding this benchmark.

Respondents were recruited through online distribution via an electronic form (Google Form) shared with backpacker-oriented online communities and social media groups. To reduce the risk of duplicate responses, the online form restricted submissions to one response per email address, and respondent contact details were cross-checked manually against the in-person respondent list to identify and remove any overlapping entries; the number of duplicates found and removed. To confirm that online respondents met the February–June 2026 study period, the form asked respondents to state the date of their most recent visit to Bandung City, and responses citing a visit date outside this window were excluded from the final dataset.

Variables and Instrument

This study examines a single construct, backpacker tourist motivation, operationalized through two groups of variables adapted from Crompton (1979) and related pull factor literature (Jang & Cai, 2002; Kozak, 2002; Nuryadin & Sugiri, 2023; Wiyoso & Pramitasari, 2021). The push factor variable comprises eight dimensions (Escape, Exploration, Self Evaluation, Relaxation, Prestige, Regression, Enhancement of Kinship, and Social Interaction), each measured with two statement items, for a total of 16 items. The pull factor variable comprises nine dimensions (Cleanliness, Safety, Destination Facility, Cost, Urban Attraction, Historical and Cultural, Accessibility, Environment, and Atmosphere), measured with 19 items in total, as Destination Facility was represented by three items to capture its broader scope (accommodation, dining, and supporting amenities). Altogether, the questionnaire comprised 35 statement items, consistent with the item count reported in the validity and reliability testing.

Data Collection

Data were collected through a closed-ended questionnaire and documentation. The questionnaire, the main instrument of this study, was developed from indicators of the push and pull factor dimensions described above and used a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) (Sugiyono, 2013), distributed to backpacker tourists who met the sampling criteria. Documentation was used to gather secondary data from books, journal articles, and other relevant publications. The questionnaire was distributed through an electronic form shared with backpacker travel communities, in order to reach respondents who had recently completed a backpacking trip to the city as well as those currently travelling. Respondents were first asked a set of screening questions to confirm that they matched the sampling criteria described above before proceeding to the main motivation items.

Content Validity, Statistical Validity, and Reliability

The questionnaire's items were derived directly from the established push (Crompton, 1979) and pull dimensions used in prior tourism research (Jang & Cai, 2002; Kozak, 2002; Nuryadin & Sugiri, 2023; Wiyoso & Pramitasari, 2021); however, no formal expert-panel review of content or face validity was conducted prior to the pilot test. This is acknowledged as a limitation of the current instrument (see Limitations) and is recommended for future iterations. Before full distribution, the instrument was pilot-tested with 34 initial respondents using IBM SPSS Statistics 25

At a 5% significance level with $df = n - 2 = 32$, the r-table value was 0.339. Item validity was originally assessed using the uncorrected, bivariate Pearson product-moment correlation between each item and the instrument's total score; following the review, this was replaced with the corrected item-total correlation produced by IBM SPSS Statistics' Reliability procedure (the item-total correlation computed after excluding the item itself from the total, avoiding the part-whole inflation that affects the uncorrected method). An item was considered valid if its corrected item-total correlation exceeded the r-table value. All 35 items produced corrected item-total correlations between 0.344 and 0.827 (Table 2), all above the r-table value. One item — CS1

(0.344) — was only marginally above this threshold; because a correlation this close to the cutoff leaves comparatively little margin for sampling error at n = 34, this item should be monitored in any future data collection and, where feasible, checked with an exploratory factor analysis to confirm that cleanliness is being captured as a distinct, well-defined dimension (Hair et al., 2019).

Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha, with a minimum threshold of 0.70 (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). The pilot instrument obtained an overall Cronbach's Alpha of 0.962 across all 35 items (n = 34; Table 4). Using the respondent-level dataset from the full sample (n = 114), subscale-level reliability was also computed: the push-factor subscale (16 items) obtained an Alpha of 0.838, and the pull-factor subscale (19 items) obtained an Alpha of 0.866, both comfortably above the 0.70 threshold and confirming that push and pull factors each form an internally consistent set of items when examined separately, rather than relying solely on the single overall pilot-stage coefficient (Table 4). The overall pilot alpha (0.962) remains higher than either subscale alpha, consistent with Cronbach's Alpha increasing mechanically with the number of items in a scale; the subscale-level figures are therefore the more informative indicators of internal consistency for interpreting the push and pull dimensions individually.

Data Analysis Technique

Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics with a scoring technique and continuum-line interpretation. For a single item, the maximum index value is the largest scale score (5) multiplied by the number of respondents (114) = 570, and the minimum index value is the lowest scale score (1) multiplied by 114 = 114. The variable range is therefore 570 − 114 = 456, and dividing this range into five equal categories gives a class interval of 456 / 5 = 91.2. The resulting score bands, and their percentage equivalents (used to categorize the dimension-level percentages reported in Table 6), are shown in Table 2. The upper bound of the "Very High" category has been corrected to end at the theoretical maximum of 570 (previously misstated as 573), and the percentage-equivalent bands have been added so that the percentages already reported in this study can be read against the same criteria directly.

Table 2. Acceptance Scale

Score Interval (single-item basis, n = 114)	Percentage Equivalent	Category
114 – 205	20.0% – 36.0%	Very Low
206 – 296	36.1% – 52.0%	Low
297 – 388	52.1% – 68.0%	Enough
389 – 479	68.2% – 84.0%	High
480 – 570	84.2% – 100%	Very High

Note: Interval width = 91.2 (456 / 5), rounded to whole score units without exceeding the 570 maximum; percentage-equivalent bounds computed as (score / 570) × 100%.
Source: Research data, 2026

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Respondent Profile

Of the 114 respondents, the majority were female (71.1%) and aged 17–25 years (71.1%), with a further 24.6% aged 26–35 and a small remainder (4.4%) aged 36–45. By domicile, the largest groups came from DKI Jakarta (31.6%) and other areas of West Java outside Bandung City (23.7%), with the remainder spread across Banten (13.2%), East Java (12.3%), Central Java (11.4%), and other regions. The most common highest education level was senior high school (47.4%), followed by an undergraduate degree (D4/S1, 37.7%); 50.9% of respondents were students, followed by private-sector employees (21.9%). The most frequent visit count was 2–3 prior visits (49.1%), and length of stay was concentrated in 2–3 days (53.5%) and 4–5 days (36.8%), together

accounting for the large majority of the sample. The most common spending band was IDR 1,000,000–IDR 2,000,000 (43.0%), closely followed by IDR 500,000–IDR 1,000,000 (36.8%). The most common travel-companion arrangement was travelling with friends (40.4%), followed by family (25.4%); only 14.9% travelled alone. The most common accommodation type was a budget hotel or other low-cost lodging (44.7%), followed by hostel or shared-room accommodation (15.8%). Table 5 presents the complete breakdown for every category, now computed directly from the full respondent-level dataset (n = 114) rather than only the leading category per variable.

Table 3. Respondent Profile (n = 114)

Characteristic	Leading Category	%
Gender	Female	71.1
	Male	28.9
Age	17–25 years	71.1
	26–35 years	24.6
	36–45 years	4.4
Domicile	DKI Jakarta	31.6
	West Java (outside Bandung City)	23.7
	Banten	13.2
	East Java	12.3
	Central Java	11.4
	Outside Java	7.0
	Yogyakarta	0.9
Highest education	Senior high school	47.4
	Undergraduate	37.7
	Diploma (D1/D2/D3)	12.3
	Master's (S2)	2.6
Occupation	Student	50.9
	Private-sector employee	21.9
	Civil servant	9.6
	Entrepreneur	9.6
	Freelancer	7.0
	Healthcare worker	0.9
Prior visits to Bandung	2–3 times	49.1
	4–5 times	23.7
	1 time	14.9
	More than 5 times	12.3
Length of stay	2–3 days	53.5
	4–5 days	36.8
	6–7 days	6.1
	More than 7 days	3.5
Expenditure	IDR 1,000,000 – 2,000,000	43.0
	IDR 500,000 – 1,000,000	36.8
	More than IDR 2,000,000	15.8
	Less than IDR 500,000	4.4
Travel companion	Friends	40.4
	Family	25.4
	Partner	15.8
	Alone	14.9
	Community/group	3.5
Accommodation	Budget hotel / low-cost lodging	44.7
	Hostel / shared room	15.8
	Homestay	10.5
	Guest house	10.5
	Friend's or relative's home	8.8
	Capsule hotel	6.1
	Public facilities (station, terminal, airport, rest area)	1.8
	Hotel	0.9
	Villa	0.9
Expenditure	IDR 1,000,000 – 2,000,000	43.0
	IDR 500,000 – 1,000,000	36.8
	More than IDR 2,000,000	15.8
	Less than IDR 500,000	4.4

Source: Research data, 2026

This profile is consistent with the characteristics of backpacker tourists as young, independent travelers who prioritize cost efficiency and flexible travel arrangements (Maoz, 2007; Susanti et al., 2022). The dominance of respondents travelling with friends or family rather than alone (only 14.9% travelled solo) mirrors the socially oriented, informally arranged travel style typical of the backpacker community described by Susanti et al. (2022), and is consistent with the reasonably high push-factor score recorded for Social Interaction even though it is not the most dominant

push dimension; it also means the solo-travel growth statistics cited in the Introduction should not be read as direct evidence for this particular sample's composition. Length of stay is concentrated in the 2–5 day range (90.3% combined), suggesting that most respondents treat Bandung City as a short-to-medium-trip destination rather than a long-haul backpacking base — a plausible reading of the pattern that should nonetheless be treated as an interpretation rather than a directly tested finding, since no cross-tabulation of length of stay against motivation scores was conducted. Because the sample is concentrated among young, female, student respondents predominantly from the Jakarta and West Java area, the findings below describe this specific respondent group. They should not be generalized to the broader population of Indonesian backpacker tourists or to older, male, or non-student segments without further study.

Validity and Reliability Results

The validity test, conducted on 34 pilot respondents at a 5% significance level (r-table = 0.339), used the corrected item-total correlation from IBM SPSS Statistics' Reliability procedure. All 35 statement items across both the push-factor and pull-factor sub-variables produced corrected item-total correlations greater than the r-table value (Table 3), confirming that every item met the minimum statistical threshold for validity, with CS1 (0.344) flagged above as the item closest to the threshold and warranting monitoring in future data collection.

Table 4. Validity Test Results

Sub-variable	Dimension	Item	Corrected Item-Total r	r-table	Result
Push Factors	Escape	ES1	0.583	0,339	Valid
		ES2	0.759	0,339	Valid
	Exploration	EX1	0.670	0,339	Valid
		EX2	0.703	0,339	Valid
	Self Evaluation	SE1	0.719	0,339	Valid
		SE2	0.642	0,339	Valid
	Relaxation	RE1	0.624	0,339	Valid
		RE2	0.694	0,339	Valid
	Prestige	PR1	0.649	0,339	Valid
		PR2	0.512	0,339	Valid
	Regression	RG1	0.574	0,339	Valid
		RG2	0.669	0,339	Valid
	Enhancement of Kinship	EK1	0.622	0,339	Valid
		EK2	0.525	0,339	Valid
	Social Interaction	SI1	0.770	0,339	Valid
		SI2	0.551	0,339	Valid
Pull Factors	Cleanliness	CS1	0.344	0,339	Valid
		CS2	0.508	0,339	Valid
	Safety	SF1	0.827	0,339	Valid
		SF2	0.750	0,339	Valid
	Destination Facility	DF1	0.604	0,339	Valid
		DF2	0.537	0,339	Valid
		DF3	0.693	0,339	Valid
	Cost	CO1	0.486	0,339	Valid
		CO2	0.727	0,339	Valid
	Urban Attraction	UA1	0.664	0,339	Valid
		UA2	0.591	0,339	Valid
	Historical and Cultural	HC1	0.766	0,339	Valid
		HC2	0.787	0,339	Valid
	Accessibility	AC1	0.493	0,339	Valid
		AC2	0.659	0,339	Valid

Sub-variable	Dimension	Item	Corrected Item-Total r	r-table	Result
	Environment	EA1	0.726	0,339	Valid
		EA2	0.745	0,339	Valid
	Atmosphere	AE1	0.700	0,339	Valid
		AE2	0.589	0,339	Valid

Source: Research data, 2026

Reliability testing using Cronbach's Alpha produced an overall pilot-stage coefficient of 0.962 (n = 34, 35 items), well above the 0.70 threshold (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). Because push and pull factors are conceptually distinct sub-variables, subscale-level reliability was additionally computed from the full sample (n = 114): the push-factor subscale (16 items) obtained an Alpha of 0.838, and the pull-factor subscale (19 items) obtained an Alpha of 0.866 (Table 5), both comfortably above the 0.70 threshold. These subscale coefficients, being based on more items than any single dimension but fewer than the full 35-item scale, confirm that push and pull factors are each measured with good internal consistency on their own, while also showing why the full-scale coefficient (0.962) is higher than either subscale value: Cronbach's Alpha increases mechanically with the number of items pooled into a single scale, so the very high overall figure partly reflects scale length rather than superior measurement of any individual dimension.

Table 5. Reliability Test Results

Variable	N	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items	Threshold	Result
Backpacker tourist motivation (overall, pilot test)	34	0.962	35	0.70	Reliable
Push-factor subscale (full sample)	114	0.838	16	0.70	Reliable
Pull-factor subscale (full sample)	114	0.866	19	0.70	Reliable

Source: Research data, 2026

Scoring Result

This research covered eight push-factor dimensions and nine pull-factor dimensions based on responses from 114 respondents. Table 6 presents the recapitulation of results, including the mean item score and standard deviation (SD), computed directly from the respondent-level raw dataset, alongside the percentage score, so that dispersion-sensitive readers can see the underlying scale value and not only the normalized percentage. SDs are moderate and broadly similar across dimensions (0.50–0.87 on the 1–5 scale), with environment showing the least dispersion (SD = 0.50) and Enhancement of Kinship the most (SD = 0.87), consistent with the latter's lower mean score and the pattern of more varied responses on less central push dimensions.

Table 6. Recapitulation of Scoring Results

Group	Dimension	Score / Max	%	Mean (1–5)	SD	Category
Push Factors	Escape	992 / 1,140	87%	4.35	0.53	Very High
	Exploration	951 / 1,140	83%	4.15	0.61	High
	Self Evaluation	1,001 / 1,140	88%	4.40	0.70	Very High
	Relaxation	943 / 1,140	82%	4.10	0.68	High
	Prestige	931 / 1,140	81%	4.05	0.69	High
	Regression	977 / 1,140	86%	4.30	0.76	Very High

Group	Dimension	Score / Max	%	Mean (1–5)	SD	Category
	Enhancement of Kinship	928 / 1,140	81%	4.05	0.87	High
	Social Interaction	950 / 1,140	83%	4.15	0.65	High
Pull Factors	Cleanliness	904 / 1,140	79%	3.95	0.79	High
	Safety	999 / 1,140	87%	4.35	0.63	Very High
	Destination Facility	1,456 / 1,710	85%	4.25	0.57	Very High
	Cost	988 / 1,140	86%	4.30	0.63	Very High
	Urban Attraction	984 / 1,140	86%	4.30	0.65	Very High
	Historical and Cultural	981 / 1,140	86%	4.30	0.66	Very High
	Accessibility	985 / 1,140	86%	4.30	0.58	Very High
	Environment	1,012 / 1,140	89%	4.45	0.50	Very High
	Atmosphere	999 / 1,140	87%	4.35	0.64	Very High

Source: Research data, 2026

The push-factor group average (84%) is the unweighted mean of its eight dimension-level percentages (83.9%, rounded to 84%), and the pull-factor group average (86%) is the unweighted mean of its nine dimension-level percentages (85.7%, rounded to 86%), rather than a weighted composite of item-level or respondent-level scores. This clarifies, per the review, exactly how the two headline percentages reported in the Abstract were derived.

Discussion

Within the push-factors group, Self Evaluation obtained the highest score (88%), followed by escape (87%) and Regression (86%). The two Self Evaluation items asked respondents about gaining an experience that helps them understand themselves better and about recognizing their own abilities when in a new situation. Both items map directly onto Crompton's (1979) concept of self-evaluation as a need for self-reflection through travel experience, supporting the reading that the strongest internal motivation reported by backpacker tourists in this sample is the desire for self-understanding and self-recognition through new experiences, though with only two items the dimension still captures a narrower slice of this construct than the full range of self-discovery, confidence, and personal-challenge facets discussed in the wider literature.

The high score for escape is consistent with backpacking trips being used as a means of breaking away from daily routines and pressures. In contrast, the high score for Regression is consistent with travel providing space for activities and experiences not otherwise available in everyday life, including an explicit item on activities that evoke nostalgia for past experiences.

The remaining push dimensions also fall into the high category and add nuance to this picture. Exploration and Social Interaction both score 83%, consistent with the independent, sociable travel style described by Maoz (2007) and Hyde and Lawson (2003). Relaxation (82%) indicates that unwinding from physical and mental fatigue remains a meaningful, secondary motive. Prestige and Enhancement of Kinship record the lowest scores in this group (81% each), suggesting that social recognition and strengthening family ties are present but less central to backpacker motivation than the more self-oriented dimensions of Self Evaluation, Escape, and Regression — a pattern broadly consistent with the individualistic, low-budget character of backpacking.

Within the pull-factors group, environment obtained the highest score (89%), followed by Safety and Atmosphere (87% each). The high score for environment indicates that the quality of the destination's spatial arrangement and the comfort felt by tourists are the strongest external attractions reported by this sample, consistent with Lady et al. (2020), who found that a well-organized, clean, and maintained destination environment strongly shapes visitors' comfort and

overall impression. All nineteen pull-factor items were worded as statements about the destination's own attributes — for example, that Bandung "has tourist areas that are clean and well maintained" or "has surroundings that are not run-down" — rather than as ratings of how important each attribute is when choosing a destination. The pull-factor scores in this study should therefore be read as respondents' perceptions of Bandung's actual performance on these attributes, not as a ranking of motivational importance; the earlier concern that these two readings could not be distinguished without the item wording is resolved by this phrasing.

Cleanliness recorded the lowest score among all eighteen dimensions (79%). Because the Cleanliness items are performance-worded in the same way as the other pull items, this lower score is best read as a genuine, comparatively less favorable perception of public-space and facility cleanliness rather than merely lower importance placed on the attribute. This does not contradict the high score for environment, since the two dimensions were designed to measure different aspects — Environment reflecting tourists' overall impression of a well-organized, non-run-down area, and Cleanliness focusing specifically on the cleanliness of public spaces and facilities — but it does reinforce that public-facility cleanliness is a concrete area for improvement rather than an attribute respondents regard as unimportant.

The remaining pull dimensions likewise fall into the very high category. Cost and Urban Attraction both score 86%, in line with Kozak's (2002) emphasis on affordability as a key pull factor for budget-conscious travelers and Wiyoso and Pramitasari's (2021) view of the city itself as an attraction. Historical and Cultural attraction and accessibility also score 86% each, suggesting that Bandung's heritage sites and the relative ease of moving around the city remain important draws even amid the congestion reported around Braga and Asia Afrika during peak periods (iNews, 2025; Radar Bandung, 2026). Destination Facility scores slightly lower, at 85%, suggesting that accommodation, dining, and supporting amenities are viewed as adequate but less decisive than environmental quality, safety, and atmosphere, broadly consistent with Nuryadin and Sugiri's (2023) finding that facility adequacy tends to support, rather than drive, a tourist's choice of destination.

Overall, the descriptive pattern in this sample shows push factors averaging 84.1% (SD not applicable at the group level; see Table 6 for dimension-level SDs) and pull factors averaging 85.9%, a difference of 1.8 percentage points. Using the respondent-level composite scores now available from the raw dataset, a paired-samples t-test confirms that pull-factor scores were statistically significantly higher than push-factor scores within respondents, $t(113) = 3.38$, $p = .001$. Because the distribution of the within-respondent differences departed from normality (Shapiro–Wilk $p < .001$), a Wilcoxon signed-rank test was also run as a robustness check and likewise found the difference significant ($W = 1{,}964$, $p < .001$), confirming the result is not an artifact of the normality assumption. The effect size, however, is small: Cohen's d for the paired difference is 0.32, meaning that although the higher average for pull factors is unlikely to be due to chance in this sample, the practical magnitude of the difference is modest. The appropriate conclusion is therefore that pull factors scored statistically significantly, but only modestly, higher than push factors among these 114 respondents — a finding that should still be described as "marginally higher" in substantive terms, even though it is now statistically supported rather than merely descriptive. Self Evaluation and Environment, the highest-scoring dimension in each group respectively, together suggest that backpacker tourists in this sample are motivated both by the psychological aim of understanding and developing themselves through travel and by the destination's comfort and spatial experience; the two groups of factors continue to operate together and complement one another, as described in push and pull factors theory, even though pull factors edge out push factors by a small but statistically detectable margin.

These findings both align with and extend previous research on tourist motivation. Like Widiati and Utami (2023), who found recreation and escape to be significant drivers of visits to Labuan Bajo, this study finds escape to be a strong push dimension, with Self-Evaluation

emerging as an even stronger motivation among backpacker tourists specifically — a nuance not captured in studies of general leisure tourists. Similarly, the high scores obtained by Environment and Accessibility echo Suryawati et al.'s (2025) findings on Sasak Ende Tourism Village, where facilities and accessibility shaped visiting decisions, suggesting that the importance of a well-organized and reachable destination extends across both rural and urban tourism contexts. However, the two settings differ substantially in scale, population, and tourism type and should not be treated as directly equivalent. The relatively high score for safety also resonates with Kamarani et al. (2025), who found that safety concerns are especially salient for backpacker tourists in Bandung City. Finally, whereas Sirait and Dewi (2025) found that solo female travelers' experiences centered on self-recovery and cultural exploration — comparable to the dominance of Self Evaluation and Historical and Cultural attraction in this study — the present findings suggest this orientation toward self-development and cultural engagement may extend to backpacker tourists in Bandung City more broadly, regardless of whether they travel alone or with companions. However, this comparison spans different traveler segments (solo female travelers versus backpackers of both genders) and different destinations, and should be read as a suggestive parallel rather than a direct replication.

These results carry several practical implications for destination management in Bandung City, presented here as priorities suggested by the ranking of scores rather than as proven, cost-effective interventions. Because Environment and Safety rank among the strongest pull dimensions, continued investment in streetscape maintenance, lighting, and visible security presence around heritage corridors such as Braga and Asia Afrika is a reasonable priority for backpacker-oriented destination management. However, no cost-effectiveness data were collected to support a claim that such investment would have a disproportionately large effect relative to its cost. Because cleanliness is the single lowest-scoring pull dimension, targeted interventions such as additional waste bins, more frequent collection schedules in high-footfall tourist corridors, and visible public-cleanliness campaigns are a reasonable priority, again pending confirmation of whether the underlying item measured performance or importance. On the demand side, because Self Evaluation and Escape dominate backpacker push motivations, destination marketing that foregrounds authentic, self-directed experiences — for example, walking routes through kampong neighborhoods or independent café and creative-space trails — is a plausible direction for this segment, consistent with the lower-scoring Prestige and Enhancement of Kinship dimensions. However, these specific product ideas were not themselves evaluated in the questionnaire and should be treated as illustrative examples requiring further market and community assessment rather than direct empirical findings.

CONCLUSION

Based on a study of 114 backpacker tourists, both push factors and pull factors play an important role in shaping the motivation to visit Bandung City, each falling into the high-to-very-high category. The desire for self-evaluation and self-development dominates internal motivation, along with escape from daily routine and the pursuit of new experiences. External motivation obtained a statistically significantly higher average than internal motivation, $t(113) = 3.38$, $p = .001$. However, the effect size is small (Cohen's $d = 0.32$), driven mainly by the comfort of the destination environment, safety, atmosphere, ease of access, facilities, and the city's historical and cultural attractions. However, the cleanliness of public facilities recorded the lowest score among all eighteen dimensions and requires continued attention. Overall, backpacker tourists' motivation to visit Bandung City is formed from a combination of internal drive and destination attraction, with pull factors scoring marginally but significantly higher than push factors in this sample — a small, statistically supported difference rather than evidence that pull factors are substantively "more dominant." Local government is advised to continue improving urban tourism area management and public-facility cleanliness while maintaining the accessibility

already valued by tourists, particularly in high-traffic areas such as Braga and Asia Afrika during long holidays. Tourism businesses such as hostels, restaurants, and local transport providers are advised to maintain affordable, good-quality service given backpackers' strong concern for value for money, while considering experiences that involve direct interaction with local culture and daily life.

Limitation

This study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting its findings. First, the sample was drawn through purposive sampling within a single urban area of Bandung City over five months and is concentrated among young, female, student respondents; the results describe this specific respondent group rather than the broader population of Indonesian backpackers and should be generalized with caution. Second, the study focuses on online recruitment channels, which may have introduced mode or selection bias. Third, the operational classification of "backpacker" relied on self-report screening criteria that, while more precise than the original draft's broad description, still leave room for overlap with ordinary independent tourists who do not identify as backpackers. Fourth, because all variables were collected from the same respondent in a single questionnaire, and scores were uniformly high across nearly every dimension, the results may be affected by common-method or response bias (e.g., acquiescence or social-desirability effects) that this study did not explicitly test for. Fifth, although subscale-level reliability and corrected item-total validity are now reported (Tables 3–4), the instrument has not been checked with a confirmatory or exploratory factor analysis, so the assumed eight-push/nine-pull dimensional structure has not been independently verified against the data; CS1, the item closest to the validity threshold, warrants particular attention in any such analysis. Sixth, the study relies solely on quantitative scoring analysis, which describes the relative strength of each motivational dimension but does not capture the deeper reasoning behind respondents' answers, and its cross-sectional, descriptive design does not support causal claims about why push or pull factors motivate backpacker travel; the statistically significant push–pull difference reported in the Discussion is a within-sample comparison and should not be read as establishing that pull factors cause greater visitation likelihood.

Future Research

Future research is encouraged to apply a mixed-methods approach, combining the scoring analysis used here with in-depth interviews or focus group discussions, to obtain a richer understanding of backpacker motivation. Future studies should also test the underlying factor structure of the push and pull instrument (e.g., through exploratory or confirmatory factor analysis), compare visitor subgroups (e.g., by age, gender, or domicile), distinguish first-time from repeat visitors, and examine whether push and pull factors predict downstream outcomes such as tourist satisfaction, revisit intention, or destination loyalty. A probability-based or systematically intercepted sample with a smaller margin of error would also strengthen the precision and representativeness of future estimates.

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