

Gender-based analysis of factors contributing to post-vacation blues: A case study of young generation tourists in West Java

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the factors contributing to the symptoms of post-vacation blues based on gender among domestic travelers in Java. This phenomenon refers to a psychological condition characterized by feelings of sadness, loss of motivation, and difficulty readjusting to daily routines after returning from a vacation. In dealing with daily routines, tourists also experience difficulties in managing time, especially sleep and rest time, decreased focus on work, and slowed speed in carrying out daily tasks. The research employs a quantitative approach and utilizes Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), involving 250 respondents residing in Java. The results of the analysis reveal significant differences between genders. For male tourists, the primary factors identified are memorable trip, mental pressure, body condition, emotional ties, and travel fatigue. In contrast, among female tourists, in addition to the five aforementioned factors, there is also the factor of emotional response, which indicates emotional sensitivity and complex expectations, as well as money matters related to financial issues. This finding suggests that female travelers are more vulnerable to experiencing post-vacation blues.

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis faktor-faktor yang menjadi gejala terjadinya *post-vacation blues* berdasarkan gender pada kalangan domestik di Pulau Jawa. Fenomena ini merujuk pada kondisi psikologis yang ditandai dengan perasaan sedih, kehilangan motivasi, dan kesulitan beradaptasi kembali ke rutinitas sehari-hari setelah berlibur. Dalam menghadapi rutinitas sehari-hari, wisatawan juga mengalami kesulitan mengatur waktu terutama waktu tidur dan istirahat, turunnya fokus pada pekerjaan, serta kecepatan mengerjakan tugas sehari-hari yang melambat. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dan teknik analisis *Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)* dengan melibatkan 250 responden yang berdomisili di Pulau Jawa. Hasil analisis menunjukkan adanya perbedaan signifikan pada gender yang berbeda. Pada wisatawan laki-laki faktor utama yang menentukan ialah *memorable trip, mental pressure, body condition, emotional ties, dan travel fatigue*. Sedangkan pada wisatawan perempuan selain 5 faktor sebelumnya juga terdapat faktor *emotional response* yang menunjukkan sensitivitas emosional dan ekspektasi yang kompleks, serta *money mater* yang berkaitan dengan masalah keuangan. Hal ini menunjukkan bahwa wisatawan wanita akan lebih rentan mengalami *post vacation blues*.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism plays a pivotal role in individual well-being through leisure and recreational activities. Leisure refers to free time allocated for activities that provide enjoyment without pressure (Ellis & Witt, 1984), while recreation involves the utilization of free time for relaxation, entertainment, or recovery from stress (Siby & Kasingku, 2024). Traveling becomes a form of recreation and an escape from routine, serving to refresh the mind, spirit, and body (Smith, 2003). This activity has been shown to reduce stress and enhance happiness (Chen & Petrick, 2013).

According to data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) in 2024, the number of domestic tourist trips in 2024 reached 1.02 billion, an increase of 23% from 2023 (825.8 million trips). Java Island remains the largest contributor, although its percentage decreased from 75.36% in 2023 to 68.48% in 2024, indicating a more equitable distribution of travel to other islands. The increase in tourist mobility aligns with the growth of tourist attractions, rising from 2,930 locations in 2022 to 4,206 in 2023, with 58.98% located on Java Island (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2023, 2024).

Despite the association of tourism with relaxation and happiness, it can also have negative effects, one of which is post-vacation blues or post-holiday blues feelings of sadness, loss of motivation, and difficulty readjusting after a holiday (Sissons, 2022).

Traveler preferences also influence emotional experiences post-holiday. Female tourists tend to prioritize safety, comfort, and amenities, while males are more inclined towards adventure activities (Ibănescu et al., 2018; Kusumarini et al., 2024; Wangsamihardja et al., 2022). These differences in preferences can affect vulnerability to post-vacation blues.

A pre-survey of 56 respondents indicated that 82% had experienced discomfort after a holiday, with 42% struggling to readjust, 53% experiencing it occasionally, and only 5% never encountering such feelings. The primary contributing factors included overwhelming work/tasks (44%), monotonous routines (29%), longing for the holiday atmosphere (21%), and other factors such as family attachments and relaxation habits (6%).

These pre-survey results are corroborated by a survey conducted by Woolf (2023), which revealed that the phenomenon of post-vacation blues is also experienced by workers in the United States, with differing symptoms between genders. Males are more likely to experience concentration difficulties (24%), discomfort (22%), and sleep disturbances (19%), whereas females are more vulnerable to loss of motivation (31%), restlessness (20%), fatigue (16%), and irritability (13%). The results of this study confirm that the post-vacation blues phenomenon occurs in real life, can reduce productivity, disrupt mental health, and affect an individual's quality of life after a vacation.

Post-vacation blues is also quite common among Indonesians. Currently, there is little research examining this phenomenon, particularly in Java especially in West Java. Therefore, this research is necessary.

The symptoms of post-vacation blues are diverse, ranging from loss of motivation and concentration difficulties to fatigue and sleep disturbances. This variety of symptoms indicates a need for factor analysis to reduce these symptoms and categorize them into clearer underlying factors. Therefore, this study aims not only to identify the symptoms experienced by travelers but also to construct a structure of the underlying factors.

Moreover, considering the high dominance of tourist trips originating from Java Island, with over 600 million trips in 2023 and nearly reaching 700 million in 2024, or 64% of all domestic tourists (BPS, 2025). West Java's domestic tourists are the second largest after East Java, reaching 18% of the total domestic tourists.

While it is acknowledged that not all provinces in Java exhibit the same level of tourist activity, the concentration of tourist mobility in this region makes it a representative case for studying the phenomenon of post-vacation blues. The high level of tourism activity from the populace in Java may lead to more significant post-vacation blues symptoms compared to other regions. Consequently, this research focuses on travellers in Java to address existing research gaps. The objective of this study is to identify and reduce the factors contributing to post-vacation blues symptoms in male and female tourists in Java Island.

Based on the outlined background, the research questions are: (1) What are the factors contributing to post-vacation blues symptoms in male tourists in Java Island? (2) What are the factors contributing to post-vacation blues symptoms in female tourists in Java Island.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Concept of tourism, leisure and recreation

Travelling is primarily driven by one's need for recreation, relaxation, or new experiences (Sinambela, 2021). Tourist motivation can be divided into intrinsic (push) and extrinsic (pull) factors. Intrinsic motivation involves psychological drives such as the desire to escape routines or seek pleasure (Hamdy et al., 2023), while extrinsic motivation relates to destination attractions such as scenery, culture, and facilities.

Understanding these motivation helps improve destination management and visitor satisfaction.

Leisure refers to free time when individuals can engage in self-chosen activities that enhance their well-being (Karaderi, 2021). It allow rest, socialization, and self-development. Recreation, as a part of leisure, involves activities that restore physical and mental energy (Ibhafidon et al., 2021), reducing stress and improving quality of life (Fenton et al., 2017).

Vacation blues

Vacation blues describe negative emotions experienced before or after holidays, divided into pre-vacation blues and post-vacation blues (Bretones, 2017; Nawijn et al., 2013). This study focuses on post-vacation blues, a psychological condition marked by sadness, fatigue, and difficulty readjusting to routines (Crockford, 2019).

According to Sandua (2023), post-vacation blues are characterized by sadness, irritability and loss of motivation after returning from holidays. Similar phenomena occur globally, such as *Gogatsu Byou* in Japan, where people feel depressed after the Golden Week holidays (Bunnell, 2022).

Several factors that can influence the emergence of post-vacation blues include: physical condition (De Bloom et al., 2014), psychological factors (Chien et al., 2017), financial pressure (Brida & Tokarchuk, 2017; Sparkes et al., 2023), workloads (Horan et al., 2021), vacation duration (De Bloom et al., 2013), types of tourist activities (Ryan et al., 2010), sleep quality (Åkerstedt & Nilsson, 2003), travel enjoyment (Bryant, 2003), the gap between expectations and reality (Backer & Schänzel, 2013), and social dynamics (Crockford, 2019; Korstanje & George, 2015), these factors form basis analyzing

the causes of post-vacation blues among tourists in Java island.

Tourist preferences

Tourist preferences form the theoretical foundation for understanding travel behavior. Tourist preferences refer to an individual's tendency to select or prioritize specific tourism attributes, activities, or destinations that align with their needs and expectation (Permadi et al., 2019; Sari & Yudana, 2019). Preferences are a manifestation of internal drives (motivational and needs) and are influenced by external factors, such as information from advertisements or social recommendations (Nieamah, 2017). Conceptually, preferences involve a cognitive process where tourists consider a range of factors (e.g., location, price, facilities) before making a decision (Gantini & Setiyorini, 2012). Psychological factors, especially attitudes and perceptions, play a central role in shaping these preferences, subsequently influencing destination choices (Rosiana et al., 2017; Nanggong et al., 2022). Apart from that, there are also other influencing factors, such as age and gender (Kusumah, 2022; Krisbianto, 2023).

Preference as a framework for analyzing gender differences

In the context of this study, preference serves as a crucial framework for analyzing how the fundamental demographic factor of gender influences the travel experience. Gender, in tourism literature, consistently reveals distinct and significant choice patterns, not only in the type of activities pursued but also in the criteria used to evaluate a destination.

Prior research consistently identifies divergent focuses between the two genders. Female tourist tend to exhibit a higher focus on qualitative aspects such as comfort, security, facility cleanliness, service and also their travel choices often

involve social and family considerations (Ibănescu et al., 2018; Millán et al., 2024). Conversely, male tourists are more inclined toward experience-based travel, emphasizing adventure and challenging activities, and are often more independent in their trip planning (Darumurtia et al., 2019; Wangsamihardja et al., 2022).

The aforementioned studies have largely focused on the psychological effects of vacation (post-vacation blues), which are reviewed descriptively in the context of students (Crockford, 2019), workers (Bretones, 2017), and festival attendees. This differs from this study which focuses more on tourists.

Another difference lies in the research methods. Previous studies have used a variety of methods, ranging from qualitative and quantitative to longitudinal meta-analyses. This study, however, focuses on analyzing the factors contributing to post-vacation blues symptoms, rather than solely on their impact, thus providing insight into the causes and influencing factors of this phenomenon. This study employed an exploratory approach using Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) to identify and refine key factors.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a quantitative approach with an exploratory research design aimed at identifying the factors associated with post-vacation blues symptoms among domestic tourists in Java. The research population consists of domestic tourists residing in Java who have experienced post-vacation blues symptoms. A purposive sampling technique was utilized, yielding a sample size of 250 respondents, as determined by the formula proposed by Hair et al. (2019). Primary data were collected through an online questionnaire employing a 1–5

Likert scale, while secondary data were gathered from relevant literature.

The data analysis technique utilized is Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), facilitated by SPSS version 25. This process includes data adequacy testing through the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity, factor extraction employing Principal Component Analysis, and Varimax rotation. The analysis was conducted twice: once for male respondents and once for female respondents.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study involves 250 respondents residing on the island of Java, aged a minimum of 17 years, who have experienced symptoms of post-vacation blues. The gender distribution is balanced, with 125 males (50%) and 125 females (50%). The majority of respondents fall within the age range of 17–25 years (82%) and are from West Java Province (50%).

Before conducting factor analysis, validity and reliability tests of the research instruments were performed. Validity testing was conducted using the Pearson Product Moment correlation with the assistance of SPSS 25 for Windows. The results indicated that all 25 statement items had calculated r-values greater than the table r-value (0.361) with significance levels below 0.05, thus confirming that all instrument items are valid. Subsequently, reliability testing using Cronbach's Alpha yielded a value of 0.918, which exceeds the minimum criterion of 0.6. This indicates that the entire research instrument can be deemed reliable and consistent for further analysis.

Factors contributing to post-vacation blues in male

Before conducting the exploratory factor analysis on the data from male

respondents, a data adequacy test was first performed using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity. The results of these tests are presented in [Table 1](#).

Table 1. Results of KMO and Bartlett's test for male respondent

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		.867
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1453.262
	df	300
	Sig.	.000

Source: Analysis, 2025

[Table 1](#) shows that the KMO value is 0.867, which falls within the category of merit or very good, indicating that the data are suitable for factor analysis. Additionally, the significance value of Bartlett's Test of Sphericity for this data is 0.000 (< 0.05), which suggests that the correlations among the variables are sufficiently strong to warrant further analysis through factor analysis ([Hair et al., 2019](#)). Thus, the data from male respondents meet the criteria for conducting exploratory factor analysis.

After the data are deemed adequate through the KMO and Bartlett's tests, further analysis is conducted, which includes the identification of Total Variance Explained, examination of the Rotated Factor Matrix, and interpretation of the principal factors formed from the rotation results.

Based on [Table 2](#), five principal components with eigenvalues greater than 1 cumulatively explain 60.50% of the variance in the data from male respondents. The first component accounts for 33.44% of the variance, followed by 9.38%, 7.58%, 5.69%, and 4.41%. Components with eigenvalues less than 1 were not retained due to their minimal contribution.

Tabel 2. Results of total variance analysis for male respondent

Component	Total Variance Explained					
	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	8.361	33.444	33.444	8.361	33.444	33.444
2	2.346	9.382	42.826	2.346	9.382	42.826
3	1.895	7.579	50.405	1.895	7.579	50.405
4	1.421	5.685	56.090	1.421	5.685	56.090
5	1.103	4.413	60.502	1.103	4.413	60.502
6	.968	3.874	64.376			
7	.896	3.583	67.960			
8	.829	3.317	71.276			
9	.757	3.029	74.305			
10	.711	2.845	77.150			
11	.656	2.624	79.774			
12	.608	2.431	82.205			
13	.550	2.199	84.404			
14	.487	1.946	86.351			
15	.485	1.940	88.291			
16	.440	1.761	90.051			
17	.400	1.600	91.652			
18	.380	1.522	93.173			
19	.334	1.336	94.510			
20	.307	1.229	95.739			
21	.287	1.150	96.888			
22	.226	.905	97.793			
23	.207	.828	98.622			
24	.186	.743	99.365			
25	.159	.635	100.000			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

Source: Analysis, 2025

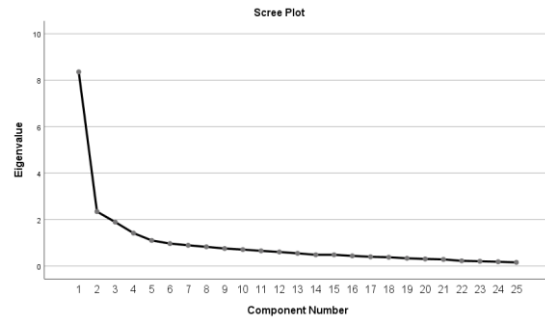


Figure 1. Results of the Scree Plot for male respondents

Source: Analysis, 2025

In Figure 1, the results of the Scree Plot indicate an elbow at the fifth component, reinforcing the finding that only five significant factors are deemed suitable for retention according to Kaiser’s criteria.

Table 3. Results of the rotated factor matrix for male respondents

	Rotated Component Matrix ^a				
	Component				
	1	2	3	4	5
AW1	.755				
KW1	.736				
AW2	.713				
DT2	.690				
EW1	.661				
EW2	.610				
DT1	.552				
DS3	.539				
Psi4		.849			
Psi3		.760			
Psi2		.718			
TP2		.638			
TP3		.632			
DS2					
F1			.661		
F2			.651		
F3			.638		
Fin2			.542		
Dur2			.509		
Fin3					
DS1				.739	
Psi1				.672	
Fin1				.640	
TP1				.531	
Dur1					.692

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 25 iterations.

Source: Analysis, 2025

The results of the Varimax rotation presented in Table 3 indicate that five principal factors were identified among male respondents. The first factor is labelled "Memorable Trip," which reflects significant vacation experiences encompassing activities, enjoyment, expectations, sleep quality, and social interactions. This factor illustrates that both positive and negative experiences during a holiday influence post-vacation mood, aligning with the findings of De Bloom et al. (2013) regarding the importance of savoring in extending the positive effects of vacations.

The second factor is identified as "Mental Pressure," which pertains to psychological stress and work demands following a vacation. The intensity of this pressure can hasten the diminishing of the positive effects of holiday experiences, as emphasized by Kühnel and Sonnentag (2011).

The third factor, "Body Condition," is related to physical well-being, including bodily fatigue, financial stress, and the duration of travel activities. Suboptimal physical condition has the potential to exacerbate symptoms of post-vacation blues, particularly when accompanied by poor sleep quality (De Bloom et al., 2013; Nilsson et al., 2001).

The fourth factor is termed "Emotional Ties," which reflects the emotional connections and social relationships formed during the vacation. Feelings of loss regarding these interactions can lead to emotional emptiness, consistent with the research conducted by Crockford (2019) and Korstanje and George (2015).

The final factor is "Travel Fatigue," which refers to exhaustion resulting from long and demanding journeys. This condition has the potential to trigger emotional stress, particularly

among males who tend to internalize stress (Kuo et al., 2022).

Overall, these five factors indicate that travel experiences, psychological pressure, physical condition, emotional ties, and travel fatigue are significant dimensions that can contribute to post-vacation blues among young male respondents.

Factors contributing to post-vacation blues in females

In the data from female respondents, the suitability for factor analysis was first tested using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity. The results of these tests are presented in the following Table 4.

Tabel 1. Results of KMO and Barlett's Test for female respondent

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.790
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1250.295
	df	300
	Sig.	.000

Source: Analysis, 2025

Table 4 indicates that the KMO value for the data of female respondents is 0.790, which reflects a moderate level that is adequate for further analysis (Hair et al., 2019). Additionally, the results of Bartlett's Test of Sphericity reveal a significance level of 0.000, indicating a sufficient correlation among the variables. Therefore, the data from female respondents are deemed suitable for further analysis.

Table 5. Results of total variance analysis for female respondents
Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	6.279	25.117	25.117	6.279	25.117	25.117
2	3.035	12.138	37.255	3.035	12.138	37.255
3	1.792	7.166	44.421	1.792	7.166	44.421
4	1.586	6.345	50.766	1.586	6.345	50.766
5	1.215	4.859	55.625	1.215	4.859	55.625
6	1.186	4.745	60.371	1.186	4.745	60.371
7	1.109	4.436	64.807	1.109	4.436	64.807
8	.978	3.911	68.718			
9	.899	3.597	72.316			
10	.838	3.353	75.668			
11	.805	3.218	78.887			
12	.676	2.702	81.589			
13	.564	2.256	83.845			
14	.535	2.142	85.987			
15	.517	2.067	88.054			
16	.430	1.721	89.775			
17	.406	1.623	91.398			
18	.378	1.513	92.911			
19	.369	1.478	94.388			
20	.308	1.231	95.620			
21	.272	1.089	96.709			
22	.248	.992	97.701			
23	.219	.876	98.577			
24	.201	.806	99.383			
25	.154	.617	100.000			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

Source: Analysis, 2025

Based on Table 5, seven factors with eigenvalues greater than 1 cumulatively explain 64.81% of the variance in the data, representing a substantial portion of the information from the 25 research indicators. This level of variance meets the standards for social analysis (Hair et al., 2019).

Figure 2 illustrates an elbow at the seventh component, indicating that subsequent factors are less significant. This finding aligns with the Total Variance Explained analysis, which shows that seven factors (eigenvalue > 1) account for 64.81% of the total variance, thereby justifying further analysis.

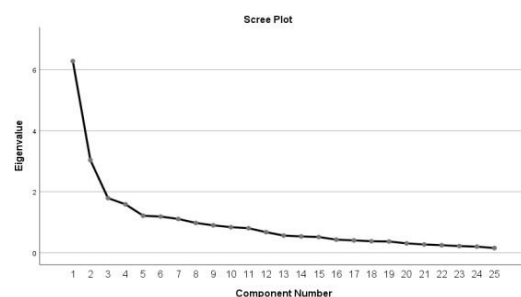


Figure 2. Results of the Scree Plot for female respondents

Source: Analysis, 2025

The results of the Rotated Factor Matrix presented in Table 6 reveal seven principal factors for female respondents with loading values greater than 0.5. Based on this analysis, seven key factors influencing the emergence of post-vacation blues among female respondents have been identified.

Table 6. Results of the rotated factor matrix for female respondent

	Rotated Component Matrix ^a						
	Component						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
AW1	.842						
KW1	.818						
AW2	.754						
EW2	.630						
DS3	.604						
F2		.796					
F3		.717					
F1		.698					
DT2		.633					
DT1		.562					
TP3			.793				
Psi3			.725				
TP2			.588				
Psi4			.544				
Dur2							
DS1				.817			
DS2				.707			
Fin1				.552			
Psi1							
Fin3					.788		
Fin2							
Dur1						.739	
TP1						.557	
Psi2							.781
EW1							.528

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 12 iterations.

Source: Analysis, 2025

The first factor, "Memorable Trip," illustrates how significant vacation experiences including activities, expectations, and social interactions, can determine mood after a holiday. This finding is consistent with the research of [De Bloom et al. \(2013\)](#), which emphasizes the importance of enjoyment derived from holiday activities for post-vacation well-being.

The second factor, "Body Condition," reflects physical well-being, including fatigue and sleep quality. Insufficient rest can hinder an individual's ability to adapt upon returning, aligning with the findings of [Nilsson et al. \(2001\)](#)

regarding the relationship between sleep disturbances and mental well-being.

The third factor, "Mental Pressure," highlights the role of psychological stress and work demands. This factor corresponds with the study by [Kühnel and Sonnentag \(2011\)](#), which indicates that post-vacation work responsibilities can exacerbate emotional fatigue.

The fourth factor, "Emotional Ties," underscores the emotional connections and social dynamics formed during vacations. These ties can evoke feelings of loss or longing upon returning to daily routines, as noted by [Crockford \(2019\)](#).

The fifth factor, "Money Matter," emphasizes anxiety related to financial

pressures, which tend to be more acutely felt by women, in line with the research by Sparkes et al. (2023).

The sixth factor, "Travel Fatigue," pertains to exhaustion resulting from lengthy journeys and intense activities. Although women are more likely to utilize social support as a coping strategy (Matud, 2004), energy-draining travel can still trigger stress.

Finally, the seventh factor, "Emotional Response," highlights the emotional reactions stemming from discrepancies between vacation expectations and reality. This finding supports gender psychology literature indicating that women are more inclined to employ emotion-based coping strategies (Tamres et al., 2002). These findings affirm that for women, physical, psychological, emotional, and financial aspects are interconnected in shaping vulnerability to post-vacation blues.

CONCLUSION

This study is an exploratory quantitative research employing Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) aimed at identifying and reducing the factors associated with post-vacation blues based on gender among young domestic tourists in West Java.

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that: (1) There are five principal factors that contribute to the occurrence of post-vacation blues in young domestic male tourists in West Java, namely Memorable Trip, Mental Pressure, Body Condition, Emotional Ties, and Travel Fatigue. (2) Seven primary factors were identified among young female tourists in West Java, including Memorable Trip, Body Condition, Mental Pressure, Emotional Ties, Money Matter, Travel Fatigue, and Emotional Response. The factor "Money Matter" underscores women's vulnerability to financial anxiety,

while "Emotional Response" reflects the emotional sensitivity and the more complex ways in which women process vacation experiences and expectations.

Thus, the results of this study not only clarify the main factors contributing to post-vacation blues among young tourists in West Java but also highlight the importance of a gender-based approach. This understanding is expected to serve as a foundation for developing more effective strategies and educational initiatives to help tourists manage their emotional experiences post-vacation more effectively.

However, this study has its limitations, particularly in the scope of its demographic focus. Future research is recommended to involve a broader age range of respondents to capture a more diverse array of experiences among domestic tourists. Additionally, including participants from across all provinces in Java will enhance the representativeness and validity of the findings, providing a more comprehensive understanding of post-vacation blues in various regional contexts. This expanded approach could yield deeper insights and facilitate the development of tailored interventions to support tourists in their emotional well-being after travel.

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