INPLASY

Effects of Tourist Fatigue on Tourist Experience: A Systematic Review

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ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

INTRODUCTION

Review question / Objective Tourist Experience is highly dynamic and context-dependent, with levels of Tourist Fatigue varying significantly with crowd density, itinerary intensity, traffic conditions, and environmental stressors. Consequently, Tourist Fatigue arising from Tourist Experience is an inevitable occurrence. This study followed the PRISMA guidelines and systematically searched the Web of Science, SCOPUS, ScienceDirect, and ProQuest databases. Based on the PECO criteria and combined with CCAT scoring, 13 studies were ultimately included, and the physiological and psychological effects of Tourist Fatigue on Tourist Experience across different tourism contexts were analyzed. The findings indicate that Tourist Fatigue negatively affects multiple dimensions of Tourist Experience, including mental fatigue (satisfaction, revisit intention, cognitive and emotional outcomes) and physical fatigue (physical load, sleep deprivation, and muscle soreness). Among the included studies, research focusing on crowding contexts and homogenized information contexts was relatively abundant. However, evidence remains insufficient for common tourism contexts such as traffic delays, multi-destination itineraries, and overnight travel. It is noteworthy that in the context of pilgrimage tourism, Tourist Fatigue did not significantly reduce visitors' physical exertion, decision-making capacity, or psychological recovery. This may be related to visitors' religious beliefs, cognitive resources, and intrinsic motivation. Due to variations in spatial environments and activity demands across different tourism contexts, the psychological resource depletion and responses associated with Tourist Fatigue may differ. This presents challenges in developing universally applicable Tourist Fatigue intervention measures. Furthermore, existing studies predominantly rely on questionnaires to

measure Tourist Fatigue, which limits their ability to fully capture the authentic Tourist Experience. Future research should integrate real-time monitoring tools to assess the dynamic shifts in Tourist Fatigue, thereby providing a practical reference value.

Condition being studied This review included 13 studies. Existing research has primarily relied on scale-based assessments, and the induction of tourist fatigue has mainly been attributed to destination crowding, homogenized information, excessive physical load, VR experiences, and harsh climatic conditions. The findings indicate that tourist fatigue negatively affects the motivational and behavioral, emotional, and cognitive components of tourist experience, as well as satisfaction, revisit intention, and spiritual recovery. Among these outcomes, satisfaction, revisit intention, and spiritual recovery were examined relatively more frequently. Although outcomes such as travel intention and avoidance behavior are also important, the evidence in this area remains limited, underscoring the need for more systematic and comprehensive research. This review further found that tourist fatigue shows clear dynamic fluctuations. Tourists are influenced not only by travel duration and travel intensity but also by the combined effects of psychological resources and environmental constraints. In addition, across different tourism contexts, individual differences in cognitive and psychological resources, cognitive load capacity, levels of psychological recovery, and resilience shape the rate at which tourist fatigue accumulates, and these differences in turn directly affect tourists' behavioral choices and decision-making capacity. Different tourism contexts involve distinct spatial environments (e.g., agritourism and urban attractions) and activity characteristics (e.g., pilgrimage activities and VR immersive experiences). The effects of external stimuli and internal states on tourist experience, therefore, depend on the contextual setting and the organization of activities. Therefore, the formation of tourist fatigue is dynamic and jointly shaped by psychological and cognitive resources and the contextual environment. Future research should broaden tourist types and conduct multi-context comparative studies, and, beyond satisfaction and revisit intention, place greater emphasis on outcomes such as tourists' avoidance behavior, consumption behavior, and dwelling behavior. At the same time, ecological validity should be strengthened by using more realistic simulations and in-situ approaches to capture the dynamic fluctuations of tourist fatigue, and to further examine its impacts on tourist experience.

METHODS

Participant or population The population of interest includes tourists and visitors (primarily adult travelers) participating in tourism activities across different tourism contexts (e.g., urban attractions, heritage sites, pilgrimage routes, and other travel settings). Studies involving general visitor/tourist samples are eligible for inclusion, regardless of nationality or travel purpose.

Intervention Not applicable.

Comparator Not applicable.

Study designs to be included The inclusion criteria followed the Population, Exposure, Comparison, and Outcome (PECO) framework (Table 1). Eligible studies were required to meet the following criteria: (P) The study population had to consist of tourists; (E) The study had to explicitly measure tourist fatigue and its various forms; (C) The comparison condition could involve any intervention or no intervention; (O) Outcomes included any effects or manifestations of tourist fatigue on tourist experience, including physiological and psychological changes (e.g., physical load, satisfaction, pleasure, and revisit intention).

Eligibility criteria The search was limited to studies published within the past decade. To maximize coverage of relevant literature, an expansive search was conducted using multiple core keywords, including tourist fatigue and tourist experience. At the tourist fatigue level, the search terms included: "tourist fatigue"、"travel fatigue" OR "tourism fatigue" OR "visitor fatigue" OR "travel burnout"。At the tourist fatigue level, the search terms included: "tourist experience" OR "visitor experience" OR "travel experience" OR "tourism experience" 。The search strategy applied Boolean operators (AND and OR) in combination with predefined keywords, as shown in Table 1, unified search terms and search strings were used across all databases.

Information sources This review systematically searched electronic databases including Web of Science, SCOPUS, ProQuest, and ScienceDirect, with the search conducted up to December 31, 2025.

Main outcome(s) The results indicate that Tourist Fatigue negatively affects multiple aspects of Tourist Experience, including motivational and behavioral responses, affective and cognitive

outcomes, satisfaction, revisit intention, and psychological restoration. Tourist Fatigue exhibits pronounced dynamic fluctuations; tourists are influenced not only by travel duration and travel intensity, but also by the combined effects of psychological resources and environmental constraints. Moreover, across different tourism contexts, individual differences in cognitive resources, capacity to manage cognitive load, level of psychological recovery, and psychological resilience shape the rate at which Tourist Fatigue accumulates, and these differences directly influence tourists' behavioral choices and decision-making ability. As tourism contexts vary in spatial settings (e.g., agritourism and urban attractions) and activity characteristics (e.g., pilgrimage activities and VR immersive experiences), the extent to which external stimuli and tourists' internal states affect their experiences depends on the specific contextual environment and the way activities are organized.

Quality assessment / Risk of bias analysis The quality of the included studies was assessed using the Crowe Critical Appraisal Tool (CCAT), developed by Lynne Crowe to standardize quality appraisal and applicable to both quantitative and qualitative research (Crowe & Sheppard, 2011), the tool comprises eight domains (Table 2). Each domain was rated on a 1–5 scale using whole numbers only (no half scores), for a maximum total score of 40. Scores above 75% (≥30/40) indicated strong quality, 55%–75% (22–29/40) indicated moderate quality, and scores below 55% (≤22/40) indicated poor quality (Zoubi & Hendry, 2022), quality appraisal results appear in Table 2.

Strategy of data synthesis We will conduct a narrative synthesis due to expected heterogeneity in tourism contexts, fatigue measures, and outcome indicators. First, study characteristics (context, sample, design, measures, and key findings) will be tabulated. Outcomes will be grouped into (1) psychological/mental outcomes (e.g., satisfaction, revisit intention, cognitive and affective responses, psychological restoration) and (2) physical outcomes (e.g., physical load, sleep deprivation, muscle soreness). We will then synthesize evidence by tourism context (e.g., crowding, information overload, traffic delays, multi-destination itineraries, overnight travel, and pilgrimage tourism) and by measurement approach (self-report vs objective/real-time indicators where available). Where sufficient comparable data are reported, we will summarize effect directions and magnitudes; however, meta-analysis is not planned unless a subset of studies is sufficiently homogeneous. The strength of conclusions will be interpreted in light of CCAT quality scores.

Subgroup analysis No formal subgroup analyses are planned. Given the expected heterogeneity in tourism contexts, fatigue measures, and outcome indicators, and the limited number of eligible studies, subgroup comparisons will be explored narratively where appropriate.

Sensitivity analysis No sensitivity analysis is planned.

Country(ies) involved Malaysia.

Keywords Tourist Fatigue; Tourist Experience; tourism contexts; systematic review.

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