

THEMATIC TRENDS OF CAFÉ BOARD GAMES AND THEIR IMPACT ON CONSUMERS' INTENTION TO VISIT

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Article Info	Abstract
Keywords: Tourism gastronomy, Boardgame cafe, Thematic cafe, coffee shop, culinary	The rivalry in the café and restaurant industry is intensifying, necessitating that business operators innovate to survive and thrive. Café industry participants vie to satisfy the lifestyle preferences of predominantly younger clientele. The introduction of thematic board game cafes is one such development. Thematic board game cafes offer a playful concept by supplying game boards for user use. Their presence is a beginning to be manifested in major cities across Indonesia. As part of the broader experience-based tourism and creative tourism movement, the emergence of these cafes reflects shifting consumer desires toward interactive, immersive leisure environments. The Purpose of this study is to assess the impact of thematic board game cafes on consumer interest in patronage. This study will offer a comprehensive analysis of customer behavior regarding innovation and originality within the café and restaurant sector. This research methodology employs a quantitative approach utilizing consumer surveys and observations. The subjects of this study were the residents of Jakarta who were potential clients of board game cafes. The research sample comprised 100 consumers of the Maze board game café in North Jakarta. Results and conclusions indicated that thematic board game cafes significantly influenced interest in visitation, contributing 23.5%. Thematic board game cafes are regarded as suitable for all age groups due to their diverse menu and game activities that cater to multiple generational levels. The allure of knowledge and social engagement enhances customer interest in patronizing thematic board game cafés. This study positions thematic board game cafés as a form of urban tourism micro-destination, emphasizing their potential role in shaping local tourism experiences and creative leisure consumption. This study will offer actionable insights that can serve as recommendations for corporate stakeholders to enhance customer interest for visiting.
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INTRODUCTION

Currently, patronizing cafés has evolved into a cultural phenomenon, as a majority of community activities, including work, study, and social interaction, that occur within these establishments. The evolution of consumer behavior, including the inclination towards "dining out" and the trend of "working from anywhere" in Indonesia, has significantly intensified the need for cafés (Wachyuni et al., 2021, 2022; Wachyuni & Wiweka, 2022). According to study data from toffin.id, the number of coffee shops in Indonesia in 2019 was 2,950 outlets in total, approximately thrice compared to the 1,000 outlets recorded in 2016 (Halalmui.org, 2024).

Toffin, a company offering products and services for the hotel, restaurant, and cafe sectors in Indonesia, categorizes the evolution of the cafe industry, particularly coffee shops, into four distinct waves. The initial wave throughout the 1980s-1990s saw the emergence of typical coffee shops that marketed instant coffee from several brands, a practice that persists to this day. The second wave in 2001 marked the emergence of multinational franchise coffee establishments. In addition, in 2010, the third wave of coffee enthusiasts emerged, valuing their coffee experience, accompanied by the introduction of the labels Single Origin and Specialty Coffee. Furthermore, the fourth wave in 2016 marked the introduction of coffee shops offering a to-go concept, providing ready-to-drink coffee produced on-site for consumption at home (Hariyanto, 2019).

This substantial development indicates that Indonesians have a preference for visiting cafés. Consequently, café entrepreneurs are competing to offer a conducive environment for patrons to engage in various activities.

Café establishments with diverse thematic concepts—such as retro-style cafés, nature-themed interiors, or minimalistic Scandinavian aesthetics—continue to proliferate. However, the café or coffee shop industry necessitates a competent strategy and innovation for sustainable growth. One emerging strategy is the creation of cafés with distinctive concepts not only in their interior and exterior design but also in the form of interactive engagement. An example of such innovation is the thematic board game café, which provides board games as part of the experience, aiming to foster interaction and social bonding among patrons.

Unlike other thematic cafés that rely predominantly on visual aesthetics and ambience, board game cafés introduce an experiential component that actively involves customers in shared activities. Previous studies indicate that a topic or concept affects visiting interest. Research conducted by (Ilma, 2016) and (Wahyudi et al., 2022) indicates that the café atmosphere and service quality significantly influence shopping decisions. Nevertheless, targeted research concerning visitation interest in thematic board game cafes has not been extensively undertaken. This study seeks to ascertain the impact of thematic board game cafes on consumer visitation interest. Moreover, this study aims to demonstrate that a cafe's distinctive idea can enhance consumer interest in visiting. Consequently, this research can offer tips to café entrepreneurs, particularly local coffee shops, to achieve success inside their own nation.

Board game cafés, as thematic spaces, have the potential to become part of a city's tourist attractions, particularly in the context of experiential tourism, which is gaining popularity among young adults and domestic travelers. They are more than mere dining spaces; they serve as distinctive social and recreational venues that can evolve into urban

tourism micro-destinations. Contemporary tourism trends reveal a growing demand for authentic local experiences, including visits to creative and themed leisure venues within urban settings. The inclusion of interactive and educational activities positions board game cafés as providers of experiential tourism, aligning with current demands for immersive, socially engaging tourism experiences.

Thematic board game café

A board game café is an establishment that offers both board games and a selection of food and beverages for patrons to order. (Angie, 2019) asserts that a board game café is ideal for socializing with friends due to its diverse selection of games available to play. According to (Wisana, 2011), a group of individuals is required to participate in a board game. A board game is a game played on a standard board, sometimes serving as a cognitive challenge, shown by titles such as Scrabble or Monopoly. Wahyu (2018) elucidates that board games are regarded as among the earliest forms of games globally. Historically constructed from wood and stone, it is currently comprised of more appropriate materials such as cards and dice (Toemon, 2017).

Based on (Wisana, 2011), the indicators of a board game café encompass the following; First, regulation; a board game is characterized by a multitude of rules. This game can only be played by all participants adhering to the established regulations, which instruct players to comply and maintain honesty. Second, social engagement; the games offered at the Boardgame café accommodate more than three participants. Certain types of board games encourage many participants to collaborate in order to overcome the game. In board games, communication is essential among opponents and allies. Third, education; it means that the board games offered are typically bundled in engaging themes. For instance, Monopoly imparts lessons on investment and land acquisition, while Agricola revolves around farm management. Other board games also impart new knowledge to players, and some players develop an interest in exploring the theme of the board game further. Forth, risk and simulation; which mean that all human actions must exert impact and yield effects, either directly or indirectly. In board games, each decision is rapidly simulated. Players can promptly ascertain the reasons for their actions during the game. Each act of treachery, broken promise, solidarity, fortune, and collaboration will yield a direct reciprocal interaction among the participants. Fifth, generational levels; digital games are not universally accessible, particularly for parents. Numerous digital games depend on technological proficiency, including the manipulation of a mouse or game controller. Meanwhile, the board game cafe offers games suitable for all generations, allowing players to effortlessly invite their parents to participate.

Consumer intention to visit

Indrajaya and Setiawan (Indrajaya et al., 2021; Setiawan et al., 2023) propose that the desire in travelling parallels the interest in purchasing, related to a research that correlates the two interests. (Putra et al., 2015) defined interest in travelling as the desire to explore a location or area deemed intriguing. The aforementioned explanation indicates that interest in visiting refers to an individual's emotion motivated by a specific desire, culminating in the decision to visit a location. According to (Ferdinand, 2014) purchasing interest can be discerned by various signs, including; first, transactional interest refers to the inclination of individuals or organizations to purchase goods or services. Second,

preferential interest refers to the tendency of individuals or organizations to prioritize a product as the primary reference point. Third, exploratory interest, defined as the behavior of an individual who consistently seeks information pertaining to goods or services of interest.

Grounded in theoretical foundations and emerging circumstances the hypothesis formulated in this study is as follows:

H₀: There is no positive influence of thematic boardgame cafe on intention to visit.

H₁: There is a positive influence of thematic boardgame cafe on intention to visit.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a comprehensive quantitative research methodology, which is designed to systematically collect and analyze numerical data. The primary objective of this approach is to rigorously test hypotheses and address pertinent questions concerning individuals' perceptions and opinions about a specific issue or topic, particularly as it relates to café experiences. By quantifying observations, the study aimed to draw meaningful conclusions that could enhance our understanding of consumer behavior within this context. The research has been conducted at the Maze Boardgame Café, strategically located at Kelapa Hibrida Raya PF18 no.9 in the vibrant Special Capital Region of Jakarta. This locale provided an ideal setting for exploring the intersection of leisure and consumer interest in thematic cafés. The study was scheduled to take place over a five-month period, from September 2023 to January 2024, allowing for a thorough examination of visitor interactions and experiences.

The target population for this research consisted of the diverse Jakarta community, specifically focusing on both current patrons and potential consumers of cafés in the area. This demography is particularly relevant given the rising popularity of boardgame cafés as social hubs. A convenience sampling technique was used to select participants who were readily available and willing to respond during their visit to the Maze Boardgame Café. The sample encompassed 100 visitors to the Maze Boardgame Café, ensuring a representation of varied perspectives within the café-goer community. In accordance with guidelines established by Roscoe, as referenced in (Sekaran, 2017), a sample size of 30 to 500 respondents is considered adequate for conducting robust quantitative analysis. However, it should be noted that the relatively small sample size and the restriction to a single café location may limit the generalizability of the findings. Future research is recommended to adopt a broader approach, incorporating multiple boardgame cafés across various cities to enable comparative insights and stronger external validity.

To gather data, the study utilized structured questionnaires, which included a series of statements aligned with the indicators of Variable X (thematic boardgame café) and Variable Y (interest in visiting). The questionnaire was designed using a five-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (5). Sample items for Variable X include: "The board game selection enhances my experience at the café" and "I enjoy interacting with others through board games". For Variable Y, examples included: "I am likely to revisit this café in the near future" and "I would recommend this café to my friends". This instrument was then meticulously crafted to capture the nuances of visitor engagement and preferences. Ethical considerations were also strictly observed. All participants received a clear explanation of the research purpose and procedures, and

written informed consent was obtained before their participation. Respondents were assured that their involvement was voluntary, and that their identities remained anonymous. All data collected were kept confidential and used solely for academic purposes. Prior to administration, the questionnaire underwent thorough validity and reliability testing to ensure its effectiveness in measuring the intended constructs.

Upon completion of data collection, the acquired data were subjected to a comprehensive array of analytical techniques. These included quantitative descriptive analysis, classical assumption tests, simple linear regression tests, t-tests, and coefficient of determination tests. This multi-faceted analytical approach will facilitate a deeper understanding of the relationships between the variables of interest and provide insights that could inform future strategies for enhancing consumer engagement in thematic boardgame cafés.

Through this meticulous research design, the study aims not only to contribute to the existing body of knowledge but also to offer practical recommendations for café owners and stakeholders seeking to attract and retain customers in this evolving market. Ultimately, the findings are anticipated to illuminate the dynamics of consumer interest in thematic cafés, thereby enriching the discourse surrounding leisure activities in urban settings.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

Respondent Demographics

The survey conducted as part of this study reveals intriguing insights into the demographic profile of visitors to the Maze Boardgame Café. A striking 74% of the respondents are male, while female visitors make up 26% of the total samples. This gender distribution highlights a notable predominance of male patrons in this particular café setting, indicating a potential gender bias in the sample that should be acknowledged in interpreting results. This supports the assumption underlying Hypothesis 1 (H_1), suggesting that thematic boardgame cafés attract a specific demographic segment, particularly males.

When examining the age demographics, it becomes evident that the majority of visitors fall within the young and productive age bracket of 23 to 27 years, comprising an impressive 89% of respondents. This is followed by a smaller segment of visitors aged 17 to 22 years (6%), and those in the 28 to 32 age range (5%). Such data indicate that the café attracts a youthful clientele, predominantly from Generation Z and millennials, who are typically active in digital and leisure-based consumption patterns. In terms of occupation, the findings reveal that a significant proportion of respondents, 80%, are employed as Civil Servants or in the private sector, while 11% identify as entrepreneurs. This occupational distribution suggests that the visitors are not only part of a productive demographic but also encompass individuals who are likely to be economically active and engaged in various professional endeavors.

These characteristics paint a vivid picture of the typical boardgame café visitor as a member of the dynamic and resourceful younger generations, who seek out communal spaces for entertainment and social interaction (Damanik et al., 2019; Setiawan et al., 2018; Wiweka et al., 2019). This demographic alignment is relevant to H_1 , further indicating that thematic cafés resonate with a specific segment of socially active young adults. For a more

comprehensive view, a detailed demographic table of the respondents can be found in Table 1, which encapsulates these findings and serves as a foundational element for further analysis and discussion within the study.

Table 1. Results of Respondent Demographic Analysis

No	Demography	Option	Percentage (%)
1	Gender	Male	74
		Female	26
2	Age	17-22 Years	0
		23-27 Years	89
		28-32 Years	6
		> 32 Years	5
3	Occupation	Civil Servant/Private Employee	80
		Entrepreneur	11
		Student	9
4	Visiting Frequency	1 time a month	2
		1-3 times a month	7
		3-5 times a month	91
		5 times a month	0

Source: Research data, 2025

As illustrated in Table 1, the visiting patterns of respondents to the Maze Boardgame Café reveal noteworthy trends. A substantial majority, comprising 91% of visitors, visits the café three to five times each month. This high frequency of visits suggests a strong level of engagement and loyalty among patrons. In contrast, a smaller segment of the population, 7%, reports visiting the café one to three times a month, while only 2% indicate that they visit once a month. Further analysis of the respondents' places of residence highlights the geographical distribution of the café's clientele. An enormous 84% of visitors are from North Jakarta, indicating that the café has successfully established itself as a popular destination within this locality. This is followed by visitors from West Jakarta, who represent 8% of the total, and East Jakarta, which accounts for 4%.

These demographic insights underscore the café's appeal to local residents, suggesting that it serves as a community hub for social interaction and leisure activities. The data indicates not only a strong local customer base but also a tendency for repeat visits, reflecting the café's ability to create an inviting atmosphere that encourages patrons to return. This combination of factors points to a market segment that is both geographically concentrated and highly engaged, presenting valuable implications for marketing strategies and customer relationship management within the café industry (Wachyuni et al., 2021).

Validity and Reliability Test of Questionnaire

The validity test was performed to confirm that the research instrument used in this study was valid, while the reliability test was conducted to establish the consistency of the instrument before distribution and further analysis. The findings from the questionnaire reliability test are presented in Table 2. The validity test results indicate that out of 14 questions pertaining to the thematic indicators of the boardgame café and 9 questions related to the interest in visiting, the calculated *r* values exceeded the critical *r* value (0.374 for *N* = 30). Consequently, all statements were considered valid.

Table 2. Test results of validity and reliability of the questionnaire

Variabel	Cronbach's Alpha	N items	Result
Thematic board game café (X)	0,873	14	Reliable
Intention to visit (Y)	0,742	9	Reliable

Source: Research data, 2025

In Table 2, the results of the reliability test reveal that the Cronbach's Alpha value for Variable X, which refers to the thematic boardgame café, is 0.873, while Variable Y is 0.742. Since both values exceed the threshold of 0.6, it can be concluded that each of the two variables is considered reliable.

Classical Assumption Test

Before performing linear regression analysis, it is essential for the data to exhibit a normal distribution. To assess this, a classical assumption test must be conducted, which includes tests for heteroscedasticity, linearity, and normality. Once all assumptions are fulfilled, the data can be processed to regression analysis and t-tests.

Heteroscedasticity Test

As noted by (Wachyuni & Tandriano, 2017), the purpose of the heteroscedasticity test is to determine whether there is unequal variance across observations within the regression model. The findings of the heteroscedasticity test in this study will be illustrated using a scatterplot, as shown in Figure 1. This scatterplot displays points that are distributed both above and below the zero mark. The arrangement of these points does not exhibit a wave-like pattern or any discernible structure, leading to the conclusion that there is no issue with heteroscedasticity.

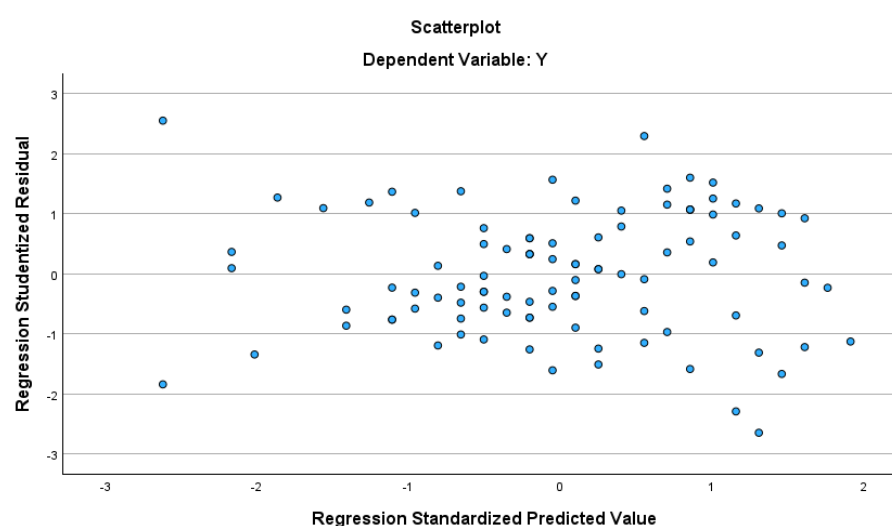


Figure 1. Scatterplot diagram

Linearity Test

As stated by (Sugiyono, 2014), the linearity test serves a crucial role for determining the nature of the relationship between independent and dependent variables in a statistical analysis. This test assesses whether the relationship is linear, providing insights into how changes in the independent variable correspond to changes in the dependent variable. To be classified as linear, the significance value of a relationship for deviation

from linearity must exceed the threshold of 0.05. In examining the results presented in Table 3, the significance value for deviation from linearity is recorded at 0.744, which notably surpasses the 0.05 threshold. This finding allows us to confidently conclude that a linear relationship exists between Variable X and Variable Y. Such a linear correlation indicates that as Variable X changes, Variable Y responds in a predictable manner, thereby reinforcing the validity of utilizing linear regression models in subsequent analyses.

Establishing this linear relationship is essential not only for the robustness of the study, but also for informing practical applications in the field. Understanding the dynamics between these variables enables researchers and practitioners to make informed decisions and predictions based on the observed data. In conclusion, the results of the linearity test provide a foundational understanding of the relationship under investigation, setting the stage for further statistical exploration and analysis.

Table 3. Linearity test

			Sum of squares	df.	Mean square	F	Sig.
y*x	Between Groups	(combined)	734.893	27	27.218	1.813	.024
		Linearity	425.936	1	425.936	28.364	<.001
		Deviation from Linearity	308.957	26	11.883	.791	.744
	Within Groups		1081.217	72	15.017		
		Total	1816.110	99			

Source: Research data, 2025

Normality Test

The results of the normality test conducted in this study are crucial for assessing the distribution of residuals across the variables in question. This test aims to determine whether the residuals exhibit a normal distribution pattern, which is fundamental for the validity of many statistical analyses. The standard significance threshold for normality is established at 0.05; when the significance value falls below this threshold, it indicates that the data does not adhere to a normal distribution. Conversely, a significance value exceeding 0.05 suggests that the data can be classified as normally distributed. In this analysis, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov method was employed to evaluate the normality of the dataset. The findings reveal a significance value of 0.244, which comfortably exceeds the 0.05 threshold. This outcome supports the conclusion that the data are normally distributed, thereby affirming the appropriateness of employing parametric statistical techniques in subsequent analyses.

Descriptive Analysis Results

Boardgame Café Thematic Variable

In addition to the normality assessment, the analysis of the thematic variables associated with board game cafés provides compelling insights into consumer perceptions and preferences. The majority of respondents demonstrated a clear agreement with the statements included in the questionnaire, indicating a strong alignment with the characteristics and offerings of these cafés. Descriptive statistics reveal that the risk and simulation indicator accumulated the highest ratings, suggesting that respondents find board games to be not only engaging but also intellectually stimulating. Furthermore, participants expressed appreciation for the maintenance of board game facilities, indicating

a desire for well-kept environments that enhance their gaming experiences.

Moreover, board game cafés are recognized as versatile venues that cater to individuals of all ages. This inclusive atmosphere is supported by the diverse array of food and beverage options available, which appeal to a broad demographic. The variety of games offered further reinforces the cafés' reputation as welcoming spaces where visitors can gather to socialize and enjoy recreational activities together. Collectively, these findings underscore the significance of thematic board game cafés in fostering community engagement and providing enriching leisure experiences for consumers across various age groups. This comprehensive understanding of consumer preferences not only enhances the strategic positioning of board game cafés but also contributes to the broader discourse on leisure and social interaction in contemporary settings.

Table 4. Results of Descriptive Analysis of Thematic Boardgame Cafe Variables

No	Indicator	Statement	Average
1	Social Interaction	I can interact socially directly by playing board games when visiting Maze Boardgame Cafe	3,81
2		Boardgame cafe provides a comfortable place to enjoy quality time with my social circle	3,72
3		At the boardgame cafe, I create scenarios and determine certain roles when playing	3,47
Total average			3,67
4	Education	I am interested in visiting a boardgame cafe because I get new lessons and knowledge	3,84
5		I want to hone my skills in playing boardgames at a boardgame cafe	3,76
6		I am interested in visiting a boardgame cafe because there are many variations of interesting educational games	3,72
Total average			3,77
7	Level of Generation	The types of board games available are very diverse, so that all age groups	3,85
8		Boardgame café also provides games for children	3,78
9		Boardgame café has food and beverage products that can also be enjoyed by all age groups	3,89
Total average			3,84
10	Rules	I can play various types of board games because the board game cafe determines the maximum time for visitors to play its board games	3,79
11		The rules at the board game cafe do not affect the essence of my playing	3,54
12		I always obey the rules when playing board games at the board game cafe	4,04
Total average			3,79

13	Risk and simulation	I always maintain cleanliness when eating or drinking while playing at a board game cafe, because maintaining the cleanliness of the board game	4,06
14		I am careful when playing board games to avoid damage to the board game cafe facilities	4,1
Total average			4,08

Source: Research data, 2025

Respondents stated that visiting a board game café encompasses far more than the simple enjoyment of food and beverages; it also offers substantial educational value that leaves a lasting positive impression and significantly enhances their inclination to return. This educational aspect of the games not only stimulates cognitive engagement but also fortifies social bonds among family and friends who are invited to take part in the experience, ultimately strengthening relational ties and fostering a sense of community.

Intention to Visit Variable

A detailed analysis of the visiting interest variable indicates that transactional interest emerges as the most prominent factor, achieving the highest average value among respondents. The data suggest that consumer interest in thematic board game cafés is predominantly driven by the transactional benefits they offer. Visitors enjoy not only the delectable food and drinks available but also access to captivating board game facilities, effectively creating a dual advantage that improves the overall experience.

Furthermore, the interest in visiting these cafés is also influenced by preferential incentives, as consumers demonstrate a clear preference for thematic board game cafés due to the unique and appealing game boards provided. The quality of the culinary offerings in these cafés is noteworthy, rivaling that of other popular dining establishments, which adds to their allure. Additionally, there is a strong desire among consumers to explore the distinctive charms of thematic board game cafés, further motivating them to visit. By engaging with these cafés, consumers gain not only a refreshing dining experience but also an immersive atmosphere that enriches their leisure activities. The results of the descriptive analysis pertaining to the visiting interest variable can be found in Table 5, providing further insights into consumer preferences and behaviors in this unique dining context.

Table 5. Results of Descriptive Analysis of Visiting Interest Variables

No	Indicator	Statement	Average value
1	Transactional Interest	I visited the boardgame café to buy food and beverage products and rent the boardgames provided	4,04
2		I am interested in visiting the Maze boardgame café again	3,91
3		I get two benefits in one transaction if I visit the maze boardgame café	3,83
Total Average			3,93
4	Preferential Interest	I prefer to visit thematic boardgame cafes compared to other themed cafes	3,47
5		The choice of food and drinks at the boardgame café is in accordance with my expectations	3,74

6		The food and drink products and attractions provided influence my interest in visiting	3,99
Total Average			3,73
7	Explorative Interest	I visited a boardgame cafe because I wanted to know more about boardgames	3,8
8		I played boardgames because I wanted to get a new experience	3,54
		I am interested in visiting a boardgame cafe because I want to feel the thematic atmosphere of the cafe	3,73
Total Average			3,69

Source: Research data, 2025

Linear regression test and t-test

A simple linear regression test is conducted to test the effect of one independent variable on the dependent variable. The results of the analysis in Table 6 show the regression equation $Y = 17,340 + 0.315X$.

Table 6. Results of Linear Regression Test and t-Test

Coefficients						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	17.340	3.094		5.604	.000
	x	.315	.058	.484	5.480	.000

a. Dependent Variable: y

Source: Research data, 2025

Furthermore, the t-test results show a significance value of $0.000 < 0.05$, which means that the thematic boardgame café variable has a positive effect on visiting interest.

The Coefficient of Determination Test

Furthermore, the determination coefficient is carried out to measure how far the model's ability to explain the dependent variable. From the SPSS output display in Table 6, the R Square value is 0.235. This indicates that the contribution of variable X to Y is 23.5%, while the remaining 76.5% is determined by other variables.

Table 7. Results of the Determination Coefficient Test

Model Summary ^b					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	
1	.484 ^a	.235	.227	3.766	

Source: Research data, 2025

Discussion

Profile and Characteristics of Thematic Boardgame Café Consumers

Demographic analysis reveals that the primary consumers of thematic board game cafés are predominantly male, i.e. the Generation Z and Millennial cohorts. This demographic is characterized by its youthful productivity and stable employment, indicating a group that actively seeks out leisure activities to complement their busy lives.



Research by (Chandra, 2006) supports the observation that men generally exhibit a stronger inclination towards gaming, both traditional and online, than women. This preference contributes to the heightened demand for thematic board game experiences among male visitors.

Further exploration into the neurological distinctions between genders, as discussed by (Oktavian et al., 2018), reveals that men tend to have greater activation in the brain regions associated with pleasure and reward when engaged in gaming activities. In neurological terms, this area is known as the mesolimbic dopamine system, which plays a central role in motivational reward processing. This heightened responsiveness underscores a key motivation for male consumers: the pursuit of enjoyment and relaxation. Thematic board game cafés provide an ideal venue for these individuals to unwind and recharge after a demanding day at work. The frequent visits, averaging three to five times per month, underscore the perception of these cafés as enjoyable social spaces. As noted by (Kotler & Armstrong, 2018), such repeat visitation is indicative of consumer satisfaction, reflecting the successful alignment of the café's offerings with the desires of its customers.

However, it is important to note that the current demographic findings—particularly the male dominance and Jakarta-specific context—represent limitations to the study's broader applicability. These demographic biases may influence the generalizability of the findings to other urban or rural settings in Indonesia. As a result, the demographic trends observed may not be generalizable to other Indonesian cities or regions with different socioeconomic or cultural characteristics. Framing this research as a case study allows for in-depth exploration, but future studies in areas such as Bandung, Bali, or other Southeast Asian urban centres would provide comparative insights and enhance external validity.

The Influence of Thematic Boardgame Café on Consumer Visiting Interests

Statistical analyses conducted in this study further corroborate the notion that thematic board game cafés exert a positive influence on consumer interest in visiting. This is evidenced by a statistically significant result ($p < 0.001$) and a moderate effect size ($\beta = 0.315$), which supports Hypothesis 1 (H_1). While the contribution value of this influence may not be particularly large, as shown by the coefficient of determination (R^2) which indicates that other factors may also play a role, it is proven that innovative elements within a café's theme can significantly enhance consumer engagement. This research underscores both theoretical and practical implications: it confirms that theme innovation has a direct and meaningful impact on consumer interest, thereby offering strategic insights for maintaining sustainability and competitiveness in the food and beverage sector.

In the context of thematic board game cafés, the educational benefits of board games serve as an additional catalyst for consumer interest. (Treher, 2011) proposes that board games are not merely recreational; they also function as effective educational tools that foster engagement and critical thinking. They facilitate discussions and collaborative problem-solving among players, creating an enriching environment. This dual value proposition, providing delightful culinary experiences alongside educational entertainment, makes these cafés particularly attractive, as reflected in the observed repeat visitation rates of three to five times per month.

Visual representations of consumer activities within board game cafés, as illustrated in Figure 2, offer further insights into the interactions and experiences that

characterize these spaces. The literature reviewed by (Iswinarti & Suminar, 2019) emphasizes the versatility of board games; they can be played in various formats, thus preventing monotony and encouraging players to revisit the material in diverse ways. Such modes include social, cognitive, individual, and cooperative play, each of which caters to different visitor motivations and learning styles. These dynamics contribute to the experiential richness of thematic cafés and help explain the sustained interest observed among patrons.

Accordingly, the findings not only validate the proposed hypothesis but also align with previous literature, reinforcing the idea that consumer interest is driven by a multifaceted combination of thematic novelty, social interaction, and cognitive stimulation.



Figure 2. Visitors' activities at the board game café

Moreover, the social interactions fostered in a thematic board game café add another dimension to the appeal of these venues. As noted by (Finkelstein, 1989), one of the primary motivations for dining out is to engage socially with others. The immersive environment of a thematic board game café not only satisfies the desire for social interaction but also cultivates a sense of community among patrons.

Nevertheless, some limitations of this concept warrant consideration. The niche appeal of board game cafés may inadvertently exclude non-gamers or those unfamiliar with the culture, while practical challenges such as noise levels and limited space may affect visitor comfort, particularly during peak hours. To broaden appeal and inclusivity, operators may consider integrating family-friendly game options, designated quiet areas, or introductory game sessions for new visitors.

This blend of entertainment, education, and socialization positions thematic board game cafés as dynamic spaces that effectively meet the multifaceted needs of today's consumers, enriching their leisure experiences while contributing to the sustainability of the food and beverage industry.

Policy Implications and Theoretical Contribution

Policy Implications

This study suggests that thematic board game cafés have potential to be developed as innovative urban tourism attractions. The Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy could integrate these cafés into creative tourism strategies by promoting them as interactive

cultural experiences for young travellers. Collaborations with café owners can lead to the creation of tourism packages that combine food, play, and social interaction. As part of destination development, these cafés can be incorporated into urban tourism campaigns to attract domestic and international visitors to commercial districts, thereby enhancing the vibrancy of city-based travel experiences. Additionally, supporting café-based startups through funding or incubation programmes can stimulate the creative economy and youth entrepreneurship. In line with SME support policies, experience design training—such as game curation, staff development, and storytelling-based hospitality—may be subsidised to improve service quality and competitiveness. These cafés also serve as safe, educational spaces for young people, making them suitable for community engagement or school-linked tourism initiatives. To reinforce their role as cultural hubs, zoning incentives could be introduced to encourage clustering of thematic cafés within designated cultural or creative districts, fostering synergies with other entertainment and leisure providers. By recognizing board game cafés as cultural hubs, policymakers can diversify tourism offerings while empowering creative industries.

Theoretical Contribution

The study contributes to the theoretical understanding of consumer behaviour in leisure and tourism by reinforcing the concept of the Experience Economy (Pine & Gilmore, 1999), which emphasizes that consumers seek engaging, memorable experiences rather than just products or services. Thematic board game cafés offer such immersive experiences by combining food, play, and social connection. The research also aligns with Play Theory (Huizinga, 1938), positioning these cafés as modern play spaces where people voluntarily participate in meaningful and enjoyable interactions. By linking café visitation with both experiential and play-based motivations, the study enhances the academic discussion around experience-driven consumer behaviour and the evolving role of themed leisure spaces in urban tourism.

CONCLUSION

The findings from this study reveal a positive correlation between the thematic variables associated with café board games and consumer interest in visiting, with a noteworthy contribution of 23.5%. This insight suggests that café owners specializing in board games could improve their service by diversifying their game selections, refining the overall ambiance, and elevating the quality of their food and beverage options. By continually enhancing the thematic elements of their cafés, it is anticipated that consumer interest and engagement will substantially increase. From a theoretical perspective, this research contributes to the understanding of how theme innovation can significantly affect consumer behavior in the café sector. The practical implications of these findings are equally important, as they provide actionable recommendations for innovation strategies within the food and beverage industry, particularly for cafés and restaurants seeking to ensure long-term sustainability and scalability. For instance, café managers may consider Gender-Targeted Engagement strategies—such as organizing game tournaments or collaborating with e-sports communities—to appeal to the predominantly male visitor base (74%). Additionally, the implementation of Loyalty Programs, including board game rental discounts or themed social night events, may sustain the high visitation frequency (91% visit 3–5 times/month). Another opportunity lies in Educational Marketing, where cafés

could promote the cognitive benefits of board games (mean score: 3.77) to families and schools, positioning the café as an experiential learning space. However, it is important to acknowledge the limitations of this study, which focused exclusively on a single brand of thematic board game café. This narrow scope may limit the generalizability of the results. Future research endeavors could benefit from a broader examination of multiple café brands, allowing for a more comprehensive analysis of consumer preferences. Furthermore, investigating additional variables that influence consumer interest in visiting could enrich the existing body of knowledge and contribute to the development of new theories in consumer behavior. From a tourism policy perspective, the findings hold strategic value. First, thematic board game cafés can be integrated into Destination Development initiatives—particularly urban tourism campaigns—to attract visitors to commercial districts. Second, SME Support policies can include subsidies for experience design training, such as game curation and staff development, thereby enhancing the competitiveness of thematic cafés. Third, Zoning Incentives could be provided to cluster thematic cafés in cultural or creative zones, fostering synergistic entertainment and leisure hubs. Collectively, these measures not only strengthen the local food and beverage sector but also support a broader experience-based tourism ecosystem. Such advancements would be invaluable for practitioners aiming to adapt to the evolving landscape of the hospitality industry, while also informing policy directions for sustainable tourism development.

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