

How to Increasing Memorable Tourism Experiences at Heritage Destination

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ABSTRACT

Background: This study aims to investigate the effect of destination image, self-congruity, and visitor engagement on memorable tourism experiences. Method: Tourists who visited Borobudur Temple were used as respondents who were taken using convenience techniques, as many as 150 questionnaires were distributed and analysed using multiple linear regression analysis with the SPSS version 28 statistical tool. Results: The results showed that all the hypotheses tested in this study were accepted. Image destinations play the most important role in increasing MTE, next are visitor engagement and self-congruity. The results of this study provide evidence that the tourist experience is an important emotional element for visitors to interact in their tourism activities. The substantial of the destination image, self-congruity, and visitor engagement will further increase the MTE. Conclusion: The antecedents of Memorable Tourism Experiences that exam in this research is an important element for the tourism business so that it can foster memories and memorable experiences for visitors when they carry out tourism activities.

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1. INTRODUCTION

.A rapidly growing tourism business in an area can boost the economy and other sectors [1] [2]. For this reason, tourism must be able to improve its performance so that consumers are interested in visiting these tourist attractions. An important component of tourism is that it does not only provide experiences but must be able to provide experiences that have a distinct impression on visitors [3]. Providing experience to visitors is a focus for tourist attractions because visitors will get direct experience in carrying out their tourism activities [4].

With regard to travel experience, the concept that is often used by many researchers is the concept of MTE or memorable tourism experience [5][6][4]. MTE consists of several components that are used to test tourist behavior towards destinations. Nonetheless, research testing the concept of MTE in heritage tourism is still very rare [7]. In addition, the MTE construct assesses an individual's experience based on his own judgment which allows for mixed results [8]. Thus, it is necessary to carry out further research related to the antecedents that can influence a memorable tourist experience.

Experience is closely related to the image of a tourist spot, the better the image of a destination will create a distinct impression for visitors [9]. Research examining the effect of destination image on MTE is still limited [10], in his study explaining that the destination image of a tourist attraction will be influenced by country destinations. In addition, other studies also explain that memorable experiences for tourists are influenced by self-congruity [11]. Tourists will show certain behaviors or expressive values when they visit tourist destinations. Furthermore, when a destination has cultural values, a separate engagement will be formed between visitors and tourist attractions [12].

Although there are many modern tourist attractions that offer new experiences for visitors, the existence of heritage attractions still gets a distinct impression from tourists. Heritage tourism is tourism with a very strong cultural nuance, in this study examining the Borobudur temple. Borobudur Temple is a historical heritage building that has the nuances of local Indonesian culture. This heritage destination can provide an experience that gives a distinct impression to its visitors. Thus, the purpose of this study was to examine the effect of destination image, self-congruity, and engagement on MTE at Borobudur Temple.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Memorable Tourism Experience

Memorable travel experiences (MTEs) refer to positive tourist experiences that are remembered and recalled after the activity is over [5]. The quality experience felt by visitors when they are at a destination is a distinct advantage for tourism destinations [13]. Therefore, tourism marketing makes this positive memory their competitive advantage. Tourist experiences at tourist attractions are temporary and also provide temporary feelings that are stored in their memories when they visit a tourist destination [14][15]. The interactions that are formed between tourists and destinations will greatly determine the tourist experience at tourist attractions [16].

Destination Image

Tourist attractions must have a good destination image because it determines the target of visits for tourists [10]. Tourist destinations are attributes attached to tourist attractions such as names, logos, symbols, buildings, and the like [1]. Destination images can be developed based on estimates or understanding of the characteristics of an area [9]. In addition, in their tourism activities visitors can directly provide evaluations related to the image of a destination they visit [17]. This causes visitors to directly experience tourist attractions that foster the experiences and impressions felt by visitors [10]. Previous studies suggested that there was a positive influence between destination image and memorable tourism experience [10]. Therefore, the hypothesis developed in this study is:

H1: Destination image positively influence memorable tourism experience on Borobudur temple

Self-Congruity

Examining self-congruity in tourism marketing research has generally been discussed in previous studies [11]. The original self-congruity construct is from the concept of social psychology which is an individual's subjective evaluation of his own behaviour towards an object [18]. Tourists who visit a destination will carry out a subjective evaluation of their tourism activities which can influence future behaviour [19]. In addition, previous studies also revealed that visitors' self-congruity will have an impact on perceived experiences that will be different from one another [20]. Thus, the hypotheses tested in this study are:

H2: Self-congruity positively influences memorable tourism experience on Borobudur temple

Visitor Engagement

Visitor engagement is a very important element in tourism marketing which has a strong relationship with the tourist experience [12]. The concept of engagement includes aspects of attachment, emotional connection, commitment, and devotion (Taheri, Jafari, & O'Gorman, 2014). In heritage tourism or cultural tourism, the level of visitor involvement is an important construct in tourism marketing because it will provide a different experience for each individual [21]. Previous studies have proven that visitor engagement can be used as a predictor of MTE [22]. Therefore, the hypothesis proposed in this study is:

H3: Visitor engagement positively influences memorable tourism experience on Borobudur temple

Based on the literature review and the hypotheses developed, the research model used in this study can be seen in Figure 1.

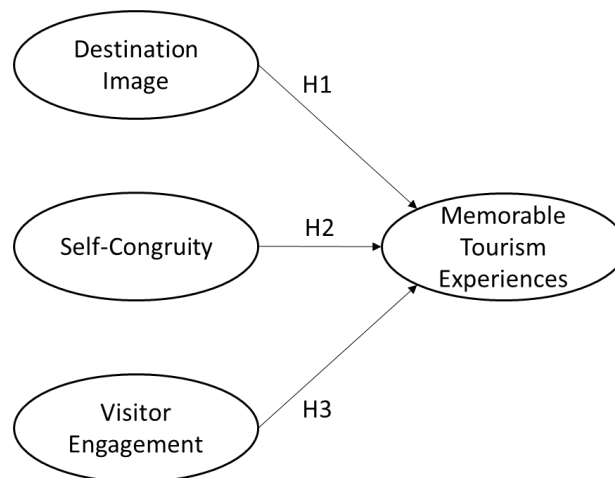


Figure1. Research Framework

3. METHOD

The target of this research is tourists who visit Borobudur temple at least once in the last two years. According to Malhotra (2012), a sample size of 150 is sufficient to conduct research, thus 150 tourists are used as respondents who are taken using a purposive sampling technique. The survey was conducted using a structured questionnaire and self-report survey was prepared. The measurement scale in this study used a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree). The data collected will be tested for validity and reliability as well as classical assumption tests. The analysis used was multiple linear regression which was processed using the SPSS version 28 statistical tool.

Measurement of the construct variables used in this study by adopting previous studies that have been done. The destination image construct is measured using 4 question items adopted from [22]. The self-congruity construct is measured using 3 question items adopted from [18]. The visitor engagement construct is measured using 8 question items adopted from [12]. The MTE construct is measured using 23 question items adopted from [12].

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

Result

Descriptive of respondent in this research capture on table 1.

Table 1. Profile of Respondents

| Category | Total | Percentage |
|-------------------------|-------|------------|
| Gender | | |
| • Male | • 78 | • 52,0% |
| • Female | • 72 | • 48,0% |
| Age | | |
| • < 25 | • 21 | • 14,0% |
| • 26 – 35 | • 36 | • 24,0% |
| • 36 – 45 | • 52 | • 35,3% |
| • > 45 | • 40 | • 27,7% |
| Education Status | | |
| • < Junior High School | • 18 | • 12,0% |
| • High School | • 36 | • 24,0% |
| • Bachelor | • 72 | • 48,0% |
| • Master/Doctor | • 24 | • 16,0% |
| Career | | |
| • Student | • 34 | • 23,7% |
| • Business | • 32 | • 21,3% |

| Category | Total | Percentage |
|-------------------------|-------|------------|
| • Employee | • 47 | • 31,3% |
| • Civil Servant | • 25 | • 17,7% |
| • Others | • 12 | • 8,0% |
| Income/month (000) | | |
| • < Rp. 1.500 | • 8 | • 5,3% |
| • Rp. 1.500 – Rp. 2.500 | • 20 | • 13,3% |
| • Rp. 2.500 – Rp. 4.000 | • 37 | • 24,7% |
| • Rp. 4.000 – Rp. 5.500 | • 52 | • 34,7% |
| • > 5.500 | • 33 | • 22,0% |

Based on table 1 it can be seen that a total of 150 respondents were used in this study, the distribution of respondents by gender was 78 men (52%) and 72 women (48%). Most respondents were in the range of 36-45 years as many as 21 (14%) followed by those over 45 years as many as 40 (27.7%), then in the age range of 26-35 years as many as 36 (24%), and the least were in the less than 25 years, namely as many as 21 (14%). The education level of respondents was dominated by bachelors at 72 (48%), followed by high school at 36 (24%), then masters/doctors at 24 (16%), and junior high school at 18 (12%). For the work of the most respondents were as employees as much as 47 (31.3%), then as students as many as 34 (23.7%), then as a business as many as 32 (21.3%), followed by civil servants as many as 25 (17.7%) %, and others as much as 12 (8%). Furthermore, for income/month the highest respondents have income in the range of 4,000,000 – 5,000,000 by 52 (34.7%), followed by the range of 2,500,000 – 4,000,000 by 37 (24.7%), then the range of more than 5,500 ,000 as many as 33 (22%), then the range 1,500,000 – 2,500,000 as many as 20 (13.3%), and less than 1,500,000 as many as 8 (5.3%).

Reliability and Validity Test

The reliability test for each variable is used to evaluate the consistency of each dimension. Higher Cronbach's alpha values indicate stronger internal consistency among questions in the questionnaire. Referring to (Hair et al., 1998) states that the critical value used to determine reliability is that the Cronbach's alpha value must be more than 0.7. The results of reliability testing can be seen in table 2.

Table 2. Result of Test Reliability

| Variables | No. of Item | Cronbach Alpha | Decision |
|------------------------------|-------------|----------------|----------|
| Destination Image | 4 | 0,718 | Reliable |
| Self-congruity | 3 | 0,833 | Reliable |
| Engagement | 8 | 0,726 | Reliable |
| Memorable Tourism Experience | 23 | 0,709 | Reliable |

Based on the results of the reliability test in this study, it was found that each variable had a Cronbach value of 0.718 for the destination image variable, 0.833 for the self-congruity variable, for the visitor engagement variable of 0.726, and the memorable tourism experience variable of 0.709. These results indicate that all the variables used in this study are reliable. To test the validity in this study using a questionnaire which refers to the contents of the questionnaire that has been tested by previous studies which were suggested by [22] for the destination image construct, [18] for the self-congruity construct, [12] for the visitor engagement construct, and [12] for the MTE construct.

Multiple Regression Analysis

Regression analysis is used to test the strength of the relationship between variables and verify the hypothesis. Prior to the regression test, classical assumption tests (normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity) were performed to ensure that the data could be used for the regression test. Based on the results of the classical assumption test, it was concluded that all data were normally distributed, there was no multicollinearity and heteroscedasticity. The test results using SPSS version 28 can be seen in table 3.

Tabel 3. Multiple Regression and Hypothesis Test

| Variables | Unstandardized Coefficients Beta | t-value | Sig. | Hypothesis Test |
|--------------|-------------------------------------|---------|-------|-----------------|
| 1 (Constant) | 0,843 | 0,937 | 0,351 | |

| Variables | Unstandardized Coefficients Beta | t-value | Sig. | Hypothesis Test |
|--------------------|-------------------------------------|---------|-------|-----------------|
| Destination image | 0,291 | 3,678 | 0,000 | H1=Accepted |
| Self-congruity | 0,187 | 2,709 | 0,029 | H2=Accepted |
| Visitor Engagement | 0,203 | 2,853 | 0,011 | H3=Accepted |

R= 0,754; R square= 0,569; Adjusted R square= 0,550

Based on table 3 destination image has a positive relationship and influence on memorable tourism experience with a p-value of less than 0.05 (p-value = 0.000) with a beta value of 0.291. This means that the first hypothesis testing is declared accepted. In testing the second hypothesis, self-congruity proved to have a positive effect on memorable tourism experience with a p-value of less than 0.05 (p-value = 0.029) with a beta value of 0.187. Thus, the test results on the second hypothesis are declared accepted. Likewise testing the third hypothesis which was declared accepted. Visitor engagement has proven to have a positive effect on memorable tourism experience with a p-value of less than 0.05 (p-value = 0.011) and a beta value of 0.203. Other findings from this study indicate that among the three variables used to test the antecedents of memorable tourism experience, destination image is the variable that has the greatest influence on memorable tourism experience. In addition, based on the simultaneous test the destination image, self-congruity, and visitor engagement variables obtain adjusted R2 = 0.550. This means that the three independent variables used in this study simultaneously show a positive influence.

Discussion

Referring to the research results, destination image is the variable that has the greatest influence compared to the two variables used in this study to enhance a memorable experience for tourists. Visitors will have their own impression of tourist attractions based on the evaluation of the experience received by them [5]. This means that the more positive the image obtained by visitors, the higher the impression obtained by visitors. Tourist evaluation and impression of the destination experience is an important part of tourism marketing because it is directly related to the assessment and behavior of visitors. The results of this study are in line with previous research conducted by [10][22] which states that the image of a tourist destination is the main key in creating a memorable experience.

The results of this study also show that self-congruity can have a positive influence on memorable tourism experiences. It can be interpreted that information obtained from other visitors can be transformed into information symbols so as to trigger an impression felt by visitors [18]. In tourism marketing, self-congruity is an important variable because it is considered a representative of tourist feelings [17]. The higher the suitability of tourist attractions, the more memorable the experience for visitors will be. Increasing Self-congruity towards a destination will have a positive impact on the impression of the tourist experience. It can be interpreted that memorable tourist experiences arise when tourists find something meaningful according to themselves [20].

This study also reveals that visitor engagement can act as an antecedent of memorable tourism experiences. This means that a higher level of involvement and understanding of a tourism destination results in a higher level of MTE. Visitor involvement in heritage tourism has different types of motivation resulting in different levels of involvement [12]. This finding is in line with previous research which identified the positive impact of visitor engagement [22]. Visitors who have engagement with a destination will have a special impression when they carry out their tourism activities. This is because visitors' expectations of tourist attractions are obtained from their individual perspective, not socially [23].

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The results of this study indicate that memorable tourism experiences are positively and significantly influenced by destination image, self-congruity, and visitor engagement. This finding can provide theoretical implications that to increase the memorable experience and memory of visitors to tourist attractions can be predicted based on destination image, self-congruity, and visitor engagement. of the three antecedents used as MTE predictors, destination image is the key factor that has the greatest influence. In addition, the findings of this study.

These findings can also provide some managerial implications for the development of sustainable tourism destinations to enhance destination image. Furthermore, consumers also feel compatibility with themselves and feel attached to the destination. In the tourism business, understanding visitors is very important to give a positive impression to tourists so that a good reputation will be formed for the destination. These unforgettable memories can encourage tourists to perform behaviors in the future.

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