

THE MEDIATING EFFECT OF CUSTOMER SATISFACTION ON BEHAVIORAL INTENTIONS FOR ECOTOURISM EVIDENCE FROM BALI

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Abstract: This study aims to measure the effect of destination image and perceived value, as well as customer satisfaction on the tourists' behavioral intentions in visiting the ecotourism object of Geopark Bangli. The research population is foreign tourists. The sample size was set at 179 people. The respondents were selected using convenience sampling technique from tourists who already know that Geopark Kintamani Bangli is an ecotourism attraction and gets an appreciation as a world cultural heritage. The data is processed and analyzed using SEM through PLS software. The results show that destination image, perceived value, and customer satisfaction have a positive and significant effect on the Behavioral Intentions. Perceived value has a higher correlation coefficient value when it is compared to the destination image and satisfaction. This indicates that managers of the attractions object and travel must adjust the cost spent by the tourists to the advantage they get. Other indicators of the perceived value that should be the material evaluation are functional value and emotional value. This indicates that tourists who visit the place considering the service and pleasure they received during the visiting.

Keywords: *Destination Image, Perceived Value, Customer Satisfaction, Behavioral Intentions*



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Ecotourism was originally an unclear market part in the 80s decade, to the point where it has become one of the most developed and dominant topics in the tourism industry and academic research (Weaver and Lawton, 2007). Bali is one of the world famous ecotourism tourism destinations and has been awarded as a world cultural heritage for some famous attractions related to the implementation of SUBAK Irrigation System in Bali such

as Pura Taman Ayun, Drainage Basin of Pakerisan in Gianyar and Subak in the area of Catur Angga Batukaru Tabanan. One of the awards received related to the recognition of the world on the natural beauty of Bali is for the area of the caldera of Mount Batur Kintamani from UNESCO as a part of the Global Geopark Network (GGN).

The awards received from the opinion and image of the tourism object area. Andreassen and Lindestad (1998), state that the effect of the image on consumer behavior, especially on consumer loyalty has attracted the researchers to conduct a study in it. In the marketing literature at the corporate level, an image is defined as the perception of the organization that is reflected in the associations owned by the customers (Keller, 1993). The image is associ-

ated with the brand as a quality perception associated with the name of either product or service (Aaker and Keller, 1990).

Furthermore, Gronroos (1988), states that Image in the marketing service literature was initially identified as one of the important factors in the evaluation of the overall service of a company. He said Image is a filter that affects the perception of a company. While Gummesson (1993), states that the quality perceived by the customer is the function of quality in fact and quality in perception. Destination Image is an individual's mental representation of experience, feeling and overall perception of a particular purpose (Crompton, 1979). Markus (1977), describes an image as a character that resembles a self-scheme. Each person develops a knowledge system (scheme) to interpret their perceptions of something especially reflected in an image. Related to the Destination image and its effect on purchasing decisions, the image of a good tourist destination prompts the decision of tourists to simplify their decision rules.

Aaker (1991), says in this context that Destination image has become an issue of attitudes and beliefs related to awareness and recognition, customer satisfaction and customer behavior. Destination Image is a cue of external information for the potential tourists or tourists who do not have any uniformity between the self-scheme and the image they have. To win the competition, the manager must create a different image that characterizes them to other competitors to communicate the main advantage of the service and placed it in the target market. Destination images that can directly describe the quality of the service to the customers can give a dominant effect on the customer perceptions of the customer value and satisfaction which then affect their Behavioral Intentions (Prendergast and Man, 2002).

According to Lee, et al. (2005), destination image plays an important role in customer behavior: first, affect the decision-making process in choosing the tourist destinations. Second, it also affects the behavioral conditions after the decision-making including on-site experience, customer satisfaction and future behavioral intentions (intention to return and willingness to recommend).

Some studies found that Perceived Value and Satisfaction are antecedents of the Behavioral Intentions (Petrick, 2004). Patrick further explained the relationship between quality, Perceived Value, Satisfaction and behavioral intentions into three models; satisfaction model (quality - satisfaction), value model (quality - satisfaction - value) and quality model (perceive value - satisfaction). Empirically, the research supports the value model where perceived satisfaction has a moderating role between perceive value on the behavioral intention. Furthermore, Lee, et al. (2005), explains that if a tourist already has a favorable picture of Destination Image then, the tourist will visit the tourism object he chose positively and will eventually lead to a greater satisfaction level and behavioral intentions.

In understanding the relationship between Destination image, Perceive Value and the mediation of Customer Satisfaction to Behavioral Intentions, managers of the tourist destination will have a picture of how to build an appropriate and directed image with the perception of the museum to increase their marketing efforts to improve the resource management. Thus, this research has three main objectives: First, the researcher tries to make an integrated model of tourist consumption process by showing the variable of the Destination image, Perceived Value, and Satisfaction on Behavioral Intentions. Second, the researcher tests the relationship between Destination Image and Perceived Value to Customer Satisfaction and Behavioral Intentions. Third, the researcher tests the Customer Satisfaction as a mediation variable between Destination Image and Perceive Value on Behavioral Intentions. Studies in the literature show that visitor demand side rarely becomes a sharp lens to analyze the changes in perceived values or behaviors in purchasing and consumer decision making in Ecotourism. Therefore, there is a significant gap in the current literature which this study will fill.

Thus, the formulation of the problems proposed in this study includes H1: the better the Destination Image, then the positive and significant effect on the Behavioral Intentions. H2: the better the Destination Image, then the positive and significant effect to the Customer Satisfaction. H3: Perceive Value has a positive and significant effect on the

Behavioral Intentions. H4: Perceive Value has a positive and significant effect on the Customer Satisfaction. H5: Customer Satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on the Behavioral Intentions.

The relationship among the variables

The literature in marketing research has long found the antecedent of the Behavioral Intention whose indicator are repurchase or revisiting intention as well as conducting word of mouth (Chen and Tsai, 2007). Chen (2008), adds that a causal relationship between image destination, customer

satisfaction and behavioral intention set by the previous research.

Petrick (2004), mentions that Image Destination, Perceived Value, and Customer Satisfaction has proven to be good predictors of Behavioral Intention. In the context of tourism, Destination Image and Perceived Value are assumed directly and significantly affect the Customer Satisfaction and Behavioral Intention. So based on the literature review above, the conceptual relationship model of this study is shown in the following figure and five hypotheses formed as follows.

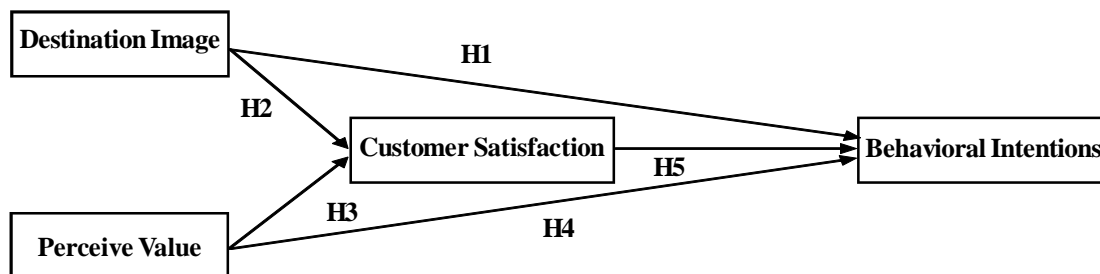


Figure 1 Hypothetical model

METHOD

Research Design

In the tourism marketing research, understanding what affecting the tourist satisfaction becomes an essential variable in the whole management (Darnell and Johnson, 2001). Previous research conducted by Chi and Qu(2007), yields that destination image affects the tourists in determining which destination they will visit, their evaluation regarding the destination and future intention. Destination image affects the perceived quality, satisfaction and behavioral intentions positively (Bigne, et al., 2001).

The population of this research is the tourists who visit the ecotourism attractions of Geopark Kintamani Bangli, while the samples taken are the foreign tourists who favor the Ecotourism attractions. In this research, there are 225 questionnaires distributed, but only 179 questionnaires used. The sampling technique used is convenience sampling

method. Regarding the characters of the data used, according to Malhotra (2004), it belongs to quantitative and qualitative data. Meanwhile, the data source used in this research is the primary and secondary data

Operational Definition and Research Variables

Ghozali (2005), mentions that in research related to management, the variable is the factor or constructor variable which is measured directly but built through observed dimensions or indicators. Indicator or dimension is usually determined through a questionnaire given to the people acting as the respondents to know their perceptions on Destination Image, Perceive Value, Customer Satisfaction, and Behavior Intention.

Each variable presented is determined by observing the indicators presented in the questionnaire using a Linkert scale. A preliminary study in which

Table 1 Operational and Measurement of Variables

| Variable | Indicator | Source: |
|-----------------------|--|-------------------------------|
| Destination Image | A lot of cultural attractions to visit Good quality of tourism infrastructure Relaxed atmosphere Unpolluted and unspoiled environment Exotic destination | Lee, <i>et al.</i> (2005). |
| Perceived Value | Value for money The acceptable standard of quality Makes me feel happy | Kim and Park (2016). |
| Customer Satisfaction | Variety of historical/cultural sites Variety of natural attractions (Kaldera) Variety of special events (Culture) Quality of events/shows Friendly and helpful local people Safe and secure environment | Lee, <i>et al.</i> (2005). |
| Behavior Intention | I plan to revisit Geopark Kintamani in the next two years. I will recommend Geopark Kintamani to my friends or family. I would say positive things about Macau to other people. | Castro, <i>et al.</i> (2007). |

the samples are 30 Foreign Tourist obtains 17 indicators that have the highest validity and reliability as the following:

1. The variable of Destination Image consists of 5 question indicators
2. The variable of Perceived Value consists of 3 question indicators
3. The variable of Customer Satisfaction consists of four dimensions with 6 question indicators
4. The variable of Behavior Intention consists of 3 question indicators

Data Collection Technique

The data collection technique used in questionnaire using Linkert scale of 1 - 5 while the sampling technique used is convenience technique in which the respondents are chosen based on criteria of liking Geopark Kintamani Bangli as ecotourism tourism object.

Data Analysis Techniques

The data analysis technique used in this research is SEM which is a multivariate statistical technique combining the factor and regression analy-

sis (correlation) which aims to analyze the relationship among the variables presented in the model, whether it is between the indicator and the construct, or between the constructs (Santoso, 2011). According to Ferdinand (2012), using the SEM method (structural equation model) in research making it in accordance with the evaluation of the relationship of interdependence. Such research has seven stages modeling which are: (1) developing the model based on the theory (2) preparing the path diagram (3) constructing the structural equation (4) selecting the input matrix and model/estimation technique (5) assessing the possibility of problem identification (6) evaluating the usefulness of the criteria and (7) interpreting as well as modifying the data.

RESULT

Instrument Reliability and Validity Testing

Reliability test aims to know whether the measuring tool used in the research is consistent or not even if it is used to measure the same object more than twice. Therefore, an instrument is considered to be reliable when it produces consistent data even after used to measure the same object several times.

In other words, highly reliable measurement is capable of producing reliable results. The reliability test is usually conducted using a reliable variable or variable which occurs when the Cronbach Alpha value is greater than 0.60.

Table 2 The Reliability Test Result of the Variable Indicators of Destination Image, Perceived Value, Customer Satisfaction and Behavioral Intentions

| | Cronbach's Alpha |
|-----------------------|------------------|
| Behavior Intention | 0,835 |
| Customer Satisfaction | 0,858 |
| Destination Image | 0,837 |
| Perceive Value | 0,767 |

Source: Data processed, 2018

The validity test of each statement items presented in the questionnaire is shown in Table 4.2, in which the Destination Image (X1) construct shows a correlation value of greater than 0.30 in all statement items which means that all items are valid. It goes the same as the Perceived Value (X2) construct which shows a correlation score of greater than 0.30 for all statement item, which means that all statement items are valid. Satisfaction (Y) construct also results in a correlation score greater than 0.30 for all statement items, which means that all items are valid. Therefore, based on the reliability and validity test result of the indicators and items of research statements, it can be concluded that all indicators and items are reliable and valid.

Data Analysis Technique

Data analysis technique used in this research is inferential analysis by using structural equation modeling (SEM) model through the application of Smart PLS 3.0. The analysis steps include the evaluation of the measurement model or outer model to examine the relationship between the indicators designed as the latent variables and the evaluation of the structural model or inner model to know the relationship between the variables designing the research model.

The Evaluation of Measurement Model (Outer Model)

Since the indicators forming as the latent variables in this research are reflexive, the evaluation of the measurement model/ outer model to measure the validity and reliability of those indicators using the criterions of a) convergent validity, b) discriminant validity, and c) composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha.

Table 3 The Validity Test Result

| Construct | Indicators | Correlation |
|----------------------------|------------|-------------|
| Destination Image (X1) | 1. X1.1 | .893** |
| | 2. X1.2 | .859** |
| | 3. X1.3 | .943** |
| | 4. X1.4 | .358** |
| | 5. X1.5 | .322** |
| Perceive Valued (X2) | 1. X2.1 | .342** |
| | 2. X2.2 | .380** |
| | 3. X2.3 | .378** |
| Satisfaction (Y1) | 1. Y1.1 | .334** |
| | 2. Y1.2 | .318** |
| | 3. Y1.3 | .243** |
| | 4. Y1.4 | .266** |
| | 5. Y1.5 | .316** |
| | 6. Y1.6 | .370** |
| Behavioral Intentions (Y2) | 1. Y2.1 | .403** |
| | 2. Y2.2 | .687** |
| | 3. Y2.3 | .594** |

Source: data processed, 2018

Convergent Validity

Convergent validity is a criterion in determining the validity of the reflexive indicators. This evaluation is done by examining the outer loading coefficient of each indicator to its latent variable. An indicator is valid if the outer loading coefficient is between 0.60 - 0.70. However, to analyze an unclear theory, it is recommended that the outer loading should be 0.50 (Lathan and Ghazali, 2012), while the significance at alpha level is 0.05 or t-statistic of 1.96.

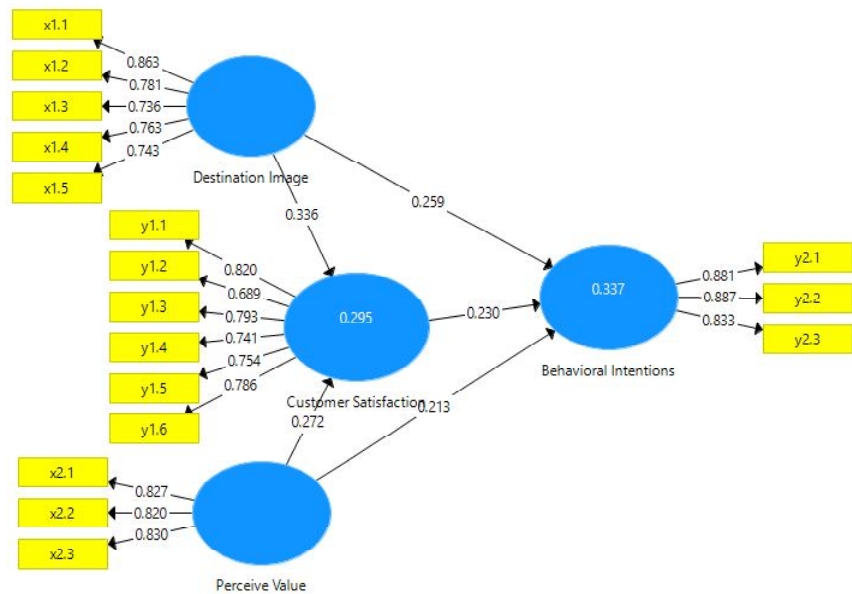


Figure 2 Outer Loading and Coefficient Path

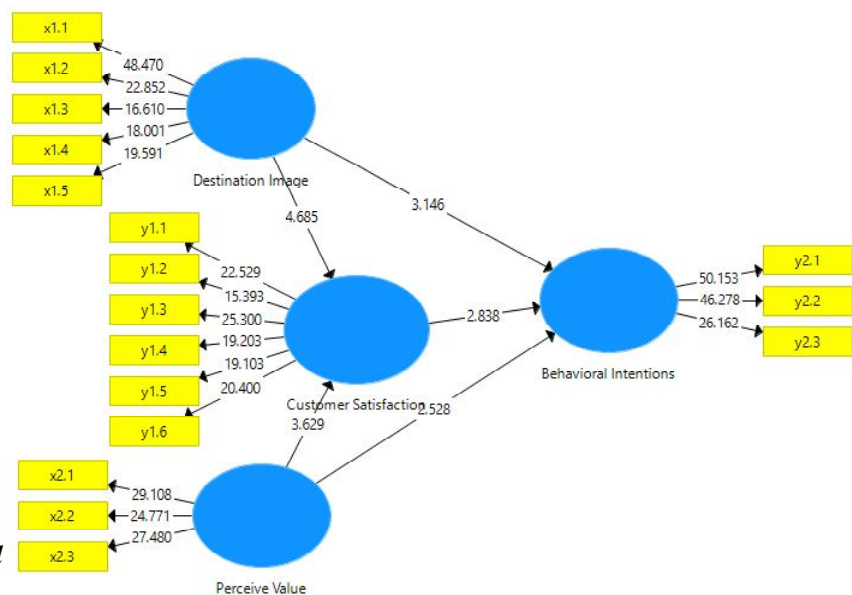


Figure 3 Bootstrapping Model

In figure 2 above, all indicators yield that each construct's outer loading value is greater than 0.60 and significant at the level of 0.05. Therefore all indicators are valid.

Discriminant Validity

The indicators validity measurements designing the latent variables can also be done through

discriminant validity. Discriminant validity can be done by comparing the AVE Root coefficient ("AVE or Square root Average Variance

Extracted) of each variable to the correlation value between the variables in the model. A variable is valid if the AVE root ("AVE or Square root Average Variance Extracted) is greater than the correlation value between the variables in the re-

search model by Lathan and Ghazali(2012), and AVE is greater than 0.50.

Table 4 Discriminant Validity

| | Average Variance Extracted | (√AVE) |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|--------|
| Behavioral Intention | 0,752 | 0,867 |
| Customer Satisfaction | 0,585 | 0,764 |
| Destination Image | 0,606 | 0,778 |
| Perceive Value | 0,682 | 0,825 |

Source: data processed, 2018

A measurement is reliable if the composite reliability and Cronbach alpha have a value greater than 0.70.

Composite reliability and Cronbach alpha is a reliability measure between the indicator blocks in the research model.

Table 5 above shows that the value of composite reliability dan Cronbach Alpha of all constructs has a value greater than 0.70, therefore it is considered to be reliable based on composite reliability criteria.

Table 5 Composite Reliability and Cronbach Alpha Test

| | Cronbach's Alpha | Composite Reliability | Average Variance Extracted (AVE) |
|-----------------------|------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| Behavioral Intention | 0.835 | 0.901 | 0.752 |
| Customer Satisfaction | 0.858 | 0.894 | 0.585 |
| Destination Image | 0.837 | 0.885 | 0.606 |
| Perceive Value | 0.767 | 0.865 | 0.682 |

Source: data processed, 2018

The Structural Model Evaluation (Inner Model)

The Evaluation of Structural Model/Inner Model is a measurement to evaluate the accuracy level of the model in the whole research which is formed through several variables as well as its indicators. In evaluating this structural model, several approaches are used including a) R-Square (R²), b) Q-Square Predictive Relevance (Q²), and c) Goodness of Fit (GoF).

The Evaluation of Structural Model Through R-Square (R²)

R-Square (R²) expresses the strength and weakness of the effect caused by the dependent variable on the independent variable. R-Square (R²) also expresses the strength and weakness of a research model. According to Lathan and Ghazali, (2012) an R-Square (R²) of 0.67 is considered to be a strong model, while an R-Square (R²) of 0.33 is considered to be moderate, and R-Square (R²) of 0.19 is considered to be weak.

Table 6 The Evaluation of Inner Structural Model

| | R Square |
|-----------------------|----------|
| Behavioral Intention | 0.337 |
| Customer Satisfaction | 0.295 |

Source: data processed, 2018

Table 6 above shows that the R² of the Customer Satisfaction and Behavioral Intention value is respectively 0.337 and 0.295. Based on the criteria of Lathan and Ghazali, (2012), the model is moderate which means that the variation of Destination image and Perceived Value can explain Satisfaction of 29.5 percent, while the other variables explain the remaining 70.5 percent. In addition, the variation of Destination Image, Perceived Value, and Customer Satisfaction can explain the Behavioral Intention of 33.7 percent, while the other variables explain the remaining 62.3 percent.

Table 7 Path Analysis and Statistical Testing

| | Original Sample (O) | Sample Mean (M) | Standard Deviation (STDEV) | TStatistics (O/STDEV) | P Values |
|---|---------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|----------|
| Customer Satisfaction → Behaviour Intention | 0.230 | 0.232 | 0.081 | 2.829 | 0.005 |
| Destination Image → Behaviour Intention | 0.259 | 0.261 | 0.086 | 3.019 | 0.003 |
| Destination Image → Cust Satisfaction | 0.336 | 0.349 | 0.075 | 4.494 | 0.000 |
| Perceive Value → Behaviour Intention | 0.213 | 0.217 | 0.086 | 2.485 | 0.013 |
| Perceive Value → Customer Satisfaction | 0.272 | 0.269 | 0.084 | 3.248 | 0.001 |

Source: data processed, 2018

DISCUSSION

The results show that: Destination image and Perceived value have a positive and significant effect on the customers' Satisfaction Level and Behavioral Intention. This result was consistent with previous research conducted by Chen and Sai (2007). Geopark Kintamani is a tourist destination with ecotourism market segmentation which also appreciated by UNESCO as a part of world Geopark. It appears that from the variable of Destination Image with two indicators; pleasant environmental indicator and pollution free environment indicator, indicate that as an ecotourism object, the image wants to be established been successfully perceived by the tourists. The Perceived Value variable shows the valued economic indicator with the dominant value of money compared to the other two indicators. This shows that the tourists feel the benefits of traveling and are satisfied with the cost they pay (Kim, 2017).

The level of customer satisfaction is reflected from the indicators and variables. Customer Satisfaction has a very important mediation role in improving Behavioral Intention, especially the desire of tourists to make a return visit and do promotion in the form of word of mouth to other potential tourists (Prayag, 2015)

CONCLUSION

In accordance with the results of research, Destination Image is an image that must be built positively to increase the tourists' satisfaction. The managers of the tourist destinations should pay attention to a pleasant environment and pollution-free,

especially if the image built is ecotourism tourist destination. In addition to these two indicators, according to the results of the tourism site management should also pay attention to interesting tourist attractions that can invite tourists to come to visit. Besides, good tourism should be supported by a complete infrastructure and its whole package eventually makes the tourism object becomes unique and exotic in the eyes of the tourists.

Based on the results, to improve the Perceive Value and provide a positive experience, managers should pay attention to some indicators related to Perceived Value in the form of economic value so that the tourists feel that the money they have been spent in accordance with the facilities and benefits they received. Besides, the functional value aspect in the form of standard quality indicators of service to tourists during a visit in the tourist object must also be maintained so that the final variable of perceived value that is emotional value in the form of happiness can be felt.

In the end, through the mediation of Customer Satisfaction, Destination Image and Perceived Value have a positive and significant effect on Behavioral Intentions. By forming a positive image and perceived value as well as increasing the mediation to the tourist satisfaction then ultimately impact the indication of returning and recommendation of word of mouth of tourists.

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