

Between Self Congruity, Destination Relationship and Memorable Tourist Experience: an Empirical Study on Destination Loyalty

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Abstract

This study examines the driving factors that can enhance tourist destination loyalty. Respondents used were 184 domestic tourists who had traveled to Bali. Data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling. Amos version 21 is used to process data. These results indicate that destination personality can improve the relationship destination but memorable tourist experience can not enhance it. The personality of a tourist destination enhance self-congruity. The study also found that memorable tourist experiences and the relationship destinations has a positive impact on increasing destinations loyalty. Self-congruity has a negative effect on destination loyalty. One contribution of this research related to showing the memorable tourist experience is more likely to influence loyal decisions than destination relationships.


Antara Kesesuaian Diri, Hubungan Destinasi, dan Pengalaman Turis yang Mengesankan: Studi Empiris pada Loyalitas Destinasi Wisata

Abstrak

Studi ini menguji faktor-faktor pendorong yang mampu meningkatkan loyalitas destinasi wisata. Responden di dalam penelitian ini adalah 184 turis domestik yang pernah berwisata ke Bali. Data dianalisis dengan menggunakan Structural Equation Modeling. Amos versi 21 digunakan untuk mengolah data. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa personalitas destinasi wisata mampu meningkatkan hubungan destinasi wisata namun pengalaman turis yang mengesankan tidak mampu meningkatkannya. Personalitas destinasi wisata juga mampu meningkatkan kesesuaian diri. Penelitian ini juga menemukan bahwa pengalaman turis yang mengesankan dan hubungan destinasi wisata memberikan dampak positif pada peningkatan loyalitas turis domestik untuk loyal pada destinasi wisata. Kesesuaian diri sebagai salah satu pendorong loyalitas terbukti berpengaruh negatif pada loyalitas destinasi wisata. Salah satu kontribusi dari penelitian ini terkait dengan menunjukkan pengalaman wisata yang berkesan lebih mungkin untuk mempengaruhi keputusan yang loyal daripada destination relationship.

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INTRODUCTION

Tourism provides an important role in the economy (Li et al., 2018; Mariani & Baggio, 2012) in a country. The positive impact of tourism includes creating jobs, improving infrastructure (Abubakirova et al., 2016), increasing business around tourist sites, and several other positive impacts. In terms of marketing, tourist destinations have an impact on visitor behavior (Hosany et al., 2006; Usakli & Baloglu, 2011), satisfaction, consumer trust (Chen & Phou, 2013), self-congruence (Klipfel et al., 2014) and loyalty (Kumar et al., 2006). In order to increase tourist visits, tourist destinations must compete with each other to make their destination the best (Mariani & Baggio, 2012). Destination marketers have long recognized the importance of promoting and building their brand goals in the minds of tourists (Chen & Phou, 2013). Management and development of tourist destinations must be carried out effectively (Pearce & Schanzel, 2013) so that tourist destinations have competitive advantages. Destination managers must be able to attract potential tourists so that they are satisfied (Enright & Newton, 2004; Gursoy et al., 2014). A well-managed destination will have an impact on increasing tourists and loyalty.

Tourist destination loyalty is an important part of tourist management (Oppermann, 2000). Some researchers explain the importance of destination loyalty (Elmeida-Santana & Moreno-Gil, 2017; Tasci, 2017; Almeida-Santana & Moreno-Gil, 2018; Al-Ansi & Han, 2019; Alrawadieh et al., 2019; Cossio-Silva et al., 2019; Fu, 2019). Loyalty can predict post visit behavior (Chen & Chen, 2010) and become a sustainable competitive advantage for the company (Sun et al., 2013; Gursoy et al., 2014). Refer to the concept of loyalty from Oliver (1999), destination loyalty consists of traveler behavior and attitudinal. Traveler behavior consists of various real actions of tourists related to destination revisit or willingness to revisit a destination. The attitudinal traveler is associated with a positive attitude towards tourists, followed

by giving positive recommendations to others. Destination loyalty dimensions are divided into three parts, namely providing positive recommendations, willingness to revisit, and destination revisit (Jani & Han, 2012). Some studies focus on discussing tourist destination loyalty (Alegre & Juaneda, 2006; Chi & Qu, 2008; Sun et al., 2013). The indication of loyal tourists having the intention to visit again and tell positive things about the tourist destination (Chi & Qu, 2008). The loyalty of tourist destinations as loyalty that does not depend on conditions, condition-dependent loyalty (high or low session) and recommend to other parties (Meleddu et al., 2015).

Tourist activities that stay at hotels in Bali can indicate enthusiastic tourists to visit the island of Bali. Data from the Central Statistics Agency (2019) shows a decrease in the average stay activity of tourists. In general, there was a decrease in almost types of star-rated hotels from 2013 to 2018. There was a decrease in visitors at 1-star hotels by 15.63%, 2-star hotels by 28.13%, 3-star hotels by 34.73%, 4-star hotels by 19.71%, while 5-star hotels increased by 33%. These problems must be overcome immediately by increasing promotions and various stimuli so that tourists want to visit the island of Bali.

Research conducted by Sudiarta and Suardana (2016) focuses on domestic tourists. About 12 tourist sites in Bali that were in great demand by tourists. The location was chosen because it is very attractive for tourists. An interesting destination indication is the fulfillment of several aspects, such as: infrastructure, facilities (Mill & Morrison, 2009), amenity, access, (Cooper et al., 1993), quality of education, cultural facilities (Ardyan & Susanti, 2018), etc. Tourist destinations must also be able to offer an unforgettable experience to tourists. These things will be able to increase tourist visits and loyalty

Many studies focus on tourist destinations on the island of Bali (McTaggart, 1980; Gibbons & Fish, 1989; Cole, 2012; Mariani & Baggio, 2012; Sutawa, 2012; Law et al., 2016; Sudiarta & Suardana, 2016). Many experts re-

search Bali island because this tourist destination is exciting. The focus of this research is local tourists who have visited tourist destinations on the island of Bali. We want to analyze several essential factors that influence the loyalty of local tourists. First, self-congruence. Some researchers focus on the concept of self-congruence on tourism (Chon, 1992a; Litvin & Goh, 2002; Litvin & Kar, 2003; Kastenholz, 2004; Boksberger et al., 2011). Developing congruity for target markets allows marketers to choose product image attributes (self, ideal, and social), which creates the highest level of congruity (Johar & Sirgy, 1989). Second, destination relationship. Destination relationship is related to the brand relationship concept. This concept addresses the relationship between visitors and tourist destinations. The third is memorable customer experience. Creating a memorable tourist experience is an essential part of the hospitality industry (Pizam, 2010; Tung & Ritchie, 2011). The tourism industry aims to facilitate extraordinary experiences (Walls et al., 2011), looking for fantasy, feeling, and pleasure (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982), and seeing tourism as the peak consumers (Wang, 2002).

This study examines the driving factors that can increase tourist destination loyalty. The driving factor that we analyze is a memorable tourist experience, self-congruity, and destination relationship. This research uses structural equation modeling analysis. One contribution of this research related to showing the memorable tourist experience is more likely to influence loyal decisions than destination relationships.

Hypothesis Development

Relationship between Personality Destinations and Relationship Destination

Destination personality is an essential part of a powerful brand (Aaker, 1996; Morgan & Pritchard, 2010). The concept of tourist destination personality refers to the concept of brand personality. Brand personality influences brand relationship quality (Tho et al., 2016). The personality of tourist destinations as a set of human characteristics attached to tourism ob-

jects (Hosany et al., 2006). Tourist locations are strived to be more different in increasingly competitive markets; destination personalities can build destination brands, understand tourist perceptions about tourist attractions, and develop the unique personality of tourist destinations (Caprara et al., 2001). The concept of tourist destination personalities is measured by the following indicators: sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication, and rudeness. Destination personality can influence preference and choice behavior (Murphy et al., 2007). Destination personality is also able to influence the emotional connection between tourists and place (Park & Jung, 2010). The quality of relationships is divided into three dimensions, namely, satisfaction, trust, and attachment (Fournier, 1998). In this study, the relationship of tourist destinations in this study was explained by three dimensions, namely satisfaction, trust, and attachment to tourist destinations. Tourist destination personalities could enhance the dimensions of relations with tourist destinations (satisfaction and trust) (Chen & Phou, 2013). Based on this explanation, we propose the following hypothesis:

H1: The destination personality has a positive effect on relationship destination

Relationship between Destination Personality and Self Congruity

Marketers try to attach a set of human characteristics to a particular brand. This concept is called a personality brand (Aaker, 1997). Perceptions of human personality characteristics are inferred from individual beliefs, attitudes and demographic characteristics (Park et al., 1986), whereas perceptions of brand personality traits can be influenced and shaped by direct or indirect interactions with brands (Plummer, 2000). The Brand Personality Scale often measures the concept of brand personality, and many are replicated by various researchers both for objects that form products or services (Aaker, 1997). Brand personality can influence user imagery, where user imagery is a picture of the brand image transferred to brands from individuals

considered as typical users of brands (Klipfel et al., 2014). Brand personality is also able to influence consumer choice towards a particular brand (Plummer, 1985; 2000). Consumers will be delighted if they buy and consume a brand that matches the image they want. Consumers also like that they are different from other consumers. They need a brand that can do it. The concept of self-congruence is the compatibility/incompatibility between the perception of the destination image and the tourist's self-image (Ahn et al., 2013). The self-congruity theory extensively studies the influence of self-congruence and brand personality (Klipfel et al., 2014). Other research shows that the personality of tourist destinations has a positive impact on self congruity (Sirgy & Su, 2000; Usakli & Baloglu, 2011). They can fulfill their self-consistency and self-esteem after the use and ownership of certain brands that share the same personality with them. Based on this explanation, we propose the following hypothesis:

H2: Destination personality has a positive impact on self-congruity.

Relationship between Self-Congruity and Destination Loyalty

Self-congruence is the conformity/incompatibility between the perception of the destination image and the tourist's self-image (Ahn et al., 2013). Consumers buy products or brands that they believe have the same symbol images and complement their self-image (Health & Scott, 1998). The self-congruence theory postulates that symbolic characteristics cause high brand preference. Symbolic characteristics will strengthen and validate individual self-perceptions (Swann et al., 1992). Self-congruence can predict consumer behavior (Hosany & Martin, 2012). Destination self-congruence affects visiting intention, recommending intention, positive attitudes, destination satisfaction, and tourist loyalty (Chon, 1992a; Sirgy & Su, 2000; Litvin & Goh, 2002; Beerli et al., 2007; Kwak & Kang, 2009). Self congruity has a significant influence on buying behavior (Ha & Im, 2012). Other research results show that self congruity

has a positive impact on first-time entrants and tourists who have come many times (Liu et al., 2012a).

Han and Back (2008) focus on one type of self congruence, which is the ideal of social image congruence, where this type can influence consumer loyalty. Kang et al. (2015) found that self congruity has a positive impact on loyalty. A consumer will show supportive and beneficial feelings for a brand when the brand personality is in accordance with their self-image (Park & Lee, 2005). This will cause consumers to prefer brands whose image or personality matches their self-image (Kotler & Keller, 2012). Products or services that are in accordance with self-image, someone will be satisfied and loyal to these products and services. Based on this explanation, the third hypothesis can be formulated as follows :

H3: Self-Congruity has a positive impact on destination loyalty

Relationship between Memorable Tourist Experience, Destination Relationship, and Destination loyalty

Experience can be concluded as the total perception and customer response related to the learning process when dealing directly or indirectly with the product or company. The overall amount of consumer perception created during the learning process (Carbon dan Heckel, 1994). Consumer experience as an internal and subjective response where consumers have a relationship either directly or indirectly with the company (Rageh et al., 2013). The experience of tourism as a relationship between people, and the amount of their world view depends on their central location to the community in which they are located (Cohen, 1979). A memorable tourist experience is also defined as a tourism experience that is easy to remember even though the event has been going on for a long time (Sthapit, 2013). Consumer experience will improve the quality of relationships between consumers and brands (Fournier, 1998). Previous studies explain the strong relationship between brands and consumers due to strong emotional bon-

ding factors (Pawle & Cooper, 2006), which is obtained through memorable experiences. The fourth hypothesis can be argued as follows:

H4: Memorable tourist experience has a positive effect on destination relationship

The concept of a Brand relationship explains that a brand has a particular relationship with its customers. The more consumers have a relationship with the brand (the more they love a particular brand), the more they can have an impact on brand loyalty (Batra et al., 2012). The brand relationship dimension was able to increase brand loyalty significantly (Veloutsou, 2015). Some researchers explain that brand relationship quality is the best predictor of brand loyalty intention (Kressmann et al., 2006; Hollebeek, 2011). Based on this explanation, we propose the following hypothesis:

H5: Destination relationship has a positive effect on destination loyalty

The study of consumer experience has increased to be phenomenal (Schmitt, 1999a, 1999b; Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004; Ponsoby-McCabe & Boyle, 2006). Creating a memorable experience has become a priority for various companies. Therefore, companies must create a design to create experiences that are attractive to consumers and able to be remembered by customers (Pine & Gilmore, 1998). Marketers must design innovative experiences to improve the core competencies of companies engaged in tourism and hospitality (William, 2006). Canadian Tourism Commission (2004) investigate how a country can create a memorable experience to engage tourists and increase customer loyalty sufficiently. Consumers who have experience with products, brands, shopping and others will influence loyalty (Brakus et al., 2009; Biedenbach & Marrel, 2010; Ismail et al., 2011; Sahin et al., 2011; Sathish & Venkatesakumar, 2011). Therefore, the hypothesis regarding the memorable tourist experience can be formulated as follows:

H6: Memorable tourist experience has a positive effect on destination loyalty

From the explanation above, we propose the empirical research model as shown in Figure 1:

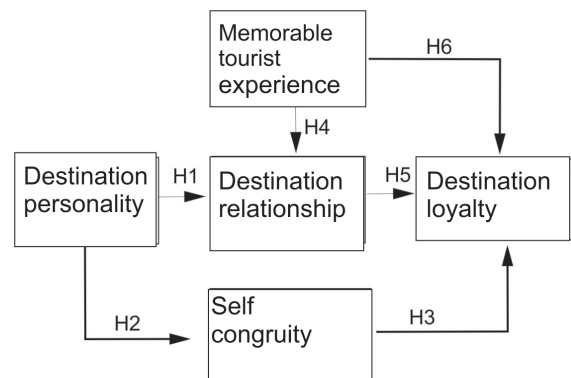


Figure 1. Empirical Research Method

METHOD

The population in this study were domestic tourists who had visited Bali Island more than two times. In this study, of the 250 respondents who received the questionnaire, there were only 184 respondents who were willing to fill out and return the questionnaire. A decent sample is between 100-200 respondents. So it can be concluded that the sample in this study is considered appropriate. The sampling technique in this study is judgment sampling, where certain conditions are needed to select samples. These conditions include the distribution of questionnaires, including the cities of Surakarta, Klaten, Sragen, Sukoharjo, Boyolali, Karanganyar, and Semarang.

In this study, there were 184 respondents. Of the 184 respondents, 75 respondents were female (40.76%), and 109 respondents were male (59.24%). Profile of respondents by the level of education was as follows respondents with a high school education were 32 people (17.39%), of respondents with a bachelor degree of 144 people (78.26%), and respondents with a master degree as much as 8 (4.35%).

Destination personality is defined as several human characteristics found on specific brand (Aaker, 1997). The dimensions of destination personality which are adapted from Aa-

ker (1997) are sincerity, gladness, competence, and discourtesy.

The memorable tourist experience is a tourism experience which is easy to be remembered although the moment happened a long time before (Sthapit, 2013). The indicators of memorable tourist experience are adapted from Brakus et al. (2009), including sensing experience, memorable feeling experience, memorable thinking experience, and memorable act experience.

Destination relationship is defined as a relationship between tourists and tourist destination. The indicators of destination relationship consist of satisfaction, trust, and engagement with tourist destination (Yuksel et al., 2010; Chen & Phou, 2013; Lee & Shen, 2013; Veasna et al., 2013; Loureiro, 2014).

Self-congruence is a congruity or incongruity between the perception of a destination's image with the tourist' self-image (Ahn et al., 2013). There are two dimensions of self congruence; those are actual and ideal

(Chon, 1992b; Litvin & Goh, 2002; Litvin & Kar, 2003; Kastenholz, 2004).

The indication of loyal tourist towards tourist destination could be seen when the tourist has the desire to revisit and telling about the tourist destination (Chi & Qu, 2008).

All the items were measured by Likert scale 7 points (1= strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Validity and Reliability

Testing reliability and validity is done to test valid and reliable instruments developed (Table 1). Reliability can be seen from the composite reliability or also called construct reliability (Hair et al., 2010). Composite reliability is used because it is almost similar to Cronbach alpha (Hulland, 1999). Instruments have reliability if the composite reliability is more than 0.7(Hair et al., 2010). Composite reliability in this study is 0.799 for destination personality;

Table 1. Composite Reliability, AVE, dan Factor Loading

Variable and Indicator	Composite Reliability	AVE	Factor Loading
Destination Personality	0.799	0.501	
Sincerity (DP1)			0.692
Excitement (DP2)			0.689
Competence (DP3)			0.671
Ruggedness (DP4)			0.772
Memorable Tourist Experience	0.903	0.700	
Memorable Sensing Experience (MTE1)			0.810
Memorable Feeling Experience (MTE2)			0.815
Memorable Thinking Experience (MTE3)			0.846
Memorable Action Experience (MTE4)			0.874
Self-congruence	0.825	0.702	
1. Actual self (SC1)			0.886
2. Ideal Self (SC2)			0.787
Destination Relationship	0.873	0.704	
Satisfaction (DR1)			0.607
Trust (DR2)			0.918
Commitment (DR3)			0.949
Destination Loyalty	0.811	0.682	
Word Of mouth (DL1)			0.863
Revisit (DL2)			0.787

0.903 for the memorable tourist experience; 0.825 for self congruence; 0.873 for destination relationship; and 0.811 for destination loyalty. The validity of this study uses loading and AVE factors. An instrument that has good validity if the AVE and loading factor is more than 0.5 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 2010). The value of AVE is 0.501 for destination personality; 0.700 for a memorable tourist experience; 0.702 for self congruence; 0.704 for destination relationship; and 0.682 for destination loyalty. All loading factor values are above the cutoff value. So it can be concluded that the instruments developed in this study are valid and reliable.

Measurement Model

The goodness of fit shows fit or non-fit of data with the proposed model (Hair et al., 2010). In this study, the measurement model indicated moderate model fit (NFI=0.834, IFI=0.862, TLI=0.831, dan CFI=0.861).

Structural Model

The structural model illustrates the relationship between latent variables (Byrne, 2010). The structural model proposed in this study illustrates the relationship between destination personality, self congruence, memorable tourist experience, destination relationship, and destination loyalty (Table 2). In this study, six hypotheses were proposed. The six hypotheses were tested, and the results were four accepted hypotheses (H1, H2, H5, and H6), and the other two hypotheses were rejected (H3 and H4).

Destination personality can have a positive and significant effect on self congruity. The results of this study are the same as previous studies (Fournier, 1998; Chen & Phou, 2013). Brand personality or brand relationship has the same relevance, namely the same brand-based theory that considers brands like humans. Hanby (1999) explained that brand personality and brand relationship both consider brands as living entities. Brand personality explains the human characteristics attached to the brand (Aaker, 1997), while brand relation is a relationship between consumers and brands that is analogous to relationships with humans. Brands that have human characteristics will make consumers have a close relationship with the brand (Avis & Aitken, 2015). Tourist locations that have personalities will make consumers satisfied, trusted, and committed to the tourist sites. Satisfied trust and commitment are dimensions of brand relationship (Yuksel et al., 2010; Chen & Phou, 2013; Lee & Shen, 2013; Veasna et al., 2013; Loureiro, 2014). Brand personality will have an impact on the connection between brands and consumers (Park & Jung, 2010)

In this study, destination personality has a positive and significant influence on self congruity. The results of this study are the same as previous studies (Sirgy & Su, 2000; Usakli & Baloglu, 2011). Self congruity is a match/incompatibility between the perception of the destination image and the tourist's self-image (Ahn et al., 2013). One will compare his perception of the brand to be consumed. The personality of a Bali tourist destination makes tourists

Table 2. Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Result
H1: Destination Personality → Destination Relationship	2.676** H1 accepted
H2: Destination Personality → Self Congruence	1.023** H2 accepted
H3: Self-congruence → destination loyalty	-3.035 H3 rejected
H4: Memorable Tourist Experience → Destination Relationship	-1.572 H4 rejected
H5: Destination Relationship → Destination Loyalty	1.133* H5 accepted
H6: Memorable Tourist Experience → Destination Loyalty	2.827** H6 accepted

* sign < 0,05

** sign < 0,01

see themselves fit or not with the personality of a Bali tourist destination.

Self-Congruity has a negative but not significant effect on Destination Loyalty. The results of this study are different from previous studies where self congruity can significantly increase brand loyalty (Han & Back, 2008; Liu et al., 2012a; Kang et al., 2015). Self congruity is the relationship between self-concept, and the symbolic value of the brand purchased will affect tourist behavior (Chon, 1992b). In this study, there was no positive influence between self congruity and tourist behavior, especially destination loyalty. The reason why self congruity is not able to have a positive and significant effect on brand loyalty is that it is possible for tourist destinations on the island of Bali to be a tourist destination that is considered a luxury brand for domestic tourists. Brand personality congruity is not able to increase brand loyalty, especially in luxury brands (Liu et al., 2012b).

This study shows that the memorable tourist experience has a negative and insignificant effect on the destination relationship. The higher the memorable tourist experience, the relationship between consumers and brands will be increasingly tight. The results of this study do not support the results of previous studies (Fournier, 1998), where a memorable experience can significantly increase brand relationship. Although memorable tourist experience had a negative effect on brand relationships, the memorable tourist experience was able to increase brand loyalty. This means that tourists who have a deep impression on the location of a tourist destination will have an impact on their loyalty to that destination. Tourists will come back or recommend these tourist destinations to others. The results in this study, which state that the memorable tourist experience has a positive and significant effect on brand loyalty, are similar to previous studies (Brakus et al., 2009; Biedebach & Marrel, 2010; Ismail et al., 2011; Sahin et al., 2011; Sathish & Venkatesakumar, 2011).

The brand relationship in this study can influence loyalty positively and significantly. The results of this study confirm the previous

studies (Kressmann et al., 2006; Hollebeek, 2011). The concept of the brand relationship in this study concerns the relationship between tourists and tourist destinations. Tourist relations are indicated by satisfaction, trust, and commitment. Consumers who are satisfied, believe, and committed to a brand will be able to influence their loyalty to tourist destinations, especially Bali.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

There are six hypotheses built in this study. After being tested, only four hypotheses were accepted, namely: Destination personality has a positive and significant effect on destination relationship, Destination personality has a positive and significant effect on self congruence, Destination relationship has a positive impact on destination loyalty, and the Memorable tourist experience has a positive and significant effect on destination loyalty. There are two hypotheses that are not accepted, among others: Self-congruence has a negative effect on destination loyalty, the Memorable tourist experience has a negative effect on the destination relationship.

The theoretical implications in this study are related to the concept of the memorable tourist experience. In this study, the memorable tourist experience can increase loyalty but not be able to increase destination relationship. Memory is an important part of the concept of a memorable tourist experience. Memory is divided into episodic and semantic memory (Tulving, 1979). Episodic memory, otherwise known as autobiographical memory, is the memory of tourists who relate to their tourism experience while semantic memory is related to tourist knowledge about tourist destinations. The memory is more likely to make tourists make decisions in the future rather than thinking about the relationship between the brand and themselves. The decision in question is a decision to revisit intention or loyal to a tourist destination (Kim et al., 2012a; Kim et al., 2012b). Experience (memory autobiography) and tourist

knowledge (semantic memory) will be able to increase destination loyalty compared to destination relationships.

The managerial implications in this study are (1) There are several drivers of loyalty in tourist destinations, namely the memorable tourist experience and brand relationship. The government must be able to build experience design for tourist destinations in Bali. Experience design can be in the form of physical context and relation context. Physical contact that is built is a tourist destination in Bali must look clean and neat, the development carried out does not damage the authenticity of nature and culture, and the building is adapted to the theme of the local culture of the Balinese population. Tourists come to Bali because they want to see and feel the beauty and authenticity of nature along with its culture. The relation context that must be built is to build trust and politeness towards tourists. (2) The government must highlight the brand personality of Bali. One way is to make a slogan or tagline about Bali. The personality that is easily understood by tourists will make tourists easily compare themselves (self congruity) with the personality of tourist destinations

The weaknesses in this study are (1) the goodness of fit indicator is still of average value; (2) the study is still limited to respondents of local tourists. Future research is expected (1) research respondents are local and foreign tourists. What is suggested is to compare the results of the study when using respondents from local and foreign tourists. (2) To anticipate the average goodness of fit, then use the SEM-PLS analysis approach.

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