International Journal of Technology and Education Research

https://e-journal.citakonsultindo.or.id/index.php/IJETER

E-ISSN: 2986-0733

Impact of Destination Image and Quality Service on Tourist Satisfaction and Loyalty at Malalayang Beachwalk, Manado, North Sulawesi

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Abstract

Tourism is a key sector in Indonesia's economy, contributing up to USD 20 billion annually. With its diverse natural landscapes and cultural heritage, Indonesia has prioritized five key tourism destinations, including North Sulawesi. Malalayang Beachwalk, which opened in October 2022, features impressive views and attractions but has faced complaints about its facilities and services, such as unwelcoming vendor behavior and high parking fees, which have impacted tourist satisfaction. This study aims to examine how the destination image and service quality affect tourist satisfaction and loyalty at Malalayang Beachwalk. Utilizing a quantitative explanatory approach and SmartPLS 3.0 for analysis, the research surveyed 100 domestic tourists who visited between October 2022 and May 2024. The findings demonstrate that both the destination image and service quality significantly and positively influence tourist satisfaction and loyalty. Additionally, tourist satisfaction has a notable impact on loyalty. These results suggest that improving both the destination image and service quality at Malalayang Beachwalk can boost tourist satisfaction and loyalty, leading to more repeat visits. The study provides valuable insights for management to address current issues and better meet tourist expectations, thereby supporting the successful growth of the tourism destination.

Keyword: destination image, quality service, tourist satisfaction, tourist loyalty, malalayang beachwalk

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INTRODUCTION

Tourism is a vital sector in Indonesia's economy, generating foreign exchange earnings of up to USD 20 billion annually (Yanwardhana, CBNC Indonesia 2021). The country's natural beauty and cultural diversity attract tourists, with the government supporting this by designating five super-priority tourist destinations: Lake Toba, Borobudur, Labuan Bajo, Likupang, and Mandalika (Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, 2021). North Sulawesi, in particular, has experienced notable growth in tourism. Malalayang Beachwalk Manado, which opened in 2023, is a new attraction offering both natural and man-made beauty. However, issues such as unfriendly vendor behavior and high parking fees have led to complaints, impacting tourist satisfaction.

According to Kotler and Armstrong (2004), tourist satisfaction reflects the extent to which a person's expectations are met. Factors influencing satisfaction include service quality, product quality, emotional factors, and convenience. Negative feedback on Malalayang Beachwalk, highlighted on @soalmanado's Instagram account, points to issues with services and facilities that need addressing. Enhancing the destination's image and service quality is crucial for achieving tourist satisfaction and loyalty. As noted by Tjiptono (2012), high-quality service meets or exceeds tourists' expectations. Satisfied travelers can positively impact the destination's image and encourage loyalty, potentially leading to increased recommendations.

This study aims to examine the effects of destination image and service quality on tourist satisfaction and loyalty at Malalayang Beachwalk Manado. The findings are intended to assist managers in understanding tourist needs and boosting visitor numbers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Destination Image

An image is a collection of beliefs, ideas, and impressions that a person has about something. Conversely, a brand is represented by a name, term, sign, symbol, or a combination of these, intended to help consumers identify a company’s products and services (Chamdani, 2016). Destination image refers to how an individual's decision to travel is influenced by their thoughts, knowledge, emotions, and perceptions, culminating in their overall satisfaction with the destination (Wibowo, 2016). This image is not solely based on personal experiences or facts; it can also be shaped by information from social media, magazines, television, books, films, brochures, posters, or other people's stories. Such sources can greatly impact a visitor’s motivation and interest in traveling to a particular destination (Isnaini, 2018).

Quality Service

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Service quality is a crucial aspect of any tourism destination. With the rising competition among destinations, management must continuously focus on understanding and fulfilling consumer needs and desires, aiming to provide superior service compared to competitors. According to Lupiyoadi (2001), service quality is a key factor in determining a company's success and quality. It involves efforts to meet consumer needs and desires and accurately deliver services that align with consumer expectations (Tjiptono, 2007). Quality should start with customer needs and end with the tourists' perceptions. Consequently, service quality can be seen as an attitude or relationship resulting from the comparison between expectations and actual performance (Anggraeni, 2015).

Tourist Satisfaction

Kotler (2011) identified five key factors influencing consumer satisfaction: the quality of tourism products, the quality of tourism services, emotional image, price, and cost. The quality of tourism products encompasses external elements like brand image, while the quality of tourism services pertains to how well services meet consumer expectations. Emotional image involves feelings of happiness, pride, or satisfaction experienced by the consumer. Products that offer high quality at a lower price provide greater value, leading to higher consumer satisfaction as they avoid additional costs or time. According to Musanto (2004), customer satisfaction is achieved when customer needs, wants, and expectations are fulfilled, which in turn fosters repeat purchases or loyalty. Satisfied customers are more likely to remain loyal, buy more, speak positively about the company, pay less attention to competitors, be less sensitive to price, provide feedback to the company, and require fewer service costs.

Loyalty

Consumer loyalty is a voluntary commitment to a particular product or service, essential for boosting sales and lowering marketing expenses. Hurriyati (2015) describes loyalty as a consumer's dedication to continue purchasing, influenced by factors such as product quality, price, service, company image, new products, trust, and the ability to meet unexpected needs. Loyalty benefits companies by cutting marketing and transaction costs, and by enhancing cross-selling and word-of-mouth promotion. Griffin (2015) suggests that customer loyalty also reduces turnover costs and increases market share. According to Marriott Global Source, the four key drivers of loyalty are product quality and consistency, exceptional experiences, personalized service, and emotional connection. Artuger et al. (2013) add that loyalty is demonstrated through repeat visits and recommendations.

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METHOD

Research Design

This research employs an explanatory design using a quantitative approach. It aims to analyze and test the causal relationships between constructs or latent variables. There are two categories of latent variables: exogenous and endogenous. Exogenous variables are those that exert an influence; in this study, the exogenous variables are destination image (X1) and service quality (X2). On the other hand, endogenous variables are those that are influenced; in this study, the endogenous variables include satisfaction (Y1), which serves as an intervening variable, and loyalty (Y2).

This study targets domestic tourists who have visited or are currently visiting Malalayang Beachwalk in Manado, specifically those who traveled from October 2022, when the venue opened, up to May 2024. The research involves 100 domestic tourist respondents. This sample size was selected for three reasons: the maximum allowable sample size for the SmartPLS 3.0 student version, the complexity of the variables and indicators being analyzed, and the lack of an existing sample reference framework to determine the exact number of tourists. Respondents were chosen based on their willingness to participate, being of adequate age to complete the questionnaire (or at least a student), and having visited and used the services at Malalayang Beachwalk at least once.

Hypotesis

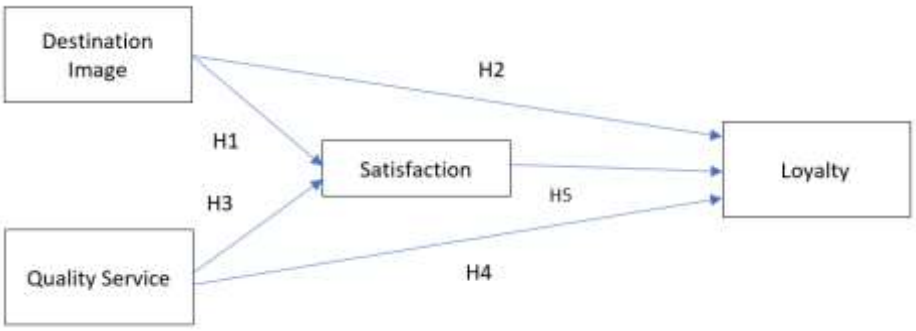


Figure 1 Research Hypothesis

Source: Data Result, 2024

This study tests several hypotheses. According to Unaradjan (2019), a hypothesis is a provisional explanation derived from theoretical foundations or previous studies, which researchers use to develop their research questions. The study examines five hypotheses, outlined as follows:

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1. The impact of destination image on tourist satisfaction.
2. The influence of destination image on tourist loyalty.
3. The effect of service quality on tourist satisfaction.
4. The effect of service quality on tourist loyalty.
5. The relationship between tourist satisfaction and tourist loyalty.

Research and Location Time

This research was conducted at Malalayang Beachwalk which is located on Jl. Wolter Monginsidi No.83 Malalayang Dua Village, Malalayang District, Manado City, North Sulawesi Province. Malalayang Beachwalk is a new tourist destination in North Sulawesi which was officially opened in October 2022. We conducted this research from December 2023 to May 2024.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Hypothesis testing is performed by analyzing the results from the inner model (structural model), which includes r-squared values, parameter coefficients, and t-statistics. To decide if a hypothesis is accepted or rejected, the significance values between constructs, t-statistics, and p-values must be evaluated. This research used SmartPLS 3.0 software for hypothesis testing. The values are derived from bootstrapping results. The study's criteria involve t-statistics greater than 1.96 with a significance level of p-value ≤ 0.05 (5 percent) and a positive beta coefficient.

Direct Effect

The criteria for hypothesis testing are based on the statistical test results and p-value values. A hypothesis is considered accepted if the p-value is less than 0.05 and the statistical value exceeds 1.96, as shown in the following table.

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Table 1 Direct Effect

Variable	*Original Sample*	*T-statistic*	*P-Values*	Conclusion
Destination Image -> Tourist Satisfaction	0,480	6,416	0,000	H1 Accepted
Destination Image -> Tourist Loyalty	0,252	2,042	0,042	H2 Accepted
Quality Service -> Tourist Satisfaction	0,492	6,564	0,000	H3 Accepted
Quality Service -> Tourist Loyalty	0,328	2,712	0,007	H4 Accepted
Tourist Satisfaction -> Tourist Loyalty	0,379	3,248	0,001	H5 Accepted

Source: Data Result, 2024

Indirect Effect

Indirect influence refers to the effect that occurs between exogenous and endogenous variables through the mediation of other variables. In this study, the indirect influences examined include:

Table 2 Indirect Effect

Variable	*Original Sample*	*T-statistic*	*P-Values*	Conclusion
Destination Image -> Tourist Satisfaction -> Tourist Loyalty	0,182	3,158	0,002	Accepted
Quality Service -> Tourist Satisfaction -> Tourist Loyalty	0,187	2,691	0,007	Accepted

Source: Data Result, 2024

Some of the research hypotheses presented in this study are as follows:

Hypotesis 1

The results of the statistical analysis using the SmartPLS 3.0 tool showed a path coefficient of 0.480 in a positive direction. A t-statistic value of 6.416 and a significant value of 0.000 indicate that the destination image variable has a positive and significant impact on tourist satisfaction. Therefore, the first hypothesis (H1) in this study was accepted, and H0 was rejected. This conclusion suggests that the better and more well-known the image of the destination, the greater the satisfaction of tourists at Malalayang Beachwalk, and vice versa. In other words, the destination image plays a crucial role in shaping tourist satisfaction. This study confirmed that

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the image of the destination positively and significantly affects the satisfaction of tourists visiting Malalayang Beachwalk.

Hypotesis 2

The results of the statistical analysis using the SmartPLS 3.0 tool revealed a path coefficient of 0.252 in a positive direction. With a t-statistic value of 2.042 and a significance value of 0.042, it is evident that the destination image variable has a positive and significant effect on tourist loyalty. Consequently, the second hypothesis (H2) in this study is accepted, and H0 is rejected. This finding implies that the better and more renowned the destination image, the greater the loyalty of tourists to Malalayang Beachwalk, and vice versa. In other words, the destination image plays a vital role in fostering tourist loyalty. This study confirmed that the destination image positively and significantly impacts the loyalty of tourists visiting Malalayang Beachwalk.

Hypothesis 3

The statistical analysis results using the SmartPLS 3.0 tool show a path coefficient of 0.492 in a positive direction. With a t-statistic value of 6.564 and a significance value of 0.000, it is clear that the service quality variable has a positive and significant effect on tourist satisfaction. Consequently, the third hypothesis (H3) in this study is accepted, and H0 is rejected. This conclusion suggests that the higher the quality of service provided, the greater the satisfaction of tourists at Malalayang Beachwalk, and vice versa. In other words, service quality plays a crucial role in tourist satisfaction.

Hypothesis 4

The results of statistical analysis using the SmartPLS 3.0 tool revealed a path coefficient of 0.328 in a positive direction. With a t-statistic value of 2.712 and a significance value of 0.007, it is evident that the service quality variable has a positive and significant impact on tourist loyalty. Therefore, the fourth hypothesis (H4) in this study is accepted, and H0 is rejected. This finding suggests that the better the quality of service provided, the greater the loyalty of tourists at Malalayang Beachwalk, and vice versa. In other words, service quality plays a crucial role in tourist loyalty.

Hypothesis 5

The results of statistical analysis using the SmartPLS 3.0 tool revealed a path coefficient of 0.379 in a positive direction. With a t-statistic value of 3.248 and a significance value of 0.001, it is evident that the tourist satisfaction variable has a positive and significant impact on tourist loyalty. Therefore, the fifth hypothesis (H5) in this study is accepted, and H0 is rejected. This conclusion indicates that the higher the level of tourist satisfaction at Malalayang Beachwalk,

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the greater the likelihood of tourists making a return visit.

CONCLUSION

Based on the data analysis and discussion, this study concludes that the destination image positively and significantly affects both tourist satisfaction and loyalty at Malalayang Beachwalk. A more favorable destination image leads to greater tourist satisfaction and loyalty. Additionally, service quality also has a positive and significant impact on both tourist satisfaction and loyalty. Higher service quality results in increased satisfaction and loyalty among tourists. Furthermore, tourist satisfaction positively and significantly influences their loyalty; thus, the more satisfied tourists are, the more likely they are to return.

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