

The Role of Destination Image and City Branding in the Decision of Singaporeans to Visit Batam City

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Abstract: This study aims to analyze the role of destination image and city branding on the decision of Singaporeans to visit tourist attractions in Batam City. This study uses a quantitative method with a survey approach. The number of samples used in this study was 100 Singaporeans. Data was obtained through the distribution of questionnaires to Singaporeans who have visited or plan to visit Batam City. The data analysis technique used was multiple regression analysis to determine the influence of each variable on the decision to visit. The results of the study show that the image of the destination has a significant influence on the decision to visit, where the positive perception of natural beauty, facilities, and community friendliness is the main attraction. City branding also plays an important role in increasing the awareness and interest of Singaporeans in Batam, especially through the promotion of slogans, city icons, and international events. The study concludes that the combination of a strong destination image, consistent city branding promotion, will be able to increase Singaporeans' decision to visit Batam.

Keywords: City Branding, Destination image, Decision to visit.

1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism has become one of the strategic sectors that contributes significantly to economic development, especially in areas that have unique geographical and cultural potential. Batam City, located in the Riau Islands, is one of the main destinations in Indonesia that attracts the attention of international tourists. Its geographical position close to Singapore makes Batam the main gateway for foreign tourists, especially from the neighboring country. In addition, the ease of access to transportation by sea and air is an important factor that supports Batam's attractiveness as a competitive tourist destination.

In facing global competition in the tourism sector, the image of the destination is one of the key elements in attracting tourists. A positive image of a destination can form a good perception among potential tourists, thereby increasing interest in visiting the destination. For Batam City, the image of the destination displayed needs to depict various advantages, such as the beauty of marine tourism, culinary diversity, duty-free shopping centers, and modern entertainment facilities. However, the formation of an effective destination image requires an integrated and sustainable marketing strategy.

In line with that, city branding also plays an important role in strengthening Batam's attractiveness as a leading tourist destination. City branding not only aims to build a city's identity, but also to create a unique and memorable impression for tourists. In the context of Batam, the development of a modern, dynamic, and tourist-friendly city image is an important step in attracting more visits from Singaporeans. This effort must also be supported by

consistent promotion through various media, both traditional and digital.

This study focuses on analyzing the role of destination image and city branding in influencing the decision of Singaporeans to visit tourist attractions in Batam City. Through this approach, it is hoped that a deeper understanding of the factors that encourage or hinder tourist visits can be obtained. The results of this study not only provide theoretical insights but can also be a strategic foundation for stakeholders in the Batam tourism sector in formulating policies and steps for destination development. Thus, Batam can further strengthen its position as one of the leading tourist destinations in Southeast Asia.

The following is data in the form of the number of international tourist visitors who come to visit the city of Batam in 2023.

Table 1
Data on Foreign Tourist Visitors to Batam in 2023

Kebangsaan	01. Wisatawan Mancanegara Ke Kota Batam Menurut Kebangsaan (Kunjungan)												
	2023												
	Januari	Februari	Maret	April	Mei	Juni	Juli	Agustus	September	Oktober	November	Desember	Tahunan
Singapura	55.573	42.606	60.233	50.760	43.672	89.694	55.801	53.719	61.058	44.789	60.169	95.736	713.810
Malaysia	12.066	12.246	12.952	12.733	12.264	15.607	13.923	16.485	14.406	12.390	16.079	23.907	175.058
India	4.630	2.366	3.428	4.670	3.338	4.654	3.277	3.565	3.927	2.906	3.526	4.448	44.735
Tiongkok	2.673	1.518	2.086	2.644	2.161	2.461	2.336	2.424	2.516	2.083	3.115	3.396	29.413
Filipina	1.914	1.450	2.137	2.419	1.516	2.678	2.265	2.250	2.260	1.656	2.502	2.499	25.546
Korea Selatan	666	640	684	180	684	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2.854
Jepang	704	639	679	643	624	848	754	700	908	624	897	875	8.895
Inggris	667	679	774	847	775	796	647	778	964	757	944	741	9.369
Amerika	609	642	742	782	727	859	855	729	839	661	679	662	8.177
Australia	662	-	-	-	-	827	744	676	962	763	885	831	6.350
Lainnya	15.219	11.407	14.553	13.462	11.587	15.856	14.461	13.916	14.360	13.559	15.275	16.758	170.413
Wisatawan Mancanegara	94.774	74.193	98.268	89.140	77.348	134.280	95.063	95.242	102.200	80.188	104.071	149.853	149.853

Source : BPS Batam City 2023

The data on Foreign Tourists presented in table 1 shows that in 2023 there will be an increase in the number of visitors. Foreign tourists who came to Batam in 2023 amounted to 1,498,530 visits. The most visits came from Singapore, with 713,810 visits throughout the year, which accounted for almost half of the total visits. Other countries with significant visits were Malaysia (175,810 visits) and India (44,490 visits). Tourists from countries such as South Korea, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States each account for about 6,000-10,000 visits throughout the year. Travelers from other countries not specifically listed are categorized as "Other", with a total of 151,986 visits. Singapore is the main tourist market for Batam City, followed by Malaysia and India. December is the peak of visits, possibly because of the year-end holidays. The consistency of the number of tourists shows the attractiveness of Batam as a tourist destination for neighboring countries and internationally.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Visiting Decision

(Ardiansyah & Agung Nugroho, 2022) The decision to visit a tourist destination is a way of making a decision, which is similar to the decision to choose or utilize a product or service. This is related to how a tourist makes a decision, which starts with their desire and need to travel for a tourist trip, collecting information about tourist attractions, to evaluating the most appropriate choice of tourist attractions. This shows that new activities that involve the selection and assessment of the desired product or service influence the decision to visit. (Donargo & Sianipar, 2022)

H3 : It is suspected that the Destination Image and City Branding together have a positive and significant effect on the Visitor's Decision

Destination Image

The image of a destination according to Crompton (1979; in Yang *et al.*, 2009) is a number of impressions, beliefs, thoughts, perceptions, and feelings that are built over time towards a place. The image of a tourist destination is defined as the image of tourism products related to tourist destinations and tourism facilities, which can directly meet the needs of tourists (Zhang *et al.*, 2017). Based on this understanding, it can be concluded that the definition of the image of a tourist destination is a person's beliefs, perceptions, impressions, and feelings about a tourist attraction.

H1 : It is suspected that the image of the destination has a positive and significant effect on the Decision to Visit

City Branding

According to (Sunyoto, 2018) considers that city branding is similar to a company brand. In this case, cities and companies alike want to attract the attention of various stakeholders and customer groups. They both have multidisciplinary roots, and a high degree of complexity. Both must consider social responsibility, as well as plan for long-term development. Hankinson claims that city branding is also closely related to the leadership factors of regional heads, brand-oriented organizational culture, coordination of different departments, will affect the brand image. According to (Kotler, Philip and Armstrong, 2014) city branding is an effort made by the government to create an identity of a place, region, then promote it to the public, both internal and external public

H2 : It is suspected that City Branding has a positive and significant effect on the Visiting Decision

3. METHODS

The population in this study is infinite. The characteristics of the respondents were 17-50 years old, and Singaporeans who visited tourist attractions in the city of Batam. The number of samples used in this study was 100 samples using non-probability sampling methods and judgmental sampling techniques. The distribution of questionnaires is carried out offline and online. The measurement of this study uses the Likert Scale. The data analysis technique used in this study is multiple linear regression analysis.

4. RESULTS

The population in this study is infinite. The characteristics of the respondents were 17-50 years old, and Singaporeans who visited tourist attractions in the city of Batam. The number of samples used in this study was 100 samples using non-probability sampling methods and judgmental sampling techniques. The distribution of questionnaires is carried out offline and online. The measurement of this study uses the Likert Scale. The data analysis technique used in this study is multiple linear regression analysis.

Classical Assumption Test

The Kolmogorov-Smirnov One-Sample *normality test* in the classical assumption test has a Kolmogorov-Smirnov *significance value*, namely *asympt sig. (2-tailed)* which is greater than 0.05, which is 0.290. Thus, the data obtained is declared to be normally distributed. Then the multicollinearity test can be seen from the tolerance value and VIF (*Variance Inflation Factor*). The existence of multicollinearity is indicated by a *tolerance value* of ≥ 0.01 or $VIF \leq 10$ multicollinearity. From the results of the test, it is known that the *tolerance value* of the destination image variable is $0.914 \geq 0.01$. The tolerance value of the *city branding* variable is $0.955 \geq 0.01$. With these results, it is known that there is no multicollinearity between independent variables. Likewise, the VIF value of each independent variable, for the VIF value of the destination image variable is $1,094 \leq 10$. The VIF value of the *e-WOM* variable is $1,014 \leq 10$. And the VIF value of the *city branding variable* is $1,094 \leq 10$. This means that there is no multicollinearity between independent variables. So it can be interpreted that this study does not have a strong correlation between independent variables, and this regression model can be tolerated. The next stage is the heteroscedasticity test, the results of the Spearman's Correlation Coefficient test in the heteroscedasticity test get a significance value in each variable with a residual greater than 0.05. The significance of the destination image variable was 0.935; and the City Branding *variable* of 0.610. So it can be interpreted that there is no heteroscedasticity problem.

Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Results

The results of the multiple linear regression analysis data processing function to determine the influence of destination image variables, and city *branding variables* on the intention to visit prospective visitors to Kenjeran Beach, the following results were obtained:

Table 4
Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Results

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	5,337	2,428		2,198	0,030
Destination Image(X1)	0,329	,083	0,336	3,973	0,000
City Branding (X2)	0,120	,046	0,330	2,321	0,510

Source : Data processed by researchers (2024)

Based on the table above, it can be seen that the regression equation is:

$$Y = 5.337 + 0.329 X1 + 0.120 X2 + e$$

1. The constant value is 5.337: meaning that if the Destination Image (X1), and *City Branding* (X2) are ignored (0), then the Visiting Decision (Y) is worth 5.337.
2. The regression coefficient of the variable Destination Image (X1) is 0.329: if the Destination Image (X1) is increased by one (1), the Visiting Decision (Y) will increase by 0.329.
3. The regression coefficient of the *City Branding* variable (X2) is 0.120: if *City Branding* (X2) is increased by one (1) then the Visiting Decision (Y) will increase by 0.031.

Coefficient of Determination (R²)

The R (Square) *Coefficient of Determination analysis* is used to find out how much the independent variables contribute in explaining the bound variables.

Table 3. Coefficient of Determination of Research Variables

Model Summary				
Type	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	,905a	0,818	0,811	1,753

Source : SPSS Processing, 2024

Based on table 3 above, it shows that the percentage of contribution of *the independent variables* of Destination Image and *City Branding*, which has a significant effect on the *dependent* variable of the Visit Decision is 0.811 or 81.1%. While the rest is 0.189 or 18.9% influenced by other variables outside this study.

Hypothesis Testing

Test t

a. Destination Image Variable (X1)

The results of the test with SPSS obtained a t-calculation for the Destination Image (X1) variable of 3.973 greater than the t-table of 1.985. By using a significant limit of 0.05 significance value of Destination Image (X1) 0.000, Ho is rejected and H1 is accepted. Thus, the first hypothesis is accepted.

b. City Branding Variable (X2)

The results of the test with SPSS obtained t-calculation for the City Branding variable (X2) 2.321 greater than the t-table 1.985. Using a significant limit of 0.05, the significance value of City Branding (X2) is 0.510, then Ho is accepted and H2 is accepted. Thus, the second hypothesis is accepted.

F Test

Based on table 2, the test of the influence of the independent variables together on the bound variables was carried out using the F test. The results of the statistical calculation showed that the value of $F_{cal} = 106.926$ was greater than $F_{table} 2.70$ with a significance of $0.000 < 0.05$, then Ho was rejected and H5 was accepted. This means that together Destination Image (X1), and City Branding (X2) have a significant effect on Purchase Decisions (Y). Thus, the Third hypothesis is accepted.

5. DISCUSSION

The Influence of Destination Image on Visiting Decisions

In this study, empirical evidence was obtained that the first hypothesis proposed was proven. With the t-count for the Destination Image variable greater than the t- table. Therefore, it can be concluded that partially the Destination Image has a significant effect on the Visiting Decision. The results of the research conducted (Parapat, 2018) which stated that the research on Location, Price and Promotion had a significant effect on the Visiting Decision. Research conducted (Istikhomah & Susanta, 2019) which states that Price and Service Quality have a significant effect on Visiting Decisions. Destination image is an important factor to improve tourists' decision to visit. Destination Image is a staple that the city of Batam must have in order to be able to improve consumer purchasing decisions. The image of destinations owned by tourist attractions in the city of Batam will be able to improve the decision to visit tourists.

The Influence of *City Branding* on Visiting Decisions

In this study, empirical evidence was obtained that the second hypothesis proposed was proven. With the t-count for *the City Branding* variable smaller than the t-table. So it can be concluded that partially *City Branding* has a insignificant effect on the Visiting Decision. Research conducted (Qomariah, 2020) which states that *City Branding* has a non-significant effect on Visiting Decisions. *City Branding* is a tangible form of strategy to attract consumers. Batam City must pay attention to *City Branding* to further improve the decision to visit Singapore tourists. *City Branding* must be in accordance with the quality and benefits of the tourist attraction itself.

The Influence of Destination Image, and *City Branding* on Visiting Decisions

In this study, empirical evidence was obtained that the fifth hypothesis proposed proved that F_{cal} was greater than F_{table} , so it can be concluded that together Destination Image and *City Branding* have a significant effect on the decision to visit tourists.

The results of research conducted (Istikhomah & Susanta, 2019) which stated that Price and Service Quality have a significant effect on the Visiting Decision. Destination image is an important factor to improve tourists' decision to visit. Destination Image is a staple thing that must be owned by tourist attractions in Batam in order to be able to improve the decision to visit Singaporeans. The image of the destination owned by the city of Batam will be able to improve the decision to visit tourists.

6. CONCLUSION

There are theoretical implications resulting from this study. Batam's positive destination image, such as its natural beauty, ease of access, and tourist facilities, plays an important role in attracting tourists from Singapore. Tourists tend to choose Batam because of its reputation as a destination that offers a satisfying tourist experience. The efforts of the government and related parties in promoting Batam through the city branding strategy have a significant impact on the decision to visit. Elements such as slogans, city icons, and integrated promotions strengthen Batam's attractiveness as a leading destination, especially in the Southeast Asian region. The decision of Singaporeans to visit Batam is the result of a combination of a positive destination image and effective promotion through city branding. Together, these factors create a strong attraction for Singaporean tourists.

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