Perceived Coolness in the Heritage Tourism: A Case Study in PT. Taman Wisata Candi

M.H. Fikri Ridhani & R. Roostika
Universitas Islam Indonesia, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

ABSTRACT: An important strategy to attract tourists to visit a destination is by understanding their emotions and creating differences. The feeling of “cool” has become one of the tourism issues, where traveling is one of the ways to be perceived as “cool”. The advancement of information technology supports the effect of traveling to increase the cool emotional aspect of travelers. This research investigated the perceived coolness of tourist in the heritage tourism destinations. The heritage destination has always been a cool place to visit, and more young generations appreciate the cool aspects of our local cultures. Specifically, this study has analyzed the structural model of antecedents and consequences of perceived coolness. Perceived coolness is translated into three variables (uniqueness, identification, and attractiveness) and three consequences of perceived coolness, namely satisfaction, place attachment, and destination loyalty. This study used 255 valid samples, who had been visiting Prambanan, Borobudur, and Ratu Boko temples. The analysis using AMOS resulted in one antecedent (uniqueness) that did not influence perceived coolness. One consequence, which is destination loyalty, did not influence by perceived coolness.

Keywords: Perceived coolness, satisfaction, place attachment, destination loyalty.

1 INTRODUCTION

One of the strategies to attract people visiting a tourism destination is by creating uniqueness. By having uniqueness, tourists will more value and hopefully will lead to destination loyalty (Shirazi & Som 2013). Other significant contributors to destination loyalty are place attachment and satisfaction (Valle et al. 2006, Sangpikul et al. 2017, Patwardhan et al. 2019). To make tourists loyal to the destination, tourism providers should offer attractive programs to attract tourists to visit and perform positive behaviors.

The technology has enabled people sharing their experiences instantly. People enjoy sharing their photos and traveling experiences that become one of the status-enhancing behaviors. Selfie photos are now one of the essential activities in traveling, and a unique location would attract more tourists to visit. Tourism has a lot of emotional experiences; thus, tourism providers should understand how to delight this emotional feeling.

Previous research has identified that whenever favorable experience is supported with the emotional feeling such as feeling "cool", which made with creativity, this will result in satisfaction and place attachment (Chen & Chou 2019). To make the tourist have the emotional experience, the destination should create distinct experiences different from other destinations. It will make the tourist have the significant emotional experience of feeling cool to influence them to visit the destinations further. Chen & Chou (2019) identified that perceived coolness is affected by some elements, namely uniqueness, identification, and attractiveness. Arguably, the attractive destination, which is cool enough to make tourists develop emotional experiences, is the main reason where tourists seek favorable experiences. Consequently, due to the critical role in creating differentiation via feeling "cool", this research focused on consumers' perceived coolness in heritage destinations. The heritage destinations are chosen due to the popularity, uniqueness, and richness of experiences offered.

More specifically, the purpose of this research is to investigate the role of perceived coolness in heritage sites by observing the antecedents (uniqueness, identification, and attractiveness) and its consequences, including satisfaction, place attachment, and destination loyalty.
1.1 Perceived Coolness

According to Bruun et al. 2016, the term “coolness” is used by the people nowadays to determine the characteristics of products and have been critically discussed over the years by practitioners and researchers. Those characteristics are essential because they will influence the way people react to a specified product or service. Runyan et al. (2013) explained that young people used the term “coolness” to specific product or service to describe the attractiveness, uniqueness, innovativeness, authenticity, and stylish. Besides, in practice, “coolness” is also expressed when some particular product or service is viewed as unique and aesthetic (Chen & Chou 2019). Since tourism offers plenty of new destinations and experiences, thus, perceived coolness can be very rich and challenging to satisfy visitors.

1.2 Antecedents of Perceived Coolness

According to Chen & Chou (2019), the antecedents of perceived coolness are identification, uniqueness, and attractiveness. Other researches also studied those three main antecedents by showing how it can be connected to the term cool products (Sundar et al. 2014, Runyan et al. 2013, Rahman 2013).

1.2.1 Uniqueness

The place can be popular because of several aspects of culture, unique landscape, infrastructure, history, and local products (Roostika 2019). One way to enhance tourism to come to the destination is by pursuing the uniqueness of destination and satisfying their desire of uniqueness for visiting the destination (Pechlaner et al. 2011). Meanwhile, Tian et al. (2001) argued that uniqueness is a term that represents consumer behavior through a product or service by a feeling of difference through activity such as acquisition, utilization, and disposition. On the other hand, Sundar et al. (2014) stated that the sense of uniqueness is correlated with the term feeling of “coolness”. According to Chen & Chou (2019), one of the elements that enhances the level of perceived coolness is the uniqueness of the destination. Therefore, the hypothesis in this research is: H1. The uniqueness of destinations positively influences the perceived coolness of tourists.

1.2.2 Identification

Customers somehow behave and tend to identify the brand in various ways. According to the previous researcher, brand identification is defined as a custom-er who identifies their self-concept and integrates that concept to the specific brand (Kumar & Kaushik 2017). Furthermore, according to Ekinci, et al. (2013), based on the social identity theory, the tourism destination is one of the objects that can make tourist express their social identity using brand identification. Chen & Chou (2019) said that perceived coolness is the core of the tourist experience, and one of the elements that enhances the level of perceived coolness is identification. Therefore, the second hypothesis is: H2. The identification of destination positively influences the perceived coolness of tourists.

1.2.3 Attractiveness

Destination attractiveness refers to the tourism opinion through their experience for visiting destination whether the destination satisfied their need (Vengesayi et al. 2009). In fact, more attractive tourist destinations will attract more tourists to visit destinations. There are two broad streams of destination attractiveness, first, with only physical attributes and second, with not only physical attributes. According to Buhalis (2000), the tourism destination is no longer seen from cultural or environment resources but now is seen as an overall appealing product that is available and purchasable for consumers located in a particular area. By having an attractive tourist destination that combines service and product, it will become one appealing product bundle. This bundle can enhance more attractiveness and memorable experience by the tourists (Cracolici & Nijkamp 2008). Similarly, it will create a memorable experience by pursuing the attractiveness of destinations that can influence the specific feeling for tourists, especially perceived coolness (Chen & Chou 2019). Therefore, the third hypothesis is: H3. The attractiveness of destination positively influences the perceived coolness of tourists.

1.3 Consequences of Perceived Coolness

In the process of customer consumption, perceived coolness is one of the ways that will bring tourists to the stage of brand loyalty (Runyan et al. 2013). Chen and Chou (2019), who examined the post-visit consequences of perceived coolness, found that tourist satisfaction, place attachment, and destination loyalty as three widely recognized behavioral could be related to perceived coolness.
1.3.1 Tourist Satisfaction

According to Van et al. (2012), tourist satisfaction is an evaluation process of emotional feeling between what tourist expected and perceptions that tourist obtained from specific service performance. Tourist satisfaction has been a big discussion of the researchers because once the tourist is satisfied with the destination, it can result in destination loyalty, revisit intention, place attachment, and word of mouth (Sangpikul, et al. 2017, Bigne, et al. 2005, Chen, et al. 2016). Kim (2017) stated that one of the ways to create tourist satisfaction is by giving memorable experiences. Furthermore, Chen & Chou (2019) argued that enhancing visitor perceived coolness could lead to a higher level of tourist satisfaction. Therefore, the fourth hypothesis is: H3. Perceived coolness of destination positively influences the satisfaction of tourists.

1.3.2 Place Attachment

Place attachment is a complex emotional bond between a person and a place that is gained from the personal experience of visiting the place (Hidalgo & Hernandez 2001). Furthermore, Chen et al. (2016) stated that the emotional bond of a person or individual to a specific place is a summary of experience by the individual itself, which is influenced by physical and social aspects. On the other hand, previous research by Bricker & Kerstetter (2000) stated that place attachment could appear after there is an emotion attribute between tourist perceptions and the specific destination. Meanwhile, according to previous literature, place attachment is the contributor to destination loyalty (Valle et al. 2006, Sangpikul et al. 2017, Patwardhan et al. 2019). Chen and Chou (2019) also stated that enhancing visitor perceived coolness could lead to a higher level of tourist place attachment. Therefore, the following hypothesis is: H5. Perceived coolness of destination positively influences place attachment of tourists.

1.3.3 Destination Loyalty

One of the strategies to have a thriving tourism destination is by maintaining a competitive strategy. It is obtained by using the term of relationship marketing, which can be said as activities lead to destination loyalty of tourist (Shirazi & Som 2013). Destination loyalty is one of the tourist perceptions regarding the destination recommended from their point of view after visiting it (Chen & Gursoy 2001). According to Chen & Chou (2019), loyalty is divided into two perspectives that are behavioral loyalty and attitudinal loyalty. Behavioral loyalty refers to the revisit destination, and attitudinal loyalty refers to the favorable tourist feelings (Chen & Chen 2010, Chen & Phou 2013).

Tourist pleasant experience from a destination is one of the primary indicators that lead to destination loyalty (Chen & Phou 2013). The previous study showed that the satisfaction of tourists for visiting the destination is one of the determinants for destination loyalty and affects destination loyalty (Valle et al. 2006, Sangpikul et al. 2017). Additionally, Chen & Chou (2019) argued that enhancing the level of perceived coolness of tourists will result in a higher level of satisfaction, place attachment, and further positive behavioral intention such as revisit and willingness to recommend. As for more, the previous study proves that destination loyalty is a consequence of destination consumption through the effect of tourist experience by visiting destinations (Chen et al. 2016, Chen & Chou 2013). Therefore, the researchers concluded these following hypotheses: H6. Perceived coolness of destination positively influences destination loyalty of tourists. H7. Tourist satisfaction positively influences the destination loyalty of tourists. H8. Tourist place attachment positively influences the destination loyalty of tourists.

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

2 RESEARCH METHODS

2.1 Sample and Data Collection Method

Data was used in this research by distributing online and offline-based questionnaires. Non-probability sampling with a convenience method was taken to access those who have experiences in visiting Borobudur, Ratu Boko, and Prambanan Temples. Out of 270 questionnaires distributed, 255 were valid for further statistical analysis with SEM AMOS. The questionnaires were adapted from Chen & Chou (2019) to measure perceived coolness, place attachment, satisfaction, and destination loyalty.
3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

3.1 Data Analysis
After completing data collection from online and offline questionnaires, the respondent’s identity can be summarized as follows: 50.6% of the respondents were females, and 49.4% were male respondents; the majority (i.e., 80%) of the respondents were from the age category of 15-24 years old; 136 respondents or 53.3% of the respondents hold a diploma degree; and majority of the respondents spent Rp.1,000,000 - Rp.3,000,000 per month.

3.2 Reliability and Validity Analysis
When using AMOS statistical technique, reliability and validity analysis have been conducted through Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). Construct reliabilities were found to meet the criteria as suggested by Ghozali (2006), where each construct reliability is more than > 0.7 and the extracted value > 0.5.

3.3 The Goodness of Fit Measurements
Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) provides the goodness of fit (GOF) analysis to show whether the proposed model is fit enough as a good model. That analysis included Chi-Square, probability, RMSEA, GFI, TLI, and CFI. The results of the analysis are shown below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goodness of Fit (GOF) Testing Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Goodness of Fit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi-Square (X²)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RMSEA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GFI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TLI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CFI</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on Table 1, all the goodness of fit criteria has satisfied the requirements as listed in the cut off value.

3.4 Hypothesis Testing
This research employed seven variables namely uniqueness (U), identification (I) and attractiveness (A), perceived coolness (PC), satisfaction (S), place attachment (PA), and destination loyalty (DL) with the total indicator of 34 indicators. In the process of analyzing with AMOS, model modifications were required by removing three indicators to achieve criteria for the goodness of fit. Those indicators were A3, PC4, and PC5.

3.5 Discussion
The first hypothesis is not supported as the uniqueness of destinations did not positively influence the tourist perceived coolness. This phenomenon commonly happens in the destination sector due to uniqueness that can be easily imitated by other competitors and reduce uniqueness. In comparison, according to Chen & Chou (2019), uniqueness on destination positively influences the perceived coolness. However, in their research, the level of uniqueness was not as high as attractiveness to influence perceived coolness because the uniqueness is part of a strategy that could “mimic” or be imitated by other destinations in the same segment. The finding might occur because of the respondent background, whose majority were locals. They might perceive temples as part of their life and no longer unique objects for
them. As a consequence, they do not consider the uniqueness of the temples as something cool.

The second hypothesis showed that identification of destination from the tourist positively influenced tourists' perceived coolness. A previous study from Ekinci, et al. (2013) stated that based on the social identity theory, tourist tends to express their social identity through identification from the pleasant experience of visiting tourism destination. The finding of this research showed that tourist tends to have a higher level of favorable experience of perceived coolness when their personality fit the destination and met with people that have a similar personality. This finding is in line with the study by Chen & Chou (2019) that found identification influences perceived coolness. The selfie photo trend and the internet have made identities important and increase emotional feelings translated as Cool.

The third hypothesis showed that the attractiveness of destinations positively influenced tourists’ perceived coolness. By visiting attractive destinations, it can lead to favorable experiences. Those favorable experiences made the tourist feel cool by visiting the destination. The finding of this research is supported by the previous study by Chen & Chou (2019) that argued that the attractiveness of destination positively influences the perceived coolness of tourists. Moreover, in the tourism context, based on Tan et al. (2013), the best way to create a superior experience is by creating the attractive destination based on what tourist think it is "cool" to do.

Comparing with the previous study from Van et al. (2012), the finding from this research showed that the higher the perceived coolness of tourists, the higher the tourist satisfaction. Tourist tends to feel satisfied with the destination when their expectation met their experience. A previous study by Hosany et al. (2014) also found that tourist satisfaction will occur when the tourist has unique feelings after visiting a destination. Similarly, Chen & Chou (2019) study also supported perceived coolness and satisfaction relationship. Therefore, it can be concluded that the fourth hypothesis perceived coolness of tourist had a positive and significant influence on tourist satisfaction.

The fifth hypothesis showed that the perceived coolness of tourists positively influenced the tourist place attachment to the destination. It can be seen that after the tourists experience the destination, they had developed an emotional feeling and bond those feeling with the destination. Brocato et al. (2015) argued that place attachment might appear when a person develops a bond between his or her personal feeling to an object. Meanwhile, Chen & Chou (2019) stated that the development of emotional sense between a destination and a tourist could appear after tourists have the experience of visiting the place. Those statements from the previous research are in line with this research where tourist develops a feeling of "cool" on the destination, which directly leads to the place attachment.

Chen & Chou (2019) argued that perceived coolness is positively associated with destination loyalty because it is one of the essential consequences of destination consumption through tourist experience. However, their study found that perceived coolness does not positively influence destination loyalty. The findings from this study are in line with Chen & Chou (2019) study. The insignificant finding can be implied that perceived coolness is not sufficient to drive loyalty to the destination since it is not mediated by satisfaction and place attachment. The finding also consistent with the previous studies (Chen et al. 2016, Chen & Phou 2013, Lee et al. 2012) for perceived coolness and destination loyalty relationships. In order to be loyal, tourists must be satisfied or attached first. Therefore, the sixth hypothesis showed that perceived coolness is not enough to drive the tourist to be loyal to the destination.

The seventh hypothesis showed that tourist satisfaction positively influences the destination loyalty of the tourist. The finding from this research is in line with the previous researches arguing that the satisfaction of tourist for visiting the destination is one of the determinants for destination loyalty and effect destination loyalty (Valle et al. 2016, Sangpikul et al. 2017, Gok & Sayin 2015).

The special relationship between tourist and associated environment establishes a place attachment in which as a factor in generating loyalty in tourism destinations (Cerro et al. 2015).

The eighth hypothesis of this research showed that tourist place attachment positively influenced tourist destination loyalty. Tourist who enjoys the atmosphere of the destination and develops special feeling has a high possibility for destination loyalty. According to Chen & Chou (2019), pleasant experience supported with the emotional sensation of "cool" will result in satisfaction and place attachment.

4. CONCLUSION

This research examined the antecedents of perceived coolness (uniqueness, identification, and attractiveness) and the consequences of perceived coolness (satisfaction, place attachment, and destination loyalty). By analyzing 255 respondents who were local visitors of three heritage sites (Borobudur,
Prambanan, and Ratu Boko Temple). By testing the data with AMOS software, findings showed that only two antecedents of perceived coolness were significant, namely attractiveness and identity. Whereas, there were two significant consequences of perceived coolness, namely place attachment and satisfaction. Perceived coolness did not directly influence destination loyalty. Both satisfaction and place attachments have a direct effect on destination loyalty.

For the academic, future empirical study could explore more elements that affect perceived coolness, such as creativity and image. The consequence of perceived coolness does not directly influence destination loyalty; thus, determining mediating variables is essential to predict tourists’ loyalty. For practitioners/managers, tourism is highly emotional and highly influenced by the advancement of technology development; thus, tourism providers should seriously manage the technology capability to increase tourists’ emotional feelings to the destination. The perception of “cool: should be developed in all the destinations to remain competitive.

REFERENCES


