Effect of Attitude on Brand Preference in the Pangandaran Tourism Area

Pratami Wulan Tresna
Business Administration Department, Universitas Padjadjaran

Tetty Herawaty
Business Administration Department, Universitas Padjadjaran

Arianis Chan
Business Administration Department, Universitas Padjadjaran

ABSTRACT

Pangandaran is famous for its tourist spots. Various beaches in Pangandaran are vacation destinations for many tourists. The numerous tourist visits to the Pangandaran tourism area motivated the author to conduct this research on brand attitudes and preferences among tourists. This study aims to determine the degree of influence Pangandaran tourism area has on attitude toward brand preference. The research method used is a survey of tourists who had visited the Pangandaran tourism area. The sample consists of 293 individuals, and data collection is conducted by distributing questionnaires and previous literature. The data analysis technique is structural equation modeling with the partial least squares approach. Results show that attitude has a significant influence on brand preference and prove that the Pangandaran tourism area is the destination choice of tourists.

Keywords: Attitude, Brand, Tourism

1. BACKGROUND

Pangandaran is one of the districts in the province of West Java that is known for its beauty and many natural attractions. Hence, Pangandaran has become a tourist spot. The target of most tourists is Pangandaran Beach with its white sand, Pangandaran green canyon, and other similar places.

As a tourist attraction, Pangandaran has high potential to continue attracting tourists, thereby benefiting from recreational activities. Pangandaran is a type of product that can be offered to consumers to satisfy their needs.

The development of marketing issues regarding product categorization creates meaning for a product that is not in the form of goods or services. In this sense, the product is something that can be offered to the market to make people interested, such that they wish to obtain, use, or consume the product to satisfy their wants or needs (Kotler & Gary 2008). Tourist sites have the same role as other tangible products. Alma (2011) stated that a product can be something tangible or intangible, such as a service. Whether tangible or not, products are still intended to satisfy needs and desires. With regard to products in the form of tourist objects or locations, Kodhyat (2007) added that tourism products are everything that tourists are interested in buying to enjoy.

The development of technology and market conditions changes the strategy that needs to be applied in offering and marketing products. Baud-Bovy (Yoeti, 2002) stated that tourism products are facilities and services provided and intended for tourists, and they comprise three components, namely, resources found in a tourist destination, facilities contained in a tourist destination, and transportation from the place of origin to a certain tourist destination.

The purchasing behavior of tourists as consumers of tourism products is unique because each person's preference and attitude toward objects have many differences. Moreover, tourists come from several segments; thus, their wants and needs also differ. Many factors influence the attitude of tourists toward their preference for a brand of tourism products. Thus, business managers and local governments need to understand the attitude of tourists toward brand preferences that have been formulated by business people and the government. This task needs to be done in various ways to make consumers interested in the tourism products provided because product development is determined by all relevant stakeholders and implemented in an integrated manner (Purnomo, 2008). Fiatiano (2007) added that the development of tourism products is perfected by the existence of commitment and cooperation among tourism operators (e.g., local governments), tourism services, and the community around the object.
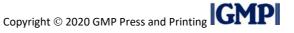
2. LITERATURE REVIEW
2.1 Attitudes toward Brands
Attitudes toward brands are one of the dimensions of brand equity. Theoretically, brand equity is a multidimensional construct formed from the influence of a brand image or attitude toward a brand (Gómez et al. 2018). These two constructions are the main subjects that need to be examined to determine their effects on Pangandaran as a tourist destination (Tresna, Herawati, & Chan, 2019). Gomez et al. (2018), Keller (1993), and Faircloth et al. (2001) discovered a relationship between attitudes toward brands and brand equity, although no significant direct relationship was observed. Attitudes toward brands and brand image are important in providing value to a brand (Keller, 1993).

Attitudes toward brands are defined as emotional judgments and dispositions to a product, that is, positive or negative feelings toward a particular brand (Hughes & Allen, 2008; Kotler & Armstrong, 1996). Keller pointed out that a good and strong attitude benefits a brand by helping it increase the disposition of consumers to pay a high price for the brand. Attitudes toward brands are related to brands that have product categories with different attributes. According to Berger and Mitchell (1989), brand attitude is an evaluation of brands that exert an influence on product value and preferences for them.

In a global market, the competition among cities as tourist destinations is focused on building unique brand attitudes and images to provide an unforgettable experience, and the brand develops positively by word of mouth (Sahin & Baloglu, 2014). Keller (1993) and Aaker (1991, 1996) analyzed brand equity by combining two measurements, namely, attitudes and behavior. Farquhar (1989) indicated that a positive attitude toward a brand and a consistent brand image are required to build a strong brand because the level of customer trust in a brand affects the level of customer loyalty to the brand (Widodo & Tresna, 2018).
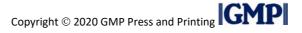
2.2 Brand Preference

Various definitions of "brand" and "branding" exist. According to Interbrand's dictionary, a brand is a combination of attributes, real and abstract, symbolized through a trade name, which, if managed properly, can produce value and influence. This combination is a set of assets and liabilities associated with brand names and symbols that produce value for the company, thus increasing the efficiency of marketing programs (Aaker, 1996). "Branding" is defined as the selection and mixing of real and abstract attributes to distinguish products, services, or companies in an interesting, meaningful, and compelling way (ibid). Thus, when someone creates a new name, logo, or symbol for a new product, he has created a brand (Tresna et al., 2019). However, a brand is not a product, but it provides a meaning to the product and defines the identity of the product in time and space. A brand is entirely a promise, a perception, everything that consumers see, hear, read, know, and feel about a product, service, or business. Brands also have a special position in the minds of consumers based on past experiences, relationships, and future expectations (Tresna et al., 2019). Christian and Sunday (2013) defined brand preference as a measure of consumer loyalty in choosing a brand over other competing brands but still accepts substitution when the selected brand cannot be found. Meanwhile, according to Lau and Lee (1999), brand preference is a condition where consumers prefer a brand because the brand is fun. Brand preference can mean liking or choice of a brand that consumers prefer (Adnyana & Respati, 2019). Brand preference is where consumers prefer a brand of a product based on their first experience in using the brand compared with other similar brands. (Nurzaini & Khasanah, 2018). Companies that have developed brand preferences are able to defend against attacks from competitors (Jin & Suh, 2005). This concept can also be applied to products in the form of places or locations. The concept that applies marketing to destinations, which emerged in the 1990s, is called place branding (Ashworth & Voogd, 1990). Promoting cities as part of an organized marketing strategy is a new idea. This growing trend that started in the 1990s emerged as a reaction to increasing competitiveness in tourism as a result of globalization (Berg, Klaassen, & Meer, 1990; Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2006; Kotler, Asplund, Rein, & Haider, 1999). According to Kavaratzis (2004:5), city branding is a means of achieving competitive advantage to increase investment from tourism and as an achievement of community development.

Indonesian and Malaysian consumers, as the most frequent visitors to Pangandaran attractions, have a relatively similar shopping style (in relation to tourist sites). As brand-conscious perfectionists, they wish to find products with high quality and exert extensive effort looking for the best products. They also believe in and have high preference for branded products (Helmi, Arifianti, & Nugraeni, 2018). A factor that influences purchase decisions is brand preference (Nurzaini & Khasanah, 2018).

Brand preference is related to attitude measurement based on beliefs about and the relative importance of specific product attributes (Bass & Talarzyk, 1972). Attitude models have been proven to predict true brand preferences (Bass & Talarzyk, 1972).

3. RESEARCH METHOD

The respondents in this study were tourists who had visited Pangandaran Regency tourist areas up to September 2017 (as many as 239 people). By using accidental sampling withdrawal techniques, a sample was obtained based on the suitability needed. This research is quantitative. A quantitative research measures data via a statistical analysis (Malhotra, 2015: 120). This research also used a descriptive research design. A descriptive research provides an overview of the object and discussion of the study (Malhotra, 2015: 87). Moreover, this study utilized a data

analysis method involving SmartPLS software version 2.0.m3, which is run on computer media.

4. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

On the basis of the questionnaire that was distributed, a description of the respondents' answers was created by examining the percentage of the respondents' answers to each questionnaire question; the description is presented in the form of a pie chart (Figure 3.1).

Figure 3.1. Pie chart of the respondents' answers to the statement that Pangandaran is an area that suits its tourist identity

As indicated in Figure 3.1, with regard to the statement that Pangandaran is an area that suits its tourist identity, 58.7% of all respondents agreed and 27.7% strongly agreed, which means that the majority of visitors are residents of West Java or domiciled in Pangandaran and surrounding areas. As much as 3.8% of the respondents disagreed, and 9.8% were hesitant.

As indicated in Figure 3.2, with regard to the statement that Pangandaran is a pleasant area, 57.9% of all respondents agreed and 34.0% strongly agreed. Thus, we can conclude that tourists consider Pangandaran a comfortable place. Meanwhile, 6% answered doubtfully, and 2% disagreed.

Figure 3.3. Pie chart of the respondents' answers to the statement that Pangandaran meets the needs of tourists

Figure 3.3 illustrates the responses of the respondents to the statement that Pangandaran can satisfy the needs of tourists. The majority of tourists (58.3%) agreed, and 19.1% strongly agreed. We can conclude from the answers of these respondents

that the needs of tourists are generally satisfied. Meanwhile, 17.4% answered doubtfully, and 4.7% disagreed.

After testing the respondents' characteristics, the next step was analyzing the level of compatibility between attitude and brand preference.

A. Testing the Validity of Partial Least Squares (Convergent Validity Test)

The first test on the partial least squares (PLS) model aimed to determine convergent validation values. A statement can be considered valid if it has an outer loading value that is greater than 0.70 (Sarwono, 2014). However, in the research development stage, a loading value of 0.50 to 0.60 is still acceptable (Ghozali, 2006). Table 4.1 shows the results of the validity test on the 239 respondents.

Table 4.1. Test on PLS Attitude toward Brand Convergent Validity

Question No	Indicator	Outer Loadings	AVE	Information
P1	Pangandaran is a tourist area that suits its tourist identity	0.7275		
P2	Pangandaran is a pleasant area	0.8692	0.6666	Valid
P3	Pangandaran can satisfy the needs of tourists	0.8455		

Table 4.1 shows the convergent validity of the attitude toward the brand. The outer loading values measured based on P1–P3 indicators have values > 0.70. This result means that the gauges (manifest variables) of the construct have high correlation. Thus, the indicator can measure latent variables that should be measured. Other results used for convergent validity can be obtained from the average variance extracted (AVE) value in Table 4.20. The AVE value of the customer satisfaction variable is 0.6666, which means that the indicator variable is valid because the AVE value > 0.05.

B. Testing the Validity of PLS (Discriminant Validity Test)

The measurement of the discriminant validity of the measurement model is judged by comparing the roots of AVE of a construct, which must be higher than the correlation between latent variables. The model is considered to have good discriminant validity when each loading value of the indicator of the latent variable is greater than when it is correlated with other latent variables. The discriminant validity test results are shown in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2. *Cross Loading*

	Attitude	Brand Preference
P1	0.727502	0.391161
P2	0.869241	0.586100
P3	0.845520	0.543865

As indicated in Table 4.2, a cross-loading value greater than 0.7 indicates good discriminant validity because the correlation value of the indicator to its construct is higher than the correlation value of the indicator with the other constructs. Thus, the latent construct predicts the indicators on their block better than other block indicators do. This result means that the latent variable has good discriminant validity.

C. Testing the PLS (Reliability Construct) Reliability

After conducting the validity test, we tested the reliability construct. A reliability test can be used to determine the consistency of indicators in a latent variable. The reliability construct of the measurement model with the reflection indicator can be determined by looking at the composite reliability value of the indicator block that measures the construct. A construct is considered reliable when the composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha values are above 0.70. A high composite reliability value indicates good consistency of each indicator in the latent variable in measuring the variable. The complete composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha values are presented in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3. Reliability Test Results

Variable	*Cronbach 's Alpha*	*Composite Reliability*	Keterangan
Attitude	0.7513	0.8564	Reliable

Table 4.3 shows that the results of Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability have satisfactory values, namely, the value of each variable is above the minimum value of 0.70. Therefore, the research instrument, namely, the questionnaire used to measure the attitude toward the brand variable, is consistent and stable. In other words, all the constructs or variables in this research are suitable for measuring instruments.
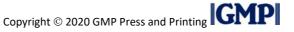
Hypothesis testing

Next, we determined the significance of the influence between constructs with the indicators and answered the hypotheses in this study. Figure 4.1 presents the paradigm of the results of the modeling conducted through the SmartPLS program to perform the calculations in a concise manner.

The test of structural equation modeling (SEM) based on PLS is a structural model (inner model). This model shows the significance of the influence between the construct and its indicators and the responses to what has been hypothesized. The structural model can be explained by the value (original sample). The values of t-statistical significance are presented in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4. *Path Coefficient*

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	Standard Error (STERR)	T Statistics (|O/STERR|)
Attitude toward Brand Preference	0.120615	0.118508	0.052017	0.052017	2.318749

According to Table 4.4, the direct effect of attitude on brand preference has a positive coefficient ("Original Sample" column) of 0.1206, t arithmetic > t table (2.3187 >

1.96). This result proves that attitude has a significant direct effect on brand preference.

5. CONCLUSION

Testing of the hypothesis on the direct effect of attitude on brand preference shows that it has a positive coefficient ("Original Sample" column) of 0.1206, t arithmetic > t table (2.3187 > 1.96). This result proves that attitude has a significant direct effect on brand preference.

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