

THE EFFECT OF ECOTOURISM MOTIVATION AND TRAVEL SATISFACTION ON DESTINATION LOYALTY

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Abstract: *The development of ecotourism in various parts of Indonesia is very rapid. However, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the nature-based tourism business was quickly stopped and the number of visitors decreased. The purpose of this study was to examine and analyze the effect of ecotourism motivation, and travel satisfaction on destination loyalty. The research method uses a quantitative research approach. The population of this study are visitors to the Padang Savana ecotourism object. This research data uses primary data. The data collection technique used a survey by distributing questionnaires to respondents. The data analysis technique used SEM Amos 21 version. The results found that ecotourism motivation had no effect on destination loyalty. However, ecotourism motivation has an effect on travel satisfaction. Other findings that travel satisfaction has no effect on destination loyalty. These findings can be used as a reference for ecotourism business managers to make marketing strategies by increasing ecotourism motivation to increase travel satisfaction. Meanwhile, to increase destination loyalty, managers must look for other more effective strategies.*

Keywords: *Destination Loyalty, Motivation, Travel Satisfaction*

1. Introduction

The development of ecotourism has been known since the 1970s, and is currently experiencing very rapid development. These developments have brought ecotourism to the attention of academics, industry experts, environmentalists, and economists. This is because of the important role of ecotourism as a research topic in tourism since 2002, when the United Nations (UN) Agency declared it the International Year of Ecotourism (Weaver, D. B., 2014). In addition, ecotourism complements the existence of conventional tourism and comes with new concepts that pay more attention to welfare, as well as opening up opportunities to improve the economy for local communities and other parties in the tourism industry (Shi, F, et al. 2019).

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, ecotourism was one of the fastest growing business sectors in the tourism sector (Das, M., & Chatterjee, B., 2020). Ecotourism is an important destination because it is useful for nature protection, education, recreation, and creating jobs (Bakar, N. A. A., & Wall, G., 2018). The attraction of ecotourism for visitors is to interact with the local community, learn about the ecosystem, and can participate in the conservation of natural resources so as to provide an interesting experience for visitors. Visitors who have environmental awareness and strong motivation will be attracted to visit and enjoy attractions

related to the natural environment. Ecotourism has been developed in Indonesia, including in East Lampung Regency in recent years. Padang Savana is one of the tourism businesses located in Braja Yekti, and Braja Harjosari Village, Braja Selehah District, which is managed by Kelompok Sadar Wisata or the Tourism Awareness Group (Noor, Rasuane, 2019).

This natural tourism object has an attraction in the form of a wide expanse of grass, rivers, rice fields, orchards, and nature conservation. The mainstay tour package is along the river that borders the Way Kambas National Park forest, and the village. Other tour packages include planting rice in the fields, tapping rubber sap, picking oranges, riding a oxcart, and monitoring birds at night (Gautama, W., K., 2021).

The Covid-19 pandemic has made the Padang Savana Ecotourism experience a decline in the number of visitors. The lack of visitors has an impact on the decline in income and the spirit of the manager. This is a problem faced and requires a solution to prevent a worse impact. The solution to overcome this problem is by strengthening the loyalty of ecotourism destinations through increasing motivation, tourism experience, destination image, and travel satisfaction (Li, T. T, et al. 2021). Motivation is an important factor for tourists visiting ecotourism objects (Dewi, A. N., & Abidin, Z., 2021). Even motivation can be a reason for tourists to come back (Lee, C. K, et al. 2014). Another important factor that makes tourists visit again, even recommend to others, is the image of the destination, tourism experience, and travel satisfaction (Quynh, N., et al., 2021). These factors prove to increase loyalty to visit ecotourism destinations.

This study aims to examine and analyze the effect of motivation, tourism experience, destination image, and travel satisfaction on the loyalty of ecotourism destinations. The specific purpose of this study is to examine the effect of travel satisfaction as a mediator of the influence of motivation, tourism experience, destination image on destination loyalty.

2. Literature Review

Every company has the ultimate goal of successfully establishing relationships with customers to form strong loyalty (Zeithaml, V. A et al. 1996; Sánchez-Casado, N et al. 2018). Loyalty is a widely studied variable in the marketing literature and is an important concept in strategic marketing (Kim, K. H., & Park, D. B., 2017). Destination loyalty can be interpreted as a commitment of tourists to subscribe or return to visit tourist attractions that have been previously visited (Hermawan, H., et al. 2019).

According to Wu, M. Y., & Pearce, P. L. (2017) motivation is a psychological need and desire that drives, directs, and integrates behavior and activities. Tourism-related motivation is a psychological need that makes people feel that psychological imbalances can be corrected through travel experiences (Carvache-Franco, M. et al. 2019). Motivation is a set of needs that influence a person to participate in tourism activities (Carvache-Franco, M., et al. 2021).

The definition of satisfaction refers to a positive feeling or pleasure obtained after experiencing or consuming a tourism product. These are psychological aspects and states of mind that emerge after tourists are exposed to an environment (Carvache-Franco, O et al. 2022). Furthermore, satisfaction has been described as a cognitive-affective state resulting from a positive consumer experience (Del Bosque, I. R., & San Martín, H., 2008).

Several previous studies have analyzed the effect of motivation, and travel satisfaction, on destination loyalty. These researchers include Castellanos-Verdugo, M et al. (2016), Wu, C. W. (2016), Adam, I. et al. (2019), Dewi, A. N., & Abidin, Z. (2021), and Carvache-Franco, et al.

(2022). The findings of these studies state that motivation has a positive and significant effect on travel satisfaction, and destination loyalty. Travel satisfaction has a positive effect on destination loyalty. Based on the findings of previous research, destination loyalty can be increased by increasing ecotourism motivation, and travel satisfaction. This study seeks to prove these findings by examining different objects, namely the Padang Savana ecotourism object, East Lampung. These various studies are summarized in Table 1. as follows.

Table 1. Previous Studies

Authors	Title	Result
Castellanos-Verdugo, M et al. (2016),	The relevance of psychological factors in the ecotourist experience satisfaction through ecotourist site perceived value. Journal of Cleaner Production. 2016 Jun 15;124:226-35.	Satisfaction affects the intention to return to visit and the willingness to recommend ecotourism sites to family and friends.
Wu, C. W. (2016)	Destination loyalty modeling of the global tourism. Journal of Business Research. 2016 Jun 1;69(6):2213-9.	Destination image, experience, and satisfaction has affect on destination loyalty
Adam, I. Et al. (2019)	A structural decompositional analysis of eco-visitors' motivations, satisfaction and post-purchase behaviour. Journal of Ecotourism. 2019 Jan 2;18(1):60-81.	Ecotourism motivation has a significant effect on satisfaction
Dewi, A. N., & Abidin, Z. (2021).	Analysis of the Relationship of Service Quality, Motivation and Destination Image to Destination Loyalty: A Case Study of Wonorejo Mangrove Ecotourism in Surabaya, East Java. Journal of Aquaculture and Fish Health, 2021 Jan 13;10(1):46-55.	Motivation, destination image has a positive and significant effect on destination loyalty.
Carvache-Franco, et al. (2022).	Satisfaction Factors That Predict Loyalty in Ecotourism: A Study of Foreign Tourism in Costa Rica. Land, 11(1), 125.	Satisfaction has a positive effect on ecotourism loyalty

Based on literature review and previous studies, a research conceptual model and hypotheses can be built which are described and presented in Figure 1. as follows.

Hypothesis 1: Ecotourism motivation has affects toward destination loyalty

Hypothesis 2: Ecotourism motivation has affects toward travel satisfaction

Hypothesis 3: Travel satisfaction has affects toward destination loyalty

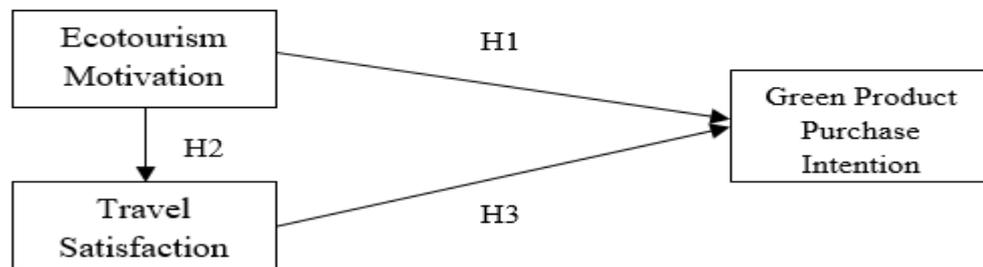


Figure 1. Research Model and Hypotheses

3. Research Method

Research Design

This type of research is quantitative research. Quantitative research is approaches to empirical studies to collect, analyze, and display data in numerical rather than narrative form (Abawi, K., 2008). In addition, quantitative research has a purpose to test hypotheses. Hypothesis testing is carried out to explain the variance in the dependent variable or to predict research results (Sekaran, U., & Bougie, R., 2016).

Based on the time dimension, this research is a cross sectional research which is only conducted in one time period. The unit of analysis is the unit that refers to the research subject (Arikunto, S. 2010). The unit of analysis of this research is the individual, namely the ecotourism visitor of Padang Savana, East Lampung. Based on the data collection method, this type of research includes survey research, which is a primary data collection method based on communication with a person as a representative of an individual sample (Zikmund, W. G., & Babin, B. J., 2011).

Population, Sample and Sampling Technique

Population refers to the whole group of people, events or things of interest that the researcher wants to investigate, (Sekaran, U., & Bougie, R., 2016). The population of this study were all visitors to the Padang Savana Ecotourism object, East Lampung. The sample is a subgroup of the population elements selected to participate in a study (Malhotra, N. K., 2010). The sample of this research is some visitors to the Padang Savana Ecotourism object, East Lampung.

The sampling technique uses a purposive sampling technique or purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is that researchers obtain information from those who are most prepared and meet several criteria needed in providing information (Sekaran, U., & Bougie, R., 2016). Limitations in this purposive sampling method are people who have visited at least 2 times to the Padang Savana Ecotourism object, male and female, and are at least 17 years old. The number of samples in this study were 130 people. Determining the sample size if it is too large will make it difficult to get a suitable model, and it is recommended that an appropriate sample size between 100-200 respondents can be used to estimate interpretation with Structural Equation Modeling / SEM (Hair Jr JF et al. 2010).

Data Source and Analysis

The source of data in this study is primary data. Primary data is data created by researchers for the specific purpose of solving research problems, (Sekaran, U., & Bougie, R., 2016). The data analysis of this research used SEM, AMOS, 21 version. Meanwhile, the Sobel Test was used to analyze the mediating variables. Variable Measurement Scale The dependent variable, independent variable and mediating variable measurement scale in this study used a Likert scale 1-5 with criteria; strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), disagree (3), agree (4), and strongly agree, (5).

Definition of Variable Operationalization

Ecotourism motivation is a collection of needs that influence a person to participate in tourism activities. Indicators of motivation are self-improvement, relaxation, and knowledge, getting out of routine, natural scenery, information and comfort, and various activities for fun (Xu, J. B., & Chan, S., 2016).

Travel satisfaction is a positive feeling or pleasure obtained after experiencing a tourist trip. Indicators of travel satisfaction consist of psychological, cognitive, and affective aspects. It is a modified result of research (Li, T. T, et al. 2021; Del Bosque, I. R., & San Martín, H., 2008).

Destination loyalty is the extent to which tourists are committed to returning to visit tourist attractions that have been previously visited. Indicators of destination loyalty in this study are saying positive things, willing to recommend, and intention to revisit ecotourism sites, (Li, T. T, et al. 2021).

4. Results and Discussion

Validity and Reliability Test

Table 2. The Result of Validity Test

Variable and Instrument	Loading Factor
Ecotourism Motivation	
Affordable cost	0,640
Looking for new experiences	0,737
Accompany family/friends	0,788
Get out of the routine	0,632
Travel satisfaction	
The right decision	0,842
Meaningful journey	0,811
A very worthwhile trip	0,846
Destination loyalty	
Ecotourism is the first choice of destination	0,780
Recommend to others	0,777
Will visit again in the future	0,823

To test the validity of this research instrument used CFA or confirmatory factor analysis. Testing the validity of this research instrument was conducted on three variables, namely ecotourism motivation, travel satisfaction and destination loyalty. According to Hair et al. (1998) the criteria for factor loading consist of three levels, namely ± 0.30 , ± 0.40 , and 0.50 . The loading factor which has a value of ± 0.30 already meets the construct validity with a minimum level. The factor loading value of ± 0.40 is considered better, and is in accordance with the guidelines that are generally used by researchers. While the value of factor loading 0.50 is the most significant value. The thing to remember is that these guidelines or rules of thumb apply to sample sizes of 100 or more. In other words, the greater the loading factor value, the more important the loading value is in interpreting or representing the construct. The test results show that all indicators have a value of more than 0.05 (Table 2). Therefore, all instruments are declared valid.

The results of the data reliability test show that the value of CR (Construct Reliability) for ecotourism motivation is 0.794, travel satisfaction is 0.765, and destination loyalty is 0.836. These results show that all variable values have values above 0.05, so it can be stated that all variables are reliable and can represent their constructs.

Goodness of fit Indices Test

The Goodness of fit/GOF test or model suitability test produces index values, including chi square (χ^2) 38.248, probability (P) = 0.094, CMIN/DF = 1.366, GFI = 0.947, AGFI = 0.895, TLI = 0.979, CFI = 0.987, and RMSEA = 0.51. Overall, all of the model value indices are declared fit (good), only marginal AGFI values. However, it still shows that this research model can be stated as good/fit. All index values are summarized in Table 2 as follows.

Table 3. The Result of Goodness-of-fit Indices Test

Goodness – of – fit Indices	Cut-off Value	Result	Criteria
Chi-Square (χ^2)	Expected smaller	38,248	Fit
Probability (P)	$\geq 0,05$	0,094	Fit
CMIN/DF	$\leq 2,00$	1,366	Fit
GFI	$\geq 0,90$	0,947	Fit
AGFI	$\geq 0,90$	0,895	Marginal
TLI	$\geq 0,90$	0,979	Fit
CFI	$\geq 0,90$	0,987	Fit
RMSEA	$\leq 0,08$	0,051	Fit

The Results of Path Analysis and Hypotheses Test

The results of path testing and hypotheses can be seen in Table 4. which shows that the three paths of influence between the independent variables and the dependent variable have only one path with significant results and two insignificant ones.

Table 4. The Result of Path Analysis and Hypotheses Test

The Effect Among Variables		Standardize Estimate	Estimate	P	Result
Ecotourism motivation	→ Destination loyalty	0,323	0,423	0,418	Not accepted
Ecotourism motivation	→ Travel satisfaction	0,940	1,207	***	Accepted
Travel satisfaction	→ Destination Loyalty	0,536	0,546	0,173	Not accepted

The path that is not significant is the influence of ecotourism motivation on destination loyalty. The results of the path test obtained a standardize estimate value of 0.323, and a probability value (P) of more than 0.05, which is 0.418. Therefore, hypothesis 1 is rejected. Increasing ecotourism motivation will not increase destination loyalty. The results of this study are not in line with the findings of previous research conducted by Dewi, A. N., & Abidin, Z. (2021), ecotourism motivation has a significant effect on destination loyalty.

The significant path is the influence of ecotourism motivation on travel satisfaction. In this path, the standardize estimate value is 0.940, with a P value of 0.00. The test results can be interpreted that the influence of the two variables is significant. Therefore, hypothesis 2 is accepted. The higher the ecotourism motivation, the higher the travel satisfaction. The results of this study support previous research conducted by Wu, C. W. (2016); Adam, I. et al. (2019) ecotourism motivation has a positive and significant effect on travel satisfaction.

The third path is the influence of travel satisfaction on destination loyalty. The results of the path test obtained a standardize estimate value of 0.536, and a P value of 0.173. This shows that the influence between the two variables is not significant, so hypothesis 3 is rejected. Increasing travel satisfaction does not necessarily increase destination loyalty. The results of this study are not in line with previous studies conducted by Castellanos-Verdugo, M et al. (2016), Carvache-Franco, et al. (2022) that travel satisfaction has an effect on destination loyalty. Furthermore, previous research stated that travel satisfaction can increase visiting intentions, willingness to recommend to family and friends.

5. Conclusion

Ecotourism is a type of tourism that is popular and favored by visitors because visitors can carry out activities related to nature but still protect the environment. After the Covid-19 pandemic passed, people needed tourist attractions to meet needs such as getting out of routine and others.

Managers of tourist attractions began to fix and develop their business to attract visitors again. Padang Savana tourism object is one of ecotourism that seeks to re-manage business after the pandemic so that tourists return to visit. Therefore, it is important to conduct research on

motivation, travel satisfaction and loyalty of ecotourism destinations as an effort to contribute to the development of government policies in the field of sustainable tourism. In addition to helping ecotourism managers in an effort to increase destination loyalty, so that ecotourism can run well, and attract many visitors. This study found that ecotourism motivation had no effect on destination loyalty. This means that an increase in ecotourism motivation does not automatically increase destination loyalty. Ecotourism managers should consider other factors to increase destination loyalty.

On the other hand, this study found that ecotourism motivation significantly influences travel satisfaction. The higher the ecotourism motivation, the higher the travel satisfaction. Ecotourism motivations that are the reasons for tourists are wanting to get out of routine, accompanying family or friends, wanting to find new experiences, and affordable costs. The motivation to accompany family or friends gets the highest value among other motivations, therefore ecotourism managers can offer family or group ecotourism travel packages as a marketing strategy. This strategy is expected to increase the satisfaction of tourists' trips to the Padang Savana ecotourism object.

This study also found that travel satisfaction had no effect on destination loyalty. This means that increasing travel satisfaction does not always succeed in increasing destination loyalty. The dimension of a trip that is valuable and meaningful, and feels that the decision to visit ecotourism is the right decision, does not always make tourists willing to recommend savanna ecotourism objects to others, and plans to visit again and are not the main choice for a vacation. Thus the manager must look for other strategies to increase loyalty besides travel satisfaction.

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