Contribution of Cultural Event to the Visitor’s Intention to Revisit and Recommend Tourist Destination Case Study: Dieng Culture Festival, Central Java, Indonesia

Hamida M. MAHARANI and Hapsari SETYOWARDHANI
Universitas Indonesia, Department of Management, 16424, Depok, Indonesia

Abstract

Indonesia, as the country richest in cultural resources in ASEAN, has opportunities to maintain its cultural resources and thereby increase tourism, and hosting cultural events is one of the ways to do so. Alluring events can motivate one to leave one’s place, visit the place conducting cultural events, and spend money to procure services at the event site. Dieng, a highland in Indonesia, rich in cultural resources, held cultural event namely Dieng Culture Festival since 2009 and has become one of the national events. The focus of this study is the contribution of cultural events and other elements of a tourist destination to the formation of the destination image which then leads to a positive behavioural intention. This research used PLS-SEM to analyze the effect of cultural events, event brand, place brand, and structural elements to the affective and cognitive image. Respondents of this research represented anyone who had visited The Dieng Culture Festival 6, 7, or 8. This research has found that place brand and structural elements significantly affect both cognitive and affective image. The other aforementioned variables, cultural events, and cultural event brand, were determined significantly to affect only the affective image of a tourist destination. In the case of Dieng and the Dieng Culture Festival, the affective image has a more significant effect on the formation of the overall image than the cognitive image. In this study, the researcher also found that the overall image of the tourist destination significantly affects positive behavioural intention (intention to revisit and intention to recommend) of the tourist to a certain tourist destination.

Keywords: Cultural events, destination image, behavioural intention

Introduction

The provinces with the highest number of tourist arrivals in Indonesia are East Java, West Java, Central Java, and DKI Jakarta. (Rencana Strategis, 2016). DKI Jakarta and East Java are business centers in Indonesia, while Central Java and West Java are considered as cultural centers on the island of Java. Central Java, one of the provinces in Java Island has high cultural potential, through a mainstay event, the Dieng Culture Festival, which serves as a cultural event model for other areas in Central Java. Dieng, in addition to being the second largest plateau in the world, it makes up four core attractions in Central Java which also comprise Karimunjawa, Borobudur Temple, and Sangiran Archaeological Museum. Initiated by the Tour Awareness Group (Pokdarwis), Dieng residents host the annual event which features various activities that highlight Dieng cultural artifacts and traditions, such as shadow puppets, traditional dances, and a dreadlock hair-cutting ceremony, among other things unique to the area. Currently, the Dieng Culture Festival is also one of the cultural festivals included in the 100 Wonder Festivals from the Ministry of Tourism in 2018, which means that the Dieng Culture Festival has become a national event. The Dieng Culture Festival was first held in 2009, so it will enter the ninth year in 2018. Every year, the Dieng Culture Festival attracts many visitors from various regions in Indonesia. As in 2017, the Dieng Culture Festival offers a positive impact on the economy of Banjarnegara and Wonosobo by bringing in revenues of Rp45 billion that can be directly felt by the people of Dieng and its surrounding areas (“Dipasarkan Online”, 2017).

A previous study conducted by Hernández-Mogollón, et al (2017) examined the effects of cultural events, structural elements, brand places, and brand cultural events on the cognitive and affective image that form the overall image and influence the formation of an intention to recommend and an intention to revisit. By doing this research, the researcher hopes to know the impact of image which is more influenced by cultural event and related elements and its impact on overall image and behavioural intention, so that the researcher can know and give suggestions to the organizers and related parties in the implementation of cultural events, especially the Dieng Culture Festival, so as to be able to maximize touristic opportunities and promote the tourism of Dieng and surrounding areas.

Literature Review

Structural Elements

Structural elements are elements that are difficult to change or move from one location to another. Structural elements come from local traditions, cultural heritage, historical sites, museums, heredity, and other types of natural resources, as well as other things that permanently stand in certain places. According to McKercher and Du Cross (2002), structural elements include tangible assets derived from knowledge of historical sites, in addition to intangible...
assets such as experiences and feelings arising from the experience of being somewhere new or different.

Cultural tourism continually strives to enhance the things it offers through various cultural facilities and museums, historical sites, and rural areas that have buildings with local, religious, and historical artistic as well as other aspects that characterize the way of life in a particular place (McKercher & Du Cross, 2002 in McKercher & Du Cross, 2003). There is a strong connection between culture and destinations as the existence of architecture, cultural facilities, and cultural events become the main ingredients promoted through campaigns which are strategically carried out to attract tourists and strengthen the cultural identity of a destination (Vivant, 2011).

In organizing cultural events, structural elements are an important part that cannot be extricated. The existence of structural elements such as historic relics, accommodations, restaurants, local food, museums, and leisure activities, offered at the location of cultural events became one of the key development constructs of cultural tourism. (Zouni & Kouremenos, 2008 in Hernández-Mogollón et al, 2017). Therefore, the researcher proposed the following hypotheses:

H1. Structural elements of cultural events have a positive effect on the cognitive image of tourist destinations
H2. Structural elements of the cultural event have a positive effect on the affective image of tourist destination

**Place Brand**

Destination branding can be defined as a way to convey the unique identity of a tourist destination by differentiating it from a competitor (Babic-Hodovic, 2014). Therefore, the result of destination branding, i.e., place brand (brand name) can result in higher competitiveness of a destination as compared to other destinations. The differentiation of a destination among competitors can be based on the sustainability of the natural, economic, and cultural resources they offer (Kozak & Nield, 2004 in Hernández-Mogollón, 2017). Place branding deals with the ecosystem (Bergvall, 2006 in Aitken, 2009) and relies on its relationship with other communities, people, landscapes, companies, consumers, and stakeholders (Hernández-Mogollón, 2017). This relationship will shape and show the uniqueness of a place and its cultural foundations (Bergvall, 2006 in Aitken, 2009) and will eventually create a sense of ownership (Aitken, 2009).

Various studies have stated that an event is very important in the formation of place brand (Getz, 2010). Thus, place brand itself can enhance the image through the awareness that occurs within the individual (Cracolici & Nijkamp, 2009). Therefore, the researcher proposed the following hypotheses:

H3. Place brand positively affects the cognitive image of tourist destinations
H4. Place brand positively affects the affective image of tourist destinations

**Cultural Events**

Cultural events hold a relevant role in the development and marketing of various tourist destinations (Hernández-Mogollón, 2017). Many small and mid-sized cities are creating events with the aim of attracting tourists to come back every year. Cultural event branding becomes a positioning strategy to increase awareness and communicate information about local destinations and traditions. Each year, localities invest their funds to promote an event with the aim of providing new and better experiences for travellers (O’Sullivan & Jackson, 2002). If executed well, cultural events can generate more income and benefits (Liu, 2014 in Hernández-Mogollón, 2017).

Cultural events are generally organized to create economic growth and enhance the image of tourist destinations. Cultural events can produce images related to social and cultural life at the venue (Quinn, 2009).
Therefore, in the fifth and sixth hypotheses, the researcher proposes the following:

H5. A cultural event has a positive effect on the cognitive image of the tourist destination

H6. A cultural event has a positive effect on the affective image of the tourist destination

Cultural event brands serve as an opportunity not only to improve affective image through the experience of tourists in the event, but also to improve the image of tourist destinations from events combined with the uniqueness of destinations, so that tourists give attention to the uniqueness, community, or traditions instead of the event organizing, which can form cognitive image. Thus, in the seventh and eighth hypotheses the researcher proposes the following:

H7. Event brand positively affects the cognitive image of tourist destinations

H8. Event brand positively affects the affective image of tourist destinations

**The Dieng Culture Festival**

The Dieng Culture Festival is an annually occurring cultural festival initiated and organized by the Tour Awareness Group (Pokdarwis) Dieng in August 2010. The idea of the Dieng Culture Festival was conceived by Pokdarwis Dieng, then Dinas Pariwisata dan Kebudayaan Banjarnegara, the local authority, giving support by facilitating either budget or coaching (It's Featured Tourist Destination, 2017)

The Dieng Culture Festival, commonly called "DCF" is held as a "people's party". The festival offers a variety of artistic and cultural performances, and is an exhibition of Dieng products. Every year, the DCF is also always marked by the release of lanterns, shadow puppets, traditional and cultural art performances, and firework festivities, all of which culminate in an apex activity: a dreadlock cutting ceremony known as "Ruwatan dreadlocks". While dreadlocks are commonly known as a representation of Rastafarianism of Jamaica, on the Dieng plateau, dreadlocks, or tangled hair is not a chosen style, but rather a cultural and mystical phenomenon that occurs only in Dieng highland children.

Dieng dreadlock wearers are born with normal hair, but at some point in their lives, their hair turns into dreadlocks. Various studies that have scientifically investigated the cause of the growth of children's dreadlocks have not produced a logical explanation. According to local beliefs, these children have been chosen by the ancestors to receive them. These dreadlocks cannot be trimmed unless the children themselves ask for it; otherwise, the dreads will continue to grow again. To celebrate the shaving of dreadlocks, a series of rituals called Ruwatan Anak Gimbal are practiced.

The ceremony begins with a procession of dreadlock children who are carried around the village, paraded in a traditional Javanese horse carriage guarded by Manggala Yudha, or royal troops, and followed by various traditional artistic processions. These special children are then taken to the Temple of Arjuna in the Dieng Temple complex where the ritual of the cutting of dreadlocks takes place. Afterwards, the cut hair is brought to the lake and washed away in the lake as a symbol of the return of the dreadlocks to the ancestors.

**Destination Image**

Destination image is a collection of beliefs, ideas, and impressions that individuals possess based on the attributes and/or activities that are available in tourist destinations within a certain timeframe (Kim & Richardson, 2003). The examination of the development of conceptualization and measurement of the destination image has increased; however, there are many inconsistencies in explaining the components that make up the destination image (Papadimitriou et al., 2015). A number of studies focus on cognitive dimensions (Lee & Xie, 2011; Prayag, 2009), whereas the cognitive component of the image consists of the beliefs and
knowledge of the destination, especially focusing on real physical attributes (Pike and Ryan, 2004 in Hernández-Mogollón, 2017). There are also studies focusing on affective images (Hosany et al, 2007), wherein the affective image component represents a feeling toward the destination (Chen & Uysal, 2002; Kim & Richardson, 2003). Baloglu and McCleary (1999b) and Pike and Ryan (2004) in Hernández-Mogollón (2017) suggested that four semantic differential scales, i.e., arousing-sleepy, pleasant-unpleasant, exciting-gloomy, and relaxing-distressing can be applied to investigate the affective components of the destination image. Various studies use the affective image and cognitive image as the overall goal image formers (Sönmez & Sirakaya, 2002 in Hernández-Mogollón, 2017).

There have been arguments suggesting that cognitive and affective images are hierarchically influential in the formation of overall image (Cai, 2002; Gartner, 1994, Woodside & Lyons, 1989; in Hernández-Mogollón, 2017), but there is a possibility that each image will contribute differently to the overall image. Each relationship will have different levels of influence because the brand association for the consumer is not equal in terms of performance. The separation of the affective and cognitive image components needs to be done to measure different effects on attitudes and future behaviors (Baloglu & Brinberg, 1997 in Qu et al, 2011). Therefore, to see the effect of the cognitive image and affective image separately, the researcher proposes the following hypotheses:

H9. The cognitive image of tourist destinations has a positive effect on overall image

H10. The affective image of tourist destinations has a positive effect on overall image

**Behavioral Intention**

Behavioural intentions that occur within the aforementioned context can be classified as expected and not expected. Behavioural intentions that are expected include saying positive things about a brand or company, buying or buying intentions, and the willingness to pay a premium price for a brand. Unexpected or unfavorable behavioural intention entails negative word-of-mouth (Rana et al, 2017), taking legal action, and not buying a brand (Zeithaml, Berry, & Parasuraman, 1996).

Visiting intentions, positive word-of-mouth (recommendation) (Chon, 1991 in Jalilvand et al., 2012), and destination loyalty (Chi & Qu, 2008 in Qu et al, 2011) are included in the behavioural intention of tourists considered in tourism sector research. This study focuses on two entities, namely; intention to revisit and intention to recommend through word-of-mouth (WOM).

In various studies focused on destination images, the dependent variables used are often related to revisit intention closely related to destination loyalty and destination branding (Assaker and Hallak 2013; Gartner and Ruzzier 2011; Huang and Hsu 2009; McKercher and Basak 2011; Petrick, Morais and Norman 2001; Xie and Lee 2013). In addition, word-of-mouth is also often included as a valuable result because it is considered a measure of destination loyalty that is separate from revisiting intention. Therefore, the researcher proposed the following hypotheses:

H11. The overall image of tourist destinations has a positive effect on the intention to revisit
H12. The overall image of tourist destinations has a positive effect on the intention to recommend

**Research Methods**

This research uses a conclusive descriptive research design. In this study, researchers test the hypothesis and test the relationship between the related variables. In the case of sampling, a non-probability method with judgmental sampling is used, whereby the determination of the sample is taken based on the researcher's
assessment of the respondent’s criteria (Malhotra, 2010). Respondents used to test the hypothesis in this study are Indonesians who have visited the Dieng Culture Festival 6, 7, or 8. Respondents obtained in this study number as many as 185, and the number of samples used represent as many as 176.

Table 1: Profile of Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Category and Percentage</th>
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<td>Gender</td>
<td>Male (42,61%); Female (57,39%)</td>
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<td>Domicile</td>
<td>East Java (5,68%); Yogyakarta (10,23%); Central Java (48,3%); West Java (9,68%); Jakarta (17,05%); Banten (5,68%); Sumatera (1,7%); Bangka Belitung (0,57%); Sulawesi (1,14%)</td>
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<td>Age</td>
<td>&lt;18 (3,41%); 18-22 (50,00%); 23-27 (34,09%); 28-32 (10,23%); 33-37 (1,14%); 38-42 (0,57%); 43-47 (0,57%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monthly total spending</td>
<td>Below Rp1.000.000 (33,23%); Rp1.000.000 - Rp3.000.000 (31,14%); Rp3.000.000 - Rp5.000.000 (7,95%); Rp5.000.000 - Rp7.000.000 (3,98%); Rp7.000.000 - Rp9.000.000 (1,14%); more than Rp9.000.000 (0,57%)</td>
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<td>Yearly traveling total spending</td>
<td>Below Rp1.000.000 (22,16%); Rp1.000.000 - Rp3.000.000 (37,5%); Rp3.000.000 - Rp5.000.000 (23,30%); Rp5.000.000 - Rp7.000.000 (9,09%); Rp7.000.000 - Rp9.000.000 (1,70%); More than Rp9.000.000 (6,25%)</td>
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<td>Total visits to Dieng</td>
<td>1-2 times (31,14%); 3-4 times (26,14%); more than 4 (22,73%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total visits to the Dieng Culture Festival</td>
<td>1 times (69,32%); 2 times (17,05%); 3 times (7,39%); 4 times (5,11%); more than 4 times (1,14%)</td>
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</table>

Sources: Output of Microsoft Excel

Research Model

The research model used in this research is reprocessed by the researcher from earlier research conducted by Qu, et al (2011) and Hernández-Mogollón, et al (2017)

Fig. 1: Research model

**Result and Discussion**

The findings in this study show that structural elements including the taste of local cuisine, local culture and traditions, natural scenery, accommodations (lodging), restaurant service, souvenirs or local souvenirs, historical heritage, leisure and leisure activities offered, and cleanliness and comfort have a significant effect on the cognitive image, namely; images related to knowledge about attributes of tourist destinations, and on the affective image, namely; images related to emotional and individual motives in selecting tourist destinations.

Structural elements and place brand have a positive effect on the cognitive image of tourist destinations, which are images related to tourist knowledge on the attributes of tourist destinations and on the affective image of tourist destinations, which are related to emotional tourists and things that are the motives of tourists to visit tourist attractions. Based on the research that has been done, it is proved that structural elements and place brands have a positive influence on affective and cognitive images (Rodríguez del Bosque & San Martín, 2008; Hernández-Mogollón et al., 2017). This result is consistent with the idea that the uniqueness of a destination can be generated not only from the uniqueness of the location, but also by the atmosphere or feelings that arise during the cultural event (Getz, 2010).

![Fig. 2: Measurement of T-Value](Sources: Output of SmartPLS 3.2.7)
Cultural events have a positive effect on the affective image of tourist destinations but do not have a significant effect on the image of tourist destinations. Events have a greater influence on the affective image (Kaplanidou, 2006 in Hernández-Mogollón, 2017) which is likely due to the fact that the visitors of the cultural event are experiencing greater intensity and empathy compared simply to traveling to a place (Bond et al., 2014). In addition, a high affective image can also be caused by the emotional and spiritual impact of the event related to the motivation and cultural background of the visitors (Custódio & Gouveia, 2007; Poria, Butler, & Airey, 2003; Hernández-Mogollón et al., 2017). The high influence of the cultural event on the destination image, whether affective or cognitive, depends on the type of tourists attending it (Richards & Wilson, 2004). In accordance with the results of this study, because cultural events have a positive effect on the image, especially the affective image of a place, hosting cultural events needs to be part of the strategy of tourist destinations to improve their image (Chalip & McGuirty, 2004; Jago et al, 2003; Hernández-Mogollón et al., 2017), in addition to promoting tourist destinations through routine events (Getz & Frisby, 1988 in Hernandez-Mogollon et al., 2017).

In a study conducted by Lin et al (2007) which focused on the influence of theme parks and natural attractions on cognitive and affective images, it was also found that theme park had no significant effect on the cognitive image, but did have a significant effect on the affective image. However, the study of natural attractions showed a significant influence of natural tourism on the cognitive image. Researchers assess the similarity of the nature of the event with a theme park, that is, both are less related to the physical attributes possessed by tourist destinations, but are closely related to the feeling of tourists to tourist destinations; consequently, the effect on affective image is greater. Yet this study has found that event brands do not have a significant effect on the cognitive image, probably because inadequate information channels are used to reach tourists, so as not to produce image events that are different from other events (Boo & Busser, 2005).

Cognitive image and affective image have a positive effect on the overall image of tourist destinations. In accordance with the

### Table 2: Measurement of Outer Loading

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**Sources:** Output of SmartPLS 3.2.7

bi-dimensional model used by Martin (2008), the two dimensions of the image are considered to explain the formation of an overall image. Moreover, based on the path coefficient in this study, the affective image has a greater influence on the formation of the overall image compared to the cognitive image. It is, therefore, important to pay more attention to the things that make up the cognitive image and improve the things that can affect the formation of affective images as they are crucial in bringing tourists to visit again (Bigné et al., 2001).

The overall image of a tourist destination has a positive effect on the intention to revisit and the intention to recommend. The path coefficient of the two behavioural intentions can be considered as almost balanced, i.e., 0.681 for the intention to recommend and 0.563 for the intention to revisit. The results of this study confirm the proposed argument that the image of the tourist destination will directly affect the intention to revisit and the intention to recommend (Alcaniz et al., 2005). For potential tourists, the intention to recommend that is influenced by the image of this tourist destination is very important for decision-making (Bigne et al., 2001). Therefore, it is important to create a positive image so that visitors to the cultural event have the intention to recommend tourist destinations to others (Qu et al., 2011).

Suggestions

Based on the results of the research, there are some factors that must be considered by the organizers of the Dieng Culture Festival, such as the name and good reputation of the Dieng Culture Festival. The organizers of the Dieng Culture Festival need to preserve the good name and reputation of the event so that the visitors’ assessment of the event remains positive. One way to maintain the reputation of the event is by managing events professionally. To be able to organize a cultural event professionally, organizers must ensure responsible development planning, which is achieved by organizing based on local needs which in turn entail guaranteeing benefits for local communities both in the short- and long-term without overriding conservation issues. ("Dampak Event Pariwisata", 2011). The organizers may use professional event organizing services to organize professional events. However, managing the Dieng Culture Festival independently (by local residents), should include confirming the quality of human resources in the management of the event and developing it by conducting training and workshops related to the implementation of the event.

The primary draw of the Dieng Culture Festival is that it provides a unique and authentic experience that cannot be experienced or replicated anywhere else. Its uniqueness resides in the tradition of children with dreadlocks; hence the Ruwatan ceremonial dreadlock cutting should continue to be a part of the Dieng Culture Festival and marketed in an interesting and different manner from year to year based on the debriefings and discussions among event organizers or committees sensitive to the traditions of the ritual.

There are some things that must be considered by the local government, namely Dieng as an attractive/interesting tourist attraction. Formica (2004) in Pallavicini (2017) identifies economic, socio-cultural, natural, and infrastructural conditions as having a major influence on the attractiveness of tourist destinations. Based on this view, it is necessary to maintain and even improve the economic condition, social culture, natural factors and infrastructure in the Dieng area. Examples of improvements to infrastructure that can be done in Dieng, among others, is to construct new roads, provide garbage collection, offer clean water, and employ cleaning personnel in the Dieng tourism area, so as to make it clean and healthy for all.

Some things that must be considered by the local Tourism Department and the Ministry of Tourism are to create precise
and measurable event planning. By being a part of the 100 Wonder Festival of the Ministry of Tourism, it is expected that the Ministry of Tourism can support the Dieng Culture Festival, especially in terms of publication and event marketing to the communities throughout Indonesia. Marketers should use Population Distribution Tables offered by the Province of Origin and Tourism Activities conducted in the National Tourist Data Review (2016). Issued by the Ministry of Tourism, this research can be used to estimate which areas of residents have the greatest potential to attend cultural events. Consequently, by using this information, marketers can provide special treatment for potential areas; for example, by intensifying the promotion of cultural events in particular areas.

Limitations

Granted, there are conspicuous limitations to the study; for example, the age range of respondents lacked variability. In the study, the majority of respondents are between 18 and 27 years. It was difficult for researchers to obtain respondents with an age above 27 years, a result of researchers making contact with prospective respondents through Instagram, specifically contacting those people who posted or commented on photos on the Dieng Festival account, a practice popular and driven by a younger demographic. Therefore, it is expected that further research can capture data from respondents with a varying age range.

In addition to a narrow range of age, another limitation of this study was that the respondents' domicile is less variable. In this research, the majority of respondents are domiciled in Central Java, despite the fact that Indonesia has vast areas, tribes, cultural riches, religions, and ethnic diversity. In the next study, it is expected that researchers can reach respondents from various regions in Indonesia with a balanced composition in order to obtain a clearer picture representing the region's diversity.

A third limitation of this study is that it did not distinguish between first-timers and repeaters in terms of behavioural intention. Comparisons between people who first came to the Dieng Culture Festival with people who have repeatedly come to the Dieng Culture Festival in order to determine the overall image felt by them or its effect on the behavioural dimensions of intention can prove interesting for further research. In subsequent research, researchers might also examine which behavioural intention dimensions are more dominant in each group (first-timer and repeater). The Dieng Culture Festival is a cultural event held in a location rich in historical heritage where the inhabitants still uphold the culture and still practice the rituals of ancestral generations. Subsequent research can be conducted about cultural events held in places that lack the wealth of historical and cultural heritage.

References


