






Seaweed Tourism Destination Potential: The Importance of Subjective Knowledge, Destination Image, and Self-Congruity in Attracting Younger Generation Tourists

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Abstract. The purpose of this study was to examine how subjective knowledge, destination image, and self-congruity affect the intention of the younger generation on seaweed educational tourism in Nusa Penida Subdistrict, how subjective knowledge and self-congruity affect the destination image of the younger generation on seaweed educational tourism, how the role of destination image in mediating subjective knowledge on the intention to visit of the younger generation on seaweed educational tourism, and how the role of destination image in mediating self-congruity on the intention to visit of the younger generation on seaweed educational tourism in Nusa Penida District. The results of this study indicate that subjective knowledge, destination image, and self-congruity have a significant positive effect on the intention to visit, subjective knowledge and self-congruity have a considerable positive impact on destination image, destination image acts as a complementary mediation of the relationship between subjective knowledge and intention to visit, and destination image acts as a complementary mediation of the relationship between self-congruity and intention to visit. This research strengthens the theory of planned behavior in solving the challenges of young generation tourists' interest in visiting seaweed tourism destinations. This study provides theoretical benefits by developing an in-depth understanding of the theory of planned behavior and the factors that influence young generation tourists' interest in visiting seaweed tourism destinations, including subjective knowledge, destination image, and self-congruity. Practically, this research benefits tourism practitioners and local governments in designing more effective marketing and destination development strategies to attract the younger generation.

Keywords: Destination Image, Intention to Visit, Seaweed, Subjective Knowledge, Self-Congruity

1 Introduction

Indonesia is one of the world's second-largest wet seaweed producers after China, with an export volume of 195,574 tons in 2020, equivalent to US\$279.58 million (Kementerian Kelautan dan Perikanan, 2021). Indonesian seaweed is famous for its high quality, making its industry demand relatively high (Direktorat Usaha dan Investasi, 2019). Based on data from the Statistics of Bali Province in 2023 (BPS Provinsi Bali, 2023), there are three seaweed-producing areas in Bali: Klungkung Regency, Denpasar City, and Buleleng Regency. Klungkung Regency has the highest seaweed production in Bali. Seaweed cultivation in Klungkung Regency is practiced in Nusa Penida District. Tourism development in Nusa Lembongan Village, Nusa Penida District, has experienced significant progress, but this is different from the development of the seaweed sector in the region (Arthana et al., 2016).

Based on interviews with several seaweed farmers in the Nusa Penida sub-district, most farmers currently need more ability to sell dried seaweed. However, they need to look at potential seaweed tourism destinations. Even if a change were to be made to introduce the seaweed ecosystem to the younger generation, the need for more information about the potential of seaweed educational tourism would be seen as one of the barriers. If processed and managed optimally, seaweed cultivation products have the potential to be sold as part of tourism activities (Pradnyana & Nugroho, 2019). This includes the seaweed educational tour package, information on various preparations from seaweed, and unique souvenirs that could be area branding to attract tourists. In addition, previous results of interviews conducted with ten youngsters, generations Y and Z, revealed that their limited knowledge of the beauty and ecological benefits of seaweed was due to a lack of available information or educational campaigns. In addition, the destination image of this tour is considered less as it is seen as a not trendy or non-instagrammable destination. Based on this, self-congruity might also be a concern, as some younger generations may feel disconnected from the environmental or educational values associated with seaweed tourism.

Subjective knowledge, destination image, and self-congruity have been far a concern in attracting travelers to tourist destinations. How tourist perceptions influence travel intentions, finding that knowledge, risk perception, and tourism self-identity increased travel interest (Jiang et al., 2022). Furthermore, knowledge of risk increases tourists' interest in traveling through their understanding and attitude toward risk, especially in dealing with public health emergencies (Zhu & Deng, 2020). That subjective knowledge significantly impacts a person's cognitive and emotional assessment of a destination image (Perpiña et al., 2021). However, in contrast with (Tassiello & Tillotson, 2020), whose research analyzed tourist intentions in the early phases of the tourist decision-making process, the results showed that tourists' subjective knowledge has a negative relationship with a destination and their intention to travel.

Research by Thaothampitak & Wongsuwatt (2022) also implies that the perception of the destination image is a crucial element that influences international students' travel desire to explore destinations along the Andaman Coast in Thailand. Nevertheless, individual self-congruity can improve destination image (Natasia & Tunjungsari, 2021). In addition, the self-congruity between the personality of the place

and the self-concept of tourists has a significant effect on tourists' positive attitude towards the destination image, and this shows that self-congruity has a considerable impact on tourist destination interactions (Kumar, 2016). This is related to the theory of planned behavior, which can be a relevant foundation for this study. The theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) states that the intention to perform a behavior is influenced by three main factors: attitude toward behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 2020). However, the research results presented by (Libre et al., 2022) and (Wantara & Irawati, 2021) showed different results, stating that the destination image variable does not influence return visit intentions.

Based on information on the phenomenon gap obtained through interviews and reinforced by gaps from several previous studies, this study focuses on the importance of subjective knowledge, destination image, and self-congruity in influencing the interest of young generation tourists to visit seaweed tourism destinations. In addition, due to the findings from previous research that subjective knowledge and self-congruity affect destination image, this study focused on testing the destination image variable as a mediating variable between knowledge and self-congruity on intention to visit.

This research makes a theoretical contribution by developing a deeper understanding of the Theory of Planned Behavior and the factors influencing the young generation tourists' interest in visiting seaweed tourism destinations, including subjective knowledge, destination image, and self-congruity. By understanding these gaps in knowledge and perceptions, this research will pave the way for developing consumer behavior theory in the tourism industry, particularly in the context of the younger generation target market. Practically, this research guides tourism practitioners, local governments, and other stakeholders in designing more effective destination marketing and development strategies to attract the younger generation. By emphasizing the importance of filling the gaps in subjective knowledge, destination image, and self-congruity, this research also provides a solid basis to explain their relevance in enhancing local economic contribution and environmental preservation in seaweed tourism destinations.

2 Methodology

The research was conducted in the Nusa Penida District. The population used in this study was Generation Y and Z in Bali. To determine the minimum sample size from an unknown population (Sugiyono, 2021), the calculation used is as follows.

$$n = \frac{z^2 pq}{e^2} = \frac{(1.96)^2 (0.5)(0.5)}{(0.05)^2} = 384.16 \approx 385 \quad (1)$$

The value of 385 is the minimum number of samples to be used. After the data was collected, the researcher conducted the validity and reliability of the questionnaire using the SPSS tool. First, this study used Order Path Analysis with Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) and SmartPLS software as data analysis techniques. Next, outer model testing and inner model testing were carried out (Hair et al., 2019). Three conditions tested on the outer model consisted of convergent validity, discriminant

validity, and composite reliability (Hair et al., 2019). The inner model was tested using the path analysis test and the goodness of fit test with the adjusted R-square determinant to assess the hypothesis. Two categories of non-mediation and three categories of mediation are as follows (Sarstedt et al., 2021): Direct-only non-mediation, No-effect non-mediation, Complementary mediation, Competitive mediation, and Indirect-only mediation.

Research Hypotheses

H₁: Subjective knowledge has a significant positive effect on the intention to visit.

H₂: Destination image has a significant positive effect on the intention to visit.

H₃: Self-congruity has a significant positive effect on the intention to visit.

H₄: Subjective knowledge has a significant positive effect on destination image.

H₅: Self-congruity has a significant positive effect on destination image.

H₆: Destination image mediates subjective knowledge on intention to visit.

H₇: Destination image mediates self-congruity on visit intention.

3 Result and Discussion

3.1 Result

There were 397 collected responses from the distributed questionnaires directly and digitally. Based on the instrument's validity test, the results show that each item on the indicator used has a correlation coefficient value greater than 0.098 for df 395 or $r > 0.098$ and $\text{sig} > 0.05$; it also has a Cronbach Alpha value > 0.60 . Therefore, it can be concluded that each questionnaire item in this study is valid and reliable.

The measurement model evaluation (outer model) was carried out. Two instrument items tested for the outer model, namely X11 and Y32, did not meet the outer loading assumptions in SEM-PLS and were removed from the model. The results of the convergent validity assessment of subjective knowledge, self-congruity, destination image, and intention to visit show that all indicators have a loading factor value of more than 0.70 and a p-value smaller than Alpha ($\alpha = 0.05$). Thus, all indicators have met convergent validity. Furthermore, discriminant validity testing was considered valid if the cross-loading value of each indicator on the variable under study was more significant than the cross-loading of other latent variables. Based on the data processing results, the cross-loading obtained by each latent variable was higher than that of other latent variables. This means that the latent variable meets the discriminant validity requirements.

To measure discriminant validity, an Average Variance Extracted (AVE) must be valued greater than 0.50 to indicate the degree of fit between the tested construct and the indicator. Following Table 1 below, the AVE column shows that all variables have an AVE value above 0.50, meaning the data has good discriminant validity. Furthermore, the measurement quality of a model is considered good if both values of Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha at least reach 0.70. Following Table 1 below, both required values exceeded 0.70; thus, each construct in the research model has an adequate level of reliability.

Table 1. Average variance extracted & composite reliability

| No. | Variable | Average variance extracted (AVE) | Composite reliability | | |
|-----|--------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|-------------|
| | | | Composite reliability | Cronbach's Alpha | Description |
| 1 | Destination image (M) | 0.624 | 0.937 | 0.924 | Reliable |
| 2 | Intention to visit (Y) | 0.721 | 0.959 | 0.951 | Reliable |
| 3 | Self-congruity (Z) | 0.722 | 0.973 | 0.970 | Reliable |
| 4 | Subjective knowledge (X) | 0.625 | 0.930 | 0.914 | Reliable |

Testing uses the inner or structural model to determine the relationship between the research model's structure, the significance level, and the R-square.

Table 2. Adjusted R-square

| Construct | Adjusted R-square |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| Destination image | 0.761 |
| Intention to visit | 0.813 |

In Table 2, it is presented that the Adjusted R-square value for the intention to visit variable is 0.813. This indicates that the subjective knowledge, self-congruity, and destination image variables can explain 81.3% of the variability of the intention to visit construct. Meanwhile, 18.7% of the variability comes from other factors outside the model. Similar findings are also seen in the destination image variable, where the subjective knowledge and self-congruity variables contribute 76.1% to the variability of the destination image. On the other hand, 23.9% of the variability comes from other factors outside the model. Therefore, hypothesis testing was carried out.

Table 3. Path coefficients

| Construct | Original sample (O) | P-values | Description |
|---|---------------------|----------|-------------|
| Destination image (M) → Intention to visit (Y) | 0.222 | 0.000 | Accepted |
| Self-congruity (Z) → Destination image (M) | 0.556 | 0.000 | Accepted |
| Self-congruity (Z) → Intention to visit (Y) | 0.650 | 0.000 | Accepted |
| Subjective knowledge (X) → Destination image (M) | 0.407 | 0.000 | Accepted |
| Subjective knowledge (X) → Intention to visit (Y) | 0.087 | 0.014 | Accepted |

Based on the Path Coefficients table, it can be seen that H₂, H₅, H₃, H₄, and H₁ are accepted because all relationships have a p-value smaller than 0.05 with a coefficient value above 0 which indicates a positive direction.

Based on the test results presented in Table 4, all tests of direct and indirect effects are accepted that they point in a positive direction. Based on the mediation criteria

described by Sarstedt et al., (2021), in this study, the mediating role of the destination image in the relationship between subjective knowledge and intention to visit can be categorized as Complementary Mediation. This is because both direct and indirect effects have the same significance and direction, which is a positive effect. In addition, based on Table 4, it can be concluded that the mediating role of destination image in the relationship between self-congruity and intention to visit in this study is categorized as Complementary Mediation.

Table 4. Direct effect and indirect effect for subjective knowledge, destination image, self-congruity, and intention to visit variables

| Variable | Coefficient | P-value | Description |
|---|-------------|---------|-------------|
| Direct effect | | | |
| Destination image (M) → Intention to visit (Y) | 0.222 | 0.000 | Accepted |
| Subjective knowledge (X) → Destination image (M) | 0.407 | 0.000 | Accepted |
| Subjective knowledge (X) → Intention to visit (Y) | 0.087 | 0.014 | Accepted |
| Self-congruity (Z) → Destination image (M) | 0.556 | 0.000 | Accepted |
| Self-congruity (Z) → Intention to visit (Y) | 0.650 | 0.000 | Accepted |
| Indirect effect | | | |
| Subjective knowledge (X) → Destination image (M) → Intention to visit (Y) | 0.090 | 0.000 | Accepted |
| Self-congruity (Z) → Destination image (M) → Intention to visit (Y) | 0.123 | 0.000 | Accepted |

3.2 Discussion

The results of this study indicate that subjective knowledge has a positive effect on the intention to visit. The higher the subjective knowledge of the younger generation, especially Generation Y and Z, the more their intention to visit seaweed educational tourist destinations increases. This relationship means the younger generation is more likely to visit tourist destinations when they feel more knowledgeable about the issue. Generation Y and Z are more likely to feel that a tourist attraction suits their needs and interests when they have more excellent subjective knowledge about the tourist attraction. A thorough awareness of the offerings, facilities, and activities at the tourist destination can increase their confidence to travel to this seaweed educational tourist destination. This relationship is supported by research conducted by Perpiña et al., (2021), Xin & Seo (2020), Shen et al., (2022). These results support the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), which explains that an individual's intention to perform a behavior is influenced by three main factors: attitude toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control (Liat et al., 2019). Thus, better subjective knowledge about seaweed educational tourism destinations can significantly increase the intention to visit, especially among Generation Y and Z.

The findings in this study also indicate the existence of better subjective knowledge about seaweed educational tourism destinations. They show a significant favorable influence between Generation Y and Z's intention to visit and the image of seaweed

educational tourism destinations. Data analysis confirmed that tourists' decision to visit a place is strongly influenced by their perception of the quality of the destination. Generation Y and Z are interested in visiting destinations with a positive reputation, such as charming and safe places with fascinating cultural wealth. Conversely, negative perceptions can reduce tourists' interest in visiting. The findings of this study are corroborated by the research of *Thaothampitak & Wongsuwatt (2022)* and *Haryono & Albetris (2023)*.

Further, the analysis shows that the intention of individuals to visit seaweed tourist destinations increases in line with their level of self-congruity with these destinations. This is due to the tendency of Generation Y and Z to choose tourist sites that are in line with their values, desires, and personalities. Seaweed educational tourism destinations that can create compatibility with Generation Y and Z would provide experiences that exceed their expectations. If it matched with the identity of Generation Y and Z, it would increase their self-confidence and provide a comfortable and enjoyable experience. Therefore, the higher the intention to visit the destination by Generation Y and Z, the stronger the level of self-congruity. The results of this study are also in line with *Biswas & Shabbirhusain (2019)* and *Ajanovic & Cizel (2016)* research.

Subjective knowledge also significantly influences the destination image of seaweed educational tourism in the Nusa Penida sub-district. This indicates that an increase in Generation Y and Z's subjective understanding of seaweed educational tourism can also impact how they perceive a destination (destination image). Generation Y and Z tend to have a better view of a destination when they have more in-depth knowledge about the destination they want to go to. More excellent subjective knowledge can be obtained from various sources, including first-hand experience, information from friends and family, and Internet learning resources. The more information they receive on seaweed educational tourism's distinctiveness, attractiveness, and advantages, the better their perception of the destination. Therefore, increasing subjective knowledge is essential in improving Generation Y and Z's perceptions of seaweed educational tourism destinations. The results of this study are supported by research conducted by *Perpiña et al., (2021)* and *Serrano-Arcos et al., (2021)*.

In addition, self-congruity also significantly increases perceptions of the destination image. This suggests that the more aligned generations Y and Z's identities, values, and interests in the seaweed educational tourism destination in the Nusa Penida sub-district, the stronger the destination image develops. In other words, perceptions of the seaweed educational tourism destination image tend to be more positive among generations Y and Z because they believe the destination is in line with their beliefs and identity. This can include their opinions on distinctiveness, attractiveness, and principles. The results of this study are also in line with research conducted by *Natasia & Tunjungsari (2021)* and *Kumar (2016)*.

Furthermore, the mediating role of destination image on subjective knowledge on intention to visit can be concluded that the destination image variable functions as a link between subjective knowledge and intention to visit. According to the mediation criteria given by *Hair et al., (2019)* the mediating role of destination image in the relationship between subjective knowledge and travel intention is classified as complementary mediation. This is because both the direct effect and the indirect effect

are statistically significant and have the same direction, which is positive. In this context, complementary mediation indicates that destination image mediates the relationship between subjective knowledge and travel intention and contributes to travel intention. In other words, subjective knowledge about seaweed educational tourism destinations can enhance destination image, strengthening the intention to visit the destination. This mediation function shows how destination image supports the relationship between Generation Y and Z's intention to travel and their subjective knowledge of the destination. A positive intention to visit is directly influenced by the Y and Z generations' subjective knowledge of the seaweed educational tourism location (Perpiña et al., 2021; Xin & Seo, 2020).

Finally, the mediating role of destination image on self-congruity to visit shows a positive influence, both directly and indirectly. Based on the mediation criteria outlined by Hair et al., (2019), the mediating role of destination image in the relationship between self-congruity and intention to visit can be classified as complementary mediation because the direct and indirect effects of self-congruity and intention to visit are both significant and have the same direction, namely a positive impact. This shows that the intention to visit a destination is significantly influenced by destination image and mediates the relationship between self-congruity and intention to visit. Thus, the relationship between TPB and the mediating role of destination image on Gen Y and Z generations' self-conformity to visit seaweed educational tourism sites can be interpreted as TPB affects the attitudes and impressions of generations Y and Z towards tourist destinations, which in turn form their mental images of these destinations. A positive image will increase their desire to visit a seaweed educational tourist destination, mainly if the destination follows their identity and beliefs.

4 Conclusion

Based on the analysis and discussion that has been stated, as a conclusion and research result, the results show that subjective knowledge has a significant positive effect on the intention to visit. Destination Image has a significant positive effect on the intention to visit. Self-congruity has a significant positive effect on the intention to visit. Subjective knowledge has a significant positive effect on destination image. Self-congruity has a significant positive effect on destination image. Destination image is a complementary mediation of the relationship between subjective knowledge and intention to visit. Finally, the destination image is a complementary mediation of the relationship between self-congruity and intention to visit.

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