Borobudur Tourists' Electronic Word of Mouth: The Impact of Memorable Tourism Experiences

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Abstract. Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) activities play a crucial role in sharing information online, including the sustainability of a tourist destination, which is influenced by the ripple effect of tourists sharing their experiences on social media. This study aims to examine the influence of memorable tourism experiences, which include factors like hedonism, refreshment, novelty, culture, knowledge, meaningfulness, and involvement, on tourists' e-WOM at Borobudur. Data was collected through questionnaires from Borobudur visitors, and multiple linear regression analysis was employed. Our findings indicate that knowledge, involvement, and novelty have positive impact on e-WOM, while hedonism has negative impact. Consequently, comprehensive and diverse management of tourism experiences is key to influencing tourists' intentions to contribute to e-WOM.

1 Introduction

The tourism industry currently plays a significant role in driving global economic growth, which is generated by the movement of tourists. World Tourism Organization (WTO) illustrates that in 2020, an estimated movement of 1.6 billion tourists is expected, with a total expenditure of USD 2000 billion or an estimated average expenditure of more than USD 5 billion per day. In Indonesia, tourism is considered one of the main sectors driving the national economy. Efforts toward this end are reflected in the establishment of 10 priority tourist destinations, five of which have been designated as super-priority destinations instructed by President Joko Widodo through Presidential Regulation Number 3/2016. These programs include Lake Toba, Borobudur, Labuan Bajo, Mandalika, and Likupang [1].

The Magelang Regency remains a primary destination for foreign tourists, with Borobudur Temple being one of the super-priority tourist destinations in Indonesia. Of the 578,000 foreign tourists who visited Central Java in 2016, the largest contribution came from the Magelang Regency, totaling 300,000, while the rest visited Solo, Semarang, and other areas [2]. Despite its high potential and performance analysis, the existing issue lies in the short duration of tourist visits to the Magelang Regency. Iwan Sutiarso, the Head of the Magelang Regency's Department of Tourism and Culture, mentioned that tourists typically spend only between 2 to 3 hours in the Magelang Regency, or less than half a day, mainly

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visiting Borobudur Temple [3]. This situation leads to suboptimal performance in the tourism sector of the Magelang Regency, consequently resulting in reduced regional revenue.

In order to increase the number of visitors, encourage tourist revisits, and improve tourist stay duration, there are aspects that support the presence of tourists, including information and satisfaction from tourists who have previously visited tourist destinations. Chandralal & Valenzuela [4] emphasize that visitors' perceptions or experiences provide valuable and credible information, as well as determine visitors' behavior in the future. Tourist experience during travel is crucial. This underlies the concept embraced by Wanurejo Tourism Village, which focuses on educational and cultural tourism. Nowadays, many customers not only demand high-quality services or products but also positive experiences that are emotionally touching and memorable.

Tourism experiences must possess seven elements to become memorable tourism experiences [5]. The seven elements of memorable tourism experience include: 1) hedonism, which relates to the personal satisfaction of tourists; 2) refreshment, an experience element that addresses tourists' need to alleviate boredom; 3) novelty, an element of experience that involves the novelty experienced by tourists at the destination; 4) culture and social interaction, related to tourists' experiences interacting with local communities and culture around the tourist destination; 5) knowledge, tourists' experience of gaining knowledge and insights during travel; 6) meaningfulness, tourists' experience of personal growth and development during tourism activities; 7) involvement, related to tourists' engagement in creating experiences during travel.

Experiences provide unique memories to consumers; if consumers have positive memories, they will feel satisfied and will share their experiences with others. A crucial marketing component in the form of testimonials, recommendations, reviews, or opinions online in this digital era is Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM). E-WOM communication refers to positive, neutral, or negative opinions expressed by individuals who potentially consume, are currently consuming, or have consumed products, services, brands, or companies. These opinions spread through the internet (social media or other sharing platforms) and can be accessed by many individuals and organizations [6]. Prayoga & Pohan [7] findings illustrate that customers communicate their destination experiences to others, either to avoid or to seek out products or services, through e-WOM. On the other hand, Moliner-Tena et al. [8] state that e-WOM is significantly influenced by memorable customer experiences.

Research on customer experience has drawn attention from various disciplines. Based on previous studies, customer experience has been the subject of study in various disciplines, such as tourism [9] and management science [10]. Several studies show that e-WOM and how to communicate customer experiences are considered important sources of information in the business market. Therefore, the concept of customer experience and e-WOM as a way to communicate consumer experiences is interesting to study from the perspective of communication science. Thus, this phenomenon becomes a new area for in-depth research from the perspective of tourism communication. Based on the background, this research aims to analyze the influence of memorable tourism experiences indicators on electronic Word of Mouth.

2 Method

This study utilizes an explanatory research method aimed at testing hypotheses regarding cause-and-effect relationships. In its implementation, causal research is generally conducted through experiments or ex post facto [11]. The authors sampled 60 visitors of Borobudur Temple using purposive sampling method. Data were collected using a questionnaire through Google Forms by observing 7 independent variables (hedonism \(X_1\), refreshment \(X_2\),
culture and social interaction (X₃), meaningfulness (X₄), knowledge (X₅), involvement (X₆), novelty (X₇)) and electronic word of mouth as dependent variable.

Validity testing was conducted by calculating the Product Moment correlation (r) of each item with its total value. The criterion is if the probability (p) of r calculation ≥ r table, it is concluded that the item is valid. All items have an r-value greater than the r-table (0.2144), indicating that all questionnaire items are valid. Next, reliability testing was conducted using Cronbach's Alpha while coefficient result > the significance level of 60% or 0.6, then the questionnaire is considered reliable, and vice versa. Research is deemed reliable when respondents' answers to statements are consistent or stable over time.

This research employs descriptive statistical analysis and regression analysis to test hypotheses. Descriptive analysis techniques provide a descriptive overview of respondents' answers to questions posed in the questionnaire, related to the variables under investigation. Descriptive analysis is used to address the research problem regarding the influence of memorable tourism experience on electronic word of mouth at Borobudur. The analysis technique involves multiple linear regression analysis, aimed at determining whether there is a partial and simultaneous influence of memorable tourism experience on electronic word of mouth at Borobudur.

### 3 Results and Discussion

#### 3.1 Results

In this research, the researcher has investigated the respondents' responses regarding the Memorable Tourism Experience variable at the Borobudur tourist destination. Memorable Tourism Experience refers to experiences and impressions that are considered significant by tourists, which subjectively and emotionally create unforgettable experiences during their visits, divided into variables presented in Table 1. Based on results, the variable with the highest average is the "culture and social interaction " variable. This is because the interaction of tourists with residents and the local culture can provide a much more authentic experience than just visiting the main tourist attractions. Tourists can experience a deeper aspect of daily life in the destination. Through social and cultural interactions, tourists can discover the uniqueness and characteristics of the Borobudur destination that may not be apparent on the surface. This allows them to gain a deeper insight into the place they are visiting.

### Table 1. Average respondent responses to the variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hedonism (X₁)</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refreshment (X₂)</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture and social interaction (X₃)</td>
<td>4.03</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meaningfulness (X₄)</td>
<td>3.82</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge (X₅)</td>
<td>3.99</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involvement (X₆)</td>
<td>3.38</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Novelty (X₇)</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e-WOM (Y)</td>
<td>3.36</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on Table 2, the results of the multiple linear regression coefficients, as presented, were then tested through partial and simultaneous hypothesis testing. A t-test was used to determine the partial influence of each independent variable on the dependent variable. The regression equation can be explained as follows.

a. the constant has a value of 0.908, which means that if the variables hedonism (X₁), refreshment (X₂), culture and social interaction (X₃), meaningfulness (X₄), knowledge
(X5), involvement (X6), novelty (X7) are all set to 0, the variable electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) has a value of 0.908.

b. The regression of the hedonism (X1) has a negative direction in its influence on e-WOM. This means that when the value of hedonism increases, the value of e-WOM decreases.

c. The regression of the knowledge (X5), involvement (X6), and novelty (X7) have a positive direction in its influence on e-WOM. This means that when the value of knowledge, involvement, and novelty increases, the value of e-WOM increases.

d. The regression of the refreshment (X2), culture and social interaction (X3), and meaningfulness (X4), have no impact on e-WOM.

As seen in Table 2, the adjusted R-squared value is 0.604 or 60.4%. This indicates that the e-WOM variable can be explained by the variables by 60.4%, while the remaining 39.6% is explained by other variables outside the model. After conducting the test using the simultaneous significance test (F test), which yielded a value of 0.000, this significance level is less than α = 0.05. Therefore, it can be concluded that the independent variables collectively have a simultaneous influence on the e-WOM variable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent (Y)</th>
<th>Independent (X)</th>
<th>Coefficient</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E-Word of Mouth</td>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>0.908</td>
<td>2.411</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X1</td>
<td>-0.226**</td>
<td>-2.121</td>
<td>Negative impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X2</td>
<td>0.033</td>
<td>0.271</td>
<td>No impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X3</td>
<td>-0.112</td>
<td>-0.798</td>
<td>No impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X4</td>
<td>0.163</td>
<td>1.111</td>
<td>No impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X5</td>
<td>0.290**</td>
<td>1.895</td>
<td>Positive impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X6</td>
<td>0.307***</td>
<td>2.778</td>
<td>Positive impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X7</td>
<td>0.234**</td>
<td>2.185</td>
<td>Positive impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>11.339</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig F</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>0.604</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: *α= 10% **α=5% ***α=1%

3.2 Discussion

The first t-test result concerns the variable "hedonism." A person may be inspired to engage in an activity to seek pleasure during leisure time and recreation, or the activity may serve an emotional function for their satisfaction. Hedonism is a lifestyle pattern where activities tend to seek life's pleasures. Kim et al. [12] explain that hedonism in the travel experience is a pleasant feeling that exhilarates oneself. Hedonism is also an aspect of the consumption experience related to multisensory, imaginative, and emotive elements perceived by consumers. Hedonism towards e-WOM has a significance level of (0.039) < 0.05. The result indicates that hedonism has a significant negative effect on e-WOM. The higher the level of pleasure or enjoyment (hedonism value) offered by a place, the weaker the influence on a tourist to engage in e-WOM regarding that place. In the context of this study, tourists who focus more on personal satisfaction and pleasure in their travel experience tend to be less motivated to share their experiences online. Although hedonism plays a role in the travel experience, there are other factors that also affect tourists' decisions to contribute to e-WOM related to the Borobudur destination. Moreover, refreshment has a positive and statistically insignificant effect on e-WOM (0.788 < 0.05). Culture and social interaction have a negative and statistically insignificant effect on e-WOM (0.429 < 0.05). Meaningfulness also has a positive and statistically insignificant effect on e-WOM (0.272 < 0.05).
On the other hand, knowledge has a positive and significant influence on e-WOM with a significance level of (0.064) < 0.05. The higher the insights and knowledge provided by a tourist destination, the stronger the influence on a customer to engage in e-WOM about that place. Traveling with the aim of gaining knowledge, known as "cultural tourism" and "educational tourism," is a form of travel that focuses on learning, exploration, and understanding various aspects of culture, history, nature, science, art, and more. This purpose reflects an interest and motivation to acquire new insights, expand knowledge, and experience different things. Similarly, tourists visiting Borobudur as a cultural and educational destination. In line with the findings of Paisri et al. [13], the educational experience at the Talad Tongchom tourist destination is positively related to e-WOM. Tourists who feel they have extensive knowledge about a destination or a travel experience will be encouraged to share that information with others. They can provide more detailed reviews, tips and tricks, and other practical information that is useful to other travelers. Furthermore, they can offer deeper, more informative, and relevant reviews and recommendations. This can enhance the quality of the e-WOM content they provide to others.

Furthermore, Involvement has a positive and significant partial influence on e-WOM with a significance level of (0.008) < 0.05, meaning that the higher a tourist's involvement in creating experiences during their travels, the stronger their motivation to engage in e-WOM. A tourist's assessment of the personal significance or relevance of a particular object, event, or action is referred to as involvement. Tourists are said to be associated and have a relationship with a product if they see that the product has personal implications [14]. In line with Dholakia's view when involvement is high, tourists are more likely to invest more time and effort in spreading product information to others [15]. This has a strong influence on a tourist's willingness to engage in e-WOM about the tourist destination. On the other hand, involvement in creating a tourism experience can have a strong personal impact, leading to satisfaction with the journey, a sense of pride, and the achievement of personal goals, thereby strengthening motivation to share experiences and inspire others. Tourists actively participate in providing cultural knowledge about the Borobudur destination and have an influence on revisiting.

In the competitive world of tourism, tourist destinations that can offer novelty often have greater appeal in terms of e-WOM. Partially, novelty has a positive and significant influence on e-WOM with a significance level of (0.033) < 0.05. In line with Sukaris et al. [16], the novelty of a product and its ability to attract interest, offer originality and innovation, will satisfy the information needs of tourists. As a result, the experiences gained from engaging in tourism activities may have epistemic and emotional value. The higher the novelty and innovation offered by the Borobudur tourist destination, the stronger the influence on tourists to engage in e-WOM about Borobudur. Recommendations about tourist destinations that offer something new tend to have the potential to become more viral content on social media or other sharing platforms. People are inclined to share interesting discoveries on their social media.

4 Conclusion

Memorable tourism experience becomes a significant and subjective impression for people or tourists. When visiting a tourist destination, someone can be considered to have a memorable tourism experience if that experience stays in their memory for a sufficiently long time and is not easily forgotten. After having a memorable travel experience, tourists tend to want to share their travel experiences. This study aims to analyze the influence of memorable tourism experience on e-WOM. In this research, the results indicate that the variables of knowledge, involvement, and novelty have significant positive influence on e-WOM, while hedonism has negative significant impact. Therefore, comprehensive and diverse
management of tourism experiences is key to influencing tourists' intentions to contribute to e-WOM.

References

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