

CREATING EDUCATIONAL THEME PARK VISITOR LOYALTY: THE ROLE OF EXPERIENCE-BASED SATISFACTION, IMAGE AND VALUE

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Review

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Abstract

Purpose – The aim of this study is to test the inter-relationships between the educational theme park image, perceived educational value, educational experience satisfaction and visitor loyalty in educational theme parks.

Methodology – 150 respondents participated in this study. Data was collected through self-administered questionnaire at two educational theme parks in Batu and Malang, East Java Province Indonesia. The Partial Least Squares with inner and outer model evaluation was employed and it indicated that the model built was robust.

Findings – The results show that the educational image, educational experience satisfaction and perceived educational value play important roles in affecting visitor loyalty. In addition, this study found that image and value are the predictors of satisfaction. The mediating test explains that apart from having a direct effect on loyalty, both image and perceived value have an indirect effect on loyalty through satisfaction.

Originality – This study provides new insights about how educational theme park visitors build their loyalty. Furthermore, the conceptual model presented in this study not only captures the direct relationships among educational image, perceived educational value, educational experience satisfaction and visitor loyalty, but also explains the indirect relationships. In addition, the setting of this study is the educational theme park industry which is believed to have special characteristics when it is compared to other industries.

Keywords educational theme park, educational image, visitor loyalty, educational experience satisfaction, perceived educational value

INTRODUCTION

Tourism sector plays an important role in the development of economic in a country by providing significant contributions to the regional income. Amusement or theme park is an important element for tourism sector. To maintain its sustainability, alike other industry, amusement parks need to maintain their loyal visitors. In the marketing literature, customer loyalty is recognized as an important concept (Oliver, 1999) since by having loyal customers, a business organization would have many benefits.

As a part of amusement park, educational theme park also needs to create customer loyalty. In the perspective of marketing study, brand image has been acknowledged to have a positive effect in creating loyalty. Specifically in the area of tourism study,

destination image also plays an important role in increasing visitor's revisit intention (Hussein & Hapsari, 2015). While some studies have shown the significant role of image as the predictor of customer loyalty, there is no current study examining the antecedents of educational theme park visitor loyalty. Thus, there is a need to further investigate the important role of educational theme park image in affecting visitor loyalty based on visitor experience in the context of educational theme park.

Perceived value is another component that have been recognized to have a significant effect on loyalty (Lai, Griffin, & Babin, 2009; Yang & Peterson, 2004). Studies indicate that consumers prefer to repurchase a product that has high value than product that has lower value (Clemes, Shu, & Gan, 2014; Patterson & Spreng, 1997; Suhartanto, 2011). Kotler and Keller (2012) explain that value is about the gap between what the customers get and what they have sacrificed. While the notion about perceived value has been widely investigated in the area of marketing studies, lack of studies have been done that have investigated this notion in the context of educational theme park. For that reason, there is a need to determine the effect of educational perceived value on the educational theme park visitor loyalty.

The notion of brand image has been recognized widely and its effect on customer loyalty has been tested in various industry. However, in order to get a specific definition, some academicians conceptualized destination image as a different notion apart of brand image. Destination image as an emerging notion in marketing has also been explored and its effect toward customer loyalty is regarded inconsistent. For example, Ramseook-Munhurrin et al. (2015) found that destination image has no significant effect on tourist loyalty in Mauritius. Furthermore, brand image, can be considered as an industrial-based construct, which the effect towards other marketing variables can be different across industries. It means that an industry might have different characteristics from other industries (Jin et al. 2015). Thus, there is a need to build a specific construct especially in educational theme park image in order to get a better understanding about educational theme park image and its relationship with other marketing constructs.

Furthermore, following Jin et al. (2015)'s statement that some marketing constructs can be regarded as industrial based-construct, some study found that the interrelationship among the investigated marketing constructs (e.g. satisfaction, image, perceived value and loyalty) are still equivocal. For example, Eid (2015) found that perceived value does not have a significant effect on Muslim customer satisfaction. Thus, exploring the constructs from other industries point of view (e.g. educational theme park industry) is needed.

Although many studies have been conducted in determining the effect of image and value on loyalty (Clemes et al., 2014; Kandampully & Suhartanto, 2000), these studies mainly concern on the direct effect. Theoretically, a variable might have direct and indirect effect towards other constructs (Baron & Kenny, 1986). For that reason, there is a need to investigate not only the direct effect of the marketing constructs, but also its indirect effects in order to get a comprehensive understanding about the interrelationship among the investigated constructs.

Customer educational experience satisfaction potentially mediates the effect of both educational theme park image and educational theme park perceived value on visitor loyalty. Some studies (Clemes et al., 2014; Hapsari, Clemes, & Dean, 2016; Yulianti & Tung, 2013) showed that brand image and perceived value have a significant effect on customer satisfaction. Moreover scholars found that satisfaction significantly affects loyalty (Ibrahim, 2013; Lai et al., 2009; Yang & Peterson, 2004). Bringing this notion to the context of educational theme park loyalty, there is a need to determine the indirect effect of both image and perceived value on loyalty through visitor satisfaction.

Based on the background of the study, this research aims to determine the effect of educational theme park image and perceived educational value on educational theme park visitor loyalty; to investigate the effect of educational theme park image and educational perceived value on visitor educational experience satisfaction, and to explore the indirect effect of educational theme park image and educational perceived value on visitor loyalty through educational experience satisfaction.

Upon the completion of these three research objectives, this study contributes to both theoretical and practical perspectives. For theoretical contribution, this study provides a comprehensive model to explain the relationship between educational theme park image, educational perceived value, educational experience satisfaction and visitor loyalty. For practical contribution, this study provides guidelines to theme park manager to make a strategy in enhancing visitor loyalty and educational experience satisfaction based on theme park educational image and educational perceived value.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1. Educational Theme Park Image

The notion of educational theme park image is derived from the idea of brand image. Brand image is about the perceptions and views held by consumers, as reflected in the associations held in consumers' memory (Kotler & Keller, 2012). Ogba and Tan (2009) contend that brand image is individual's perception or mental picture about a brand or branded product or service. Moreover, it includes the symbolic definitions consumers associating with the specific product, service or attributes.

Brand image is considered as an important aspect in the area of marketing studies. The concept of theme park image is derived from the concept of brand image. Following the brand image concept, theme park image can be conceptualized in three stages: pre-visit, during the visit and post-visit. The theme park image that will be built in visitors' mind will be different in those three stages. Thus, this paper is mainly capture the educational theme park image that is captured by their visitors based on their experiences (post-visit image).

Some studies showed that the brand image plays an important role in satisfying customers. The study of Sondoh et al., (2007) indicated that customers perception about the positive image of a brand leads to the high overall satisfaction in buying cosmetics.

In accordance to this study, the study toward social media users shows that social media image significantly affects user's satisfaction (Yulianti & Tung, 2013).

Apart of its role as the antecedent of customer satisfaction, brand image is also found to be the robust predictor of customer loyalty. Customers would be more loyal to a particular brand which has a positive image. Some studies have found the effect of brand image on loyalty. Parahiyanti and Hussein (2014) found that car free day visitors would revisit the event if they perceived a positive image about that event. Similar to this finding, Kandampully and Suhartanto (2000) show that hotel brand image plays an important role in enhancing customer loyalty in the area of hotel industry in Indonesia.

Based on these previous studies, this study proposes:

H1 : Educational theme park image has a positive and significant effect on educational experience visitor satisfaction

H2 : Educational theme park image has a positive and significant effect on visitor loyalty

1.2. Perceived Educational Value

Value creation is an important element of an organization and it is considered as an important part of mission statements (Yang & Peterson, 2004). Moreover, Patterson and Spreng (1997) noted that perceived value is about consumer's assessment of the gap between perceived benefits and perceived costs. Gallarza & Gil Saura (2006) stated that value is important in the area of marketing studies since the concept of value has arisen from the development of two fundamental dimensions of consumer behavior, i.e. price and psychology. Moreover, the construct of value is able to help explain different domains of consumer behavior such as product choice, buying intention and loyalty. Furthermore, the construct of value is inextricably linked to other essential consumer behavior constructs such as perception of quality and satisfaction.

Previous studies have found the importance of perceived value in satisfying customers. Patterson and Spreng (1997) illustrate that perceived value has a positive significant effect on customer satisfaction. It means the higher value perceived by customers, the more satisfied customers with the products or services offered. In accordance to Patterson and Spreng (1997), Hapsari, Clemes, and Dean (2016) found that airline passengers' satisfaction was significantly affected by perceived value. This study indicates that passengers would be more satisfied if they perceive higher value offered by airline companies.

As an important notion in marketing, perceived value is also acknowledged to have a significant effect on customer loyalty. Studies (Cronin Jr, Brady, & Hult, 2000; Hussein, A & Hapsari, 2014; Yang & Peterson, 2004) determine the significant effect of perceived value on customer loyalty. These studies explain that the higher value perceived by customers, will lead to the higher customer loyalty.

Hence, this study proposes:

H3 : Educational perceived value has a positive and significant effect on educational experience satisfaction.

H4 : Educational perceived value has a positive and significant effect on on visitor loyalty.

1.3. Educational Expearence Satisfaction

The notion of educational experience satisfaction is derived by the idea of customer satisfaction. Suhartanto (2011) claims that customer satisfaction is one of main objectives of marketing activities. Satisfaction is about the gap between customer's expectation and perception of products and services performance (Kotler & Keller, 2012). Moreover, if performance fails to meet customer expectation about the brand-related stimuli, then customers will be dissatisfied. If performance matches identity, packaging, communications and environments customer expectation, a customer will be satisfied (Yulianti & Tung, 2013).

Studies about customer loyalty indicate that customer satisfaction is the robust predictor of customer loyalty (Assaker, Vinzi, & O'Connor, 2011; Hussein & Hapsari, 2014; Lai et al., 2009). These studies show that customer would be loyal to the firms if they are satisfied with the products or services offered.

Similar to the perspective of marketing, the importance of satisfaction was also found in creating visitor revisit intention. Some studies in the domain of tourism explain that the satisfied visitors tend to be more loyal to visit a particular tourism destination (Assaker et al., 2011; Chi & Qu, 2008; Son & Lee, 2011). These studies lead into hypotheses:

H5 : Educational experience satisfaction has a positive and significant effect of visitor loyalty.

H6 : Educational experience satisfaction mediates the effect of theme park image on visitor loyalty

H7 : Educational experience satisfaction mediates the effect of perceived value on visitor loyalty.

2. Methods

2.1. Data Analysis

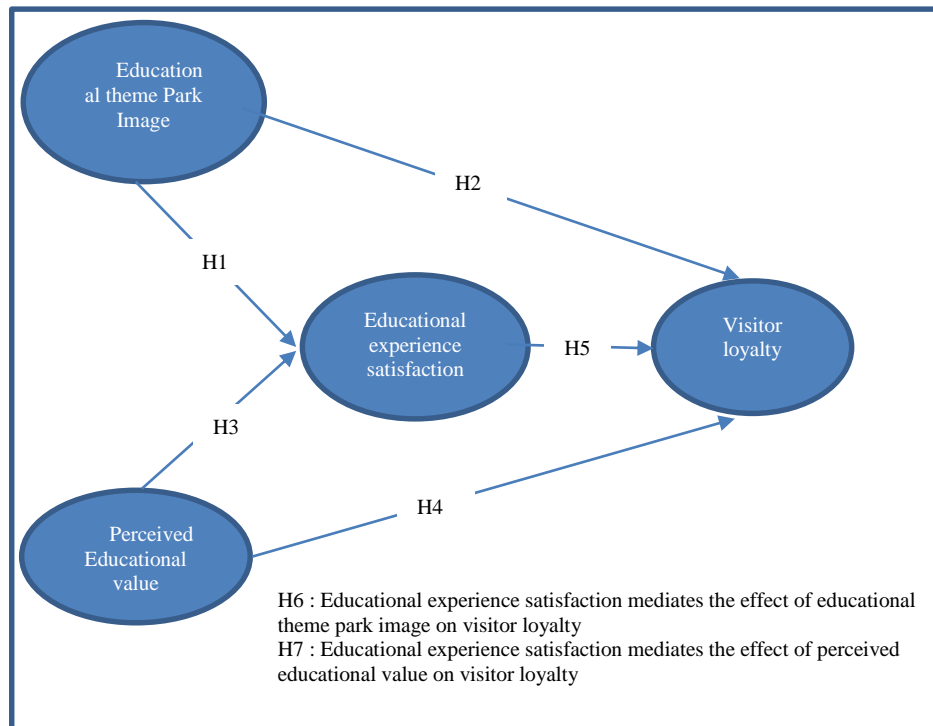
An explanatory research approach is used by this study to test the hypotheses. Data is collected through surveys using self-administered questionnaire. Partial Least Squares technique using smartPLS 2.0 was employed by this study to analyze data and test the hypotheses. Prior testing the hypotheses, two steps of analysis were conducted to measure the robustness of model tested. The first step is outer model and the second step is inner model evaluation.

Outer model evaluation consisting convergent validity, discriminant validity and uni-dimensionality test. Following Hair, Black, and Babin's, (2010) suggestion a construct would be free of convergent validity problems if the items used have factor loading higher than 0.6 and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) higher than 0.5. For discriminant validity, a construct stated to have free discriminant validity problems if the score of factor loading is higher than its cross loading (Chin, 2010). The uni-dimensionality evaluation was evaluated through the score of composite reliability. A construct is called uni-dimensional if the score of composite reliability is higher than 0.7 (Chin, 2010).

Inner model evaluation was conducted through assessing Tenenhaus Goodness of Fit (GoF) index (Tenenhaus, Vinzi, Chatelin, & Lauro, 2005). Even though there is no consensus regarding the fit model Daryanto, de Ruyter, and Wetzels, (2009) stated that the baseline of GoF are small = 0.1, medium = 0.25 and large = 0.36.

Hypotheses testing were conducted after both outer and inner model evaluation were conducted. In the hypotheses testing, the alpha was set 5% ($t = 1.96$). To test the mediation effect, Sobel's test were performed combined with Baron and Kenny's (1986) steps in testing mediating effect.

Figure 1: **Conceptual Model**



2.2. Samples and Data Gathering Procedures

The population of this study is the educational theme park visitor in Indonesia. One hundred and fifty self-administered questionnaires were distributed to educational theme parks visitors in Batu and Malang, East Java Province, Indonesia during December 2015-January 2016. The data gathered by employing convenience sampling (Sekaran and Bougie 2016), due to unavailable data of theme park visitor in Indonesia and resource limitation. The number of visitors in Jatim Park 2 (one of the theme park where the research took place) during 2015 can reach around 400.000 visitor (Itaquillah and Widodo 2017).

2.3. Measurements

The questionnaire was designed based on literature review. All constructs were developed based on the general marketing concept and being adjust based on the educational theme park industry characteristics. The questionnaire is consisted of two parts. The first part collects information about the demographic of respondents; and the second part measures the variables investigated in this study. A 5-point Likert scale anchored from 1 (strongly disagree) and 5 (strongly agree) was used in this study. The measures were adapted from several literatures measuring loyalty (Luo & Hsieh, 2013; Pike, Bianchi, Kerr, & Patti, 2010), satisfaction (Zeithaml, Bitner, & Gremler, 2010), perceived value (Levesque & McDougall, 1996) and brand image (Ouwersloot and Tudorica 2001, Hosany et al. 2006).

Prior distributing the questionnaires, a pilot study was conducted to test the validity and reliability of the instruments. The result showed that the instruments are valid and reliable, thus the study can be proceeded.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

3.1. Demographic Characteristic of Respondents

The demographic analysis indicates that 56% respondents aged between 21 and 24; 58.67% respondents are male; 37% have tertiary education and 68% of respondents have income above Rp 2,000,000 per month. Table 1 summarizes respondents' characteristics.

Table 1: Respondents Characteristics

| No | Characteristics | Category | Frequency | % |
|----|-----------------|---------------------|-----------|-------|
| 1 | Age | 17 – 20 | 46 | 30.67 |
| | | 21 – 24 | 84 | 56 |
| | | 25 – 28 | 15 | 10 |
| | | >28 | 5 | 3.33 |
| 2 | Gender | Male | 88 | 58.67 |
| | | Female | 62 | 41.33 |
| 3 | Education | High School | 96 | 64 |
| | | Diploma | 4 | 2.67 |
| | | Bachelor | 45 | 30 |
| | | Postgraduate | 5 | 3.33 |
| 4 | Income/month | ≤1,000,000 | 49 | 32.67 |
| | | 1,000,001-2,000,000 | 69 | 46 |
| | | 2,000,001-3,000,000 | 12 | 8.67 |
| | | > 3.000.000 | 19 | 12.67 |
| 5 | Job | Private employee | 21 | 14 |
| | | Government employee | 6 | 4 |
| | | Students | 122 | 81.33 |
| | | Others | 1 | 0.67 |

3.2. Inner and Outer Model Evaluations

Prior testing the hypotheses, outer model and inner model evaluations were performed by this study. The result of convergent validity indicates that the factor loading for each items ranged between 0.610 and 0.859. As there is no item having factor loading below than 0.6, there is no need to remove the item from the model. In accordance to the factor loadings, the score of AVE ranges between 0.505 and 0.569 which means there is no convergent validity problem. The score of Composite Reliability (CR) for each construct ranged between 0.833 and 0.867. Given that the CR scores are above 0.7, the constructs are considered uni-dimensional. Table 2 shows the summary of outer model evaluation.

Table 2: Outer Model Evaluation

| Items | Mean | Factor Loadings | AVE | CR | R ² |
|---|------|-----------------|-------|-------|----------------|
| EDUCATIONAL THEME PARK IMAGE | | | | | |
| Theme park credibility (IMG 1) | 3.98 | 0.649 | 0.512 | 0.862 | |
| Theme park popularity (IMG 2) | 4.06 | 0.791 | | | |
| The social class of visitors. (IMG 3) | 4.19 | 0.665 | | | |
| The theme park is visited by various range of age (IMG 4) | 4.30 | 0.695 | | | |
| Theme park product variety (IMG 5) | 3.99 | 0.764 | | | |
| Theme park product benefit (IMG 6) | 4.05 | 0.720 | | | |

| Items | Mean | Factor Loadings | AVE | CR | R ² |
|--|------|-----------------|---|-------|---------------------|
| PERCEIVED EDUCATIONAL VALUE | | | | | |
| Functional value. The theme park having good value when compared to other theme park (PV1) | 3.94 | 0.619 | | | |
| Functional value. The educational theme park giving good services (comfort and friendly) (PV2) | 4.05 | 0.768 | 0.558 | 0.833 | |
| The theme park giving a good social value (PV3) | 3.87 | 0.773 | | | |
| The theme park provide a good value for money (PV4) | 3.87 | 0.815 | | | |
| VISITOR SATISFACTION | | | | | |
| The educational theme park provide emotional satisfaction (VS 1) | 3.87 | 0.714 | | | |
| Spesification of the service offered meets visitor's demand (VS 2) | 3.95 | 0.796 | | | |
| The expectation of services fits visitor's perception (VS 3) | 3.95 | 0.767 | 0.505 | 0.835 | 0.627 |
| Customer satisfied with the fairness of service (VS 4) | 4.05 | 0.651 | | | |
| Overall satisfaction in visiting the educational theme park (VS %) | 4.07 | 0.610 | | | |
| VISITOR LOYALTY | | | | | |
| Visitor intention to revisit because of the high level of satisfaction (VL1) | 4.01 | 0.859 | | | |
| The theme park worth to be revisited (VL 2) | 3.95 | 0.779 | | | |
| The intention to recommend to others (VL 3) | 4.04 | 0.715 | 0.569 | 0.867 | 0.702 |
| The intention to revisit because of the theme park features (VL 4) | 3.96 | 0.775 | | | |
| Overall visitor intention to revisit the theme park (VL 5) | 3.89 | 0.626 | | | |
| | | | $\bar{\Sigma} = 0.536$ | | $\bar{R}^2 = 0.664$ |
| | | | $GoF = \sqrt{0,536 \times 0.664} = 0.596$ | | |

Upon the evaluation of discriminant validity, there is no discriminant validity problems were found in this study, as the correlation value are less than 0.85. Factor loading for each constructs are higher than its cross loadings. Table 3 shows the evaluation of discriminant validity.

Table 3: Discriminant Validity Evaluation

| | Perceived Value | Theme Park Image | Visitor Loyalty | Visitor Satisfaction |
|-------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| IMG 1 | 0.498 | 0.649 | 0.461 | 0.452 |
| IMG 2 | 0.575 | 0.791 | 0.626 | 0.635 |
| IMG 3 | 0.464 | 0.665 | 0.538 | 0.398 |
| IMG 4 | 0.400 | 0.695 | 0.559 | 0.384 |
| IMG 5 | 0.552 | 0.764 | 0.567 | 0.559 |
| IMG 6 | 0.534 | 0.720 | 0.572 | 0.571 |
| PV 1 | 0.619 | 0.366 | 0.393 | 0.393 |
| PV 2 | 0.768 | 0.561 | 0.526 | 0.544 |
| PV 3 | 0.773 | 0.578 | 0.589 | 0.644 |
| PV 4 | 0.815 | 0.578 | 0.615 | 0.624 |
| VS 1 | 0.545 | 0.524 | 0.573 | 0.714 |
| VS 2 | 0.652 | 0.531 | 0.627 | 0.796 |
| VS 3 | 0.544 | 0.595 | 0.564 | 0.767 |
| VS 4 | 0.454 | 0.378 | 0.485 | 0.651 |
| VS 5 | 0.450 | 0.478 | 0.427 | 0.610 |
| VL 1 | 0.597 | 0.653 | 0.859 | 0.642 |
| VL 2 | 0.583 | 0.637 | 0.779 | 0.579 |
| VL 3 | 0.518 | 0.544 | 0.715 | 0.558 |
| VL 4 | 0.504 | 0.592 | 0.775 | 0.572 |
| VL 5 | 0.517 | 0.487 | 0.626 | 0.506 |

Inner model evaluation was performed by this study to make sure the robustness of the tested model. For this study, inner model evaluation was assessed through the value of Tenenhaus's Goodness of Fit index (Tenenhaus et al., 2005). The GoF calculation shows that the score was 0.596 (see table 2 for calculation). According to the baseline proposed by Daryanto et al. (2009), the GoF of this study is categorized as large.

Upon the evaluation of both outer and inner model, it can be stated that the model is robust. The further step is to test the proposed hypotheses. The conceptual model shows five direct relationships and two indirect relationships were tested in this study.

Hypothesis 1 proposed that educational theme park image has a significant effect on educational visitor satisfaction. The hypothesis test indicates that there is a positive effect of educational theme park image on visitor satisfaction ($t = 4.929$; $\beta = 0.353$). The effect of educational theme park image on visitor satisfaction is in accordance with the study of Coban (2012), which found a significant effect of destination image on tourist satisfaction in Cappadocia, Turkey. Furthermore, Jin et al. (2015) also found that theme park image affecting visitor satisfaction. It means that when visitors perceived positive images of the educational theme park, the more satisfied visitors toward the theme park.

Hypothesis 2 examined the effect of theme park image on loyalty. Similar to its effect on satisfaction, theme park image has a positive significant effect on loyalty ($t = 5.653$; $\beta = 0.415$). Thus, Hypothesis 2 is supported. This finding explains that visitors would be more loyal in visiting the theme park, if the image of theme park is positively perceived.

Perceived educational value was predicted to have a significant effect on educational experience satisfaction and visitor loyalty as proposed by Hypothesis 3 and 4. The statistical analysis shows that there is a positive significant relationship between perceived value and visitor satisfaction ($t = 7.701$; $\beta = 0.498$). It means Hypothesis 3 is supported. This finding is supported by the study of Chen and Chen (2010) in the tourism industry, Howat and Assaker (2013) in the public aquatic centre and Kim, Holland et al. (2013) in the context of destination loyalty. This positive significant effect means that the higher value perceived by visitors, the more satisfied the visitors in visiting the theme park. In addition, this study found a significant effect of perceived value on visitor loyalty ($t = 2.747$ $\beta = 0.180$). Thus, Hypothesis 4 is supported. The significant effect of perceived value on behavioural loyalty is similar with the effect found by researchers in various industry such as in online shopping behavior and in the tourism industry (Chen and Chen 2010, Wu, Chen et al. 2014). This significant effect explains that the higher perceived value the more loyal the visitors toward the theme park.

Hypothesis 5 proposed the effect of educational theme park visitor satisfaction on visitor loyalty. The hypothesis test shows that there is a significant effect from satisfaction on loyalty ($t = 4.185$; $\beta = 0.329$). The significant effect of educational theme park visitor satisfaction on visitor loyalty, is supported by previous study, especially on the context of destination loyalty (Coban 2012, Ramseook-Munhurrin et al. 2015). It means that the more satisfied visitors, will lead to the higher visitor loyalty. Hypothesis 5 is supported.

The indirect effects of both theme park image and perceived value on visitor loyalty via visitor satisfaction were tested by using and Baron and Kenny's (1986) method and the t-statistic score was calculated by employing Sobel's test. Following Baron and Kenny's (1986) steps and Sobel's calculation, there is a significant indirect effect of educational theme park image and perceived educational value on visitor loyalty through visitor satisfaction. It means Hypothesis 6 and 7 are supported. The indirect effect of theme park image of visitor loyalty through visitor satisfaction is 0.117 with t-statistic 3.208. Moreover, the indirect effect of perceived value on visitor loyalty via visitor satisfaction is 0.164 ($t = 3.708$). Since visitor satisfaction has a significant effect on visitor loyalty, the mediating effect of visitor satisfaction in the relationship between theme park image and visitor loyalty, and perceived value and visitor loyalty are considered partial mediation. Table 4 summarizes the results of the hypothesis testing. Thus, the total effect of the educational theme park image construct toward visitor loyalty is 0.532, which is the sum of the direct and indirect effect ($0.415 + 0.117$). In addition, the total effect of perceived educational value on visitor loyalty is 0.662, which was calculated by adding the direct and indirect effect of perceived value on visitor loyalty ($0.498 + 0.164$).

Table 4: Hypothesis Test

| Hypothesis | Coefficient | t-statistic | Remark |
|------------|-------------|-------------|-----------|
| H1 | 0.356 | 4.929 | Supported |
| H2 | 0.415 | 5.653 | Supported |
| H3 | 0.498 | 7.701 | Supported |
| H4 | 0.180 | 2.747 | Supported |
| H5 | 0.329 | 4.185 | Supported |
| H6 | 0.119 | 3.208 | Supported |
| H7 | 0.165 | 3.708 | Supported |

Based on the research objectives proposed in this study, two significant contributions are offered. The first contribution is about the conceptual model that explain the relationships among educational theme park image, educational perceived value, educational theme park visitor satisfaction and visitor loyalty. In addition, practical recommendations for theme park managers and practitioners are formulated.

The conceptual model tested in this study explains that educational theme park image and educational value have a significant effect on educational visitor satisfaction. This finding is similar to the study of Sondoh Jr et al. (2007) and Yulianti and Tung (2013) which found the importance of image in creating satisfaction. It implies that the concept of image and value might also be used in the context of the educational theme park studies which is a part of tourism and recreation industry. In addition, it contributes to the literatures by showing that the image of educational theme park and educational value perceived by visitors are the robust antecedents of visitor satisfaction. The positive relationships among these constructs explain that the more positive image of the theme park and the higher educational value perceived by visitors, will lead to the more satisfied visitors toward the educational theme park.

Apart from the effect of educational theme park image and educational perceived value on visitor satisfaction, the model formulated in this study also indicates the essential effects of both constructs on visitor loyalty. As an important concept in marketing literature, some studies have determined the effect of brand image and perceived value on customer loyalty (Back, 2005; Lai et al., 2009; Suhartanto, Clemes, & Dean, 2013). In accord to the previous studies, this study also found the positive significant effect of educational theme park image on visitor loyalty. Moreover, perceived educational value was found to be the essential determinant of visitor loyalty.

As some studies found the important effect of customer satisfaction in creating loyalty, the effect of educational theme park visitor satisfaction on visitor loyalty was also evaluated by this study. The result of hypothesis test indicates that educational theme park visitor satisfaction positively affects visitor loyalty. This finding is similar to the study of Suhartanto et al., (2013) in the hotel industry, Clemes et al. (2014) in the area of mobile communication industry and Mason and Nassivera (2013) in the perspective of event management. However, as the previous studies mainly concern on the direct effect of satisfaction on loyalty, the conceptual model built in this study provides deeper understanding about the role of visitor satisfaction on visitor loyalty in the area of educational theme park industry. By testing the mediation effects, this study shows that the notion of satisfaction does not only have a direct effect on loyalty. Customer educational satisfaction also plays an important role in mediating the effect of educational theme park image and perceived educational value on visitor loyalty.

The results of this study contribute to the body of knowledge regarding the relationship between educational theme park image and other marketing constructs. This study proved that educational theme park image significantly affects perceived educational value, educational theme park visitor satisfaction, and educational theme park visitor loyalty. This current study provides an insight about how to create visitor loyalty for educational theme park. Furthermore, based on the results of this current study, the measurement items for customer image, perceived value and satisfaction have been

validated, and those items can be replicated for assessing visitor behavior in other educational theme park.

CONCLUSIONS

The results of this study show that perceived value, customer satisfaction and theme park image are the determinants of theme park visitor loyalty. Theoretically, it implies that in affecting visitor loyalty, both theme park image and perceived value have direct and indirect effect via visitor satisfaction. Hence, the total effects are the sum of direct and indirect effect. In practical standpoint, this study provides guidelines for educational theme park manager and other leisure practitioners about the way to enhance the visitor loyalty. Specifically, it is suggested that to increase the loyalty, the theme park manager should give more attention on the theme park image, value offered to the visitors and the satisfaction of visitors, as those elements are proven to be the determinants of loyalty in the perspective of theme park visitors.

Despite the contributions, this current research also has some limitations. First, the sample was drawn by using convenience sampling makes the result of this study cannot be easily generalized for other setting or other industry. Second, theme park visitor loyalty in this study was only determined by three constructs, namely perceived educational value, educational customer satisfaction and educational theme park image. Thus, the more comprehensive study about determining theme park visitor loyalty need to be done by adding other important marketing construct such as customer experience, customer engagement, etc.

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