

Local Branding: Imperative Strategy Towards Competitiveness of Sustainable Destinations Through the Role of Social Media

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Abstract

The aim of the research is to form the Competitiveness of Sustainable Destinations to realize tourism marketing through Local Branding. The variables tested are Local Branding and Destination Image. Social Media is expected to moderate the influence of Local Branding on the Competitiveness of Sustainable Destinations. The population is visitors to tourist attractions, while the sample is 152. Respondents are determined using the Proportionate Stratified Random Sampling technique. SEM as an analysis tool with the smartPLS.3.0 program application. The results of the Sustainable Destination Competitiveness test results can be manifested through optimal management of Local Branding and Destination Image. Local Branding can be applied through Local Culture and Destination Image. Local Branding significantly affects the Competitiveness of Sustainable Destinations, while Local Culture significantly influences Local Branding. Destination Image significantly influences Local Branding and significantly influences the Competitiveness of Sustainable Destinations. Social Media is able to function as a pure moderator of the influence of Local Branding on the Competitiveness of Sustainable Tourism Destinations in Semarang City. The R - Square value in the Local Branding construct is 0.758536, meaning that Local Branding is influenced by Local Culture and Destination Image 75.85%. The Q Square value > 0 (0.575377) on the Local Branding variable indicates that the model has strong predictive relevance, meaning that the research model has relevance in predicting Local Culture and Destination Image with Local Branding in Tourism Objects. R-Square on the construct of Sustainable Destination Competitiveness 0.817528 means that the Competitiveness of Sustainable Destinations is influenced by Local Branding and Destination Image 81.75%. The Q Square value of 0.668352 (> 0) indicates that the model has strong predictive relevance, meaning that the research model has relevance in predicting Local Branding and Destination Image on the Competitiveness of Sustainable Tourism Destinations.

Keywords: Culture, Competitiveness, Destination Image, Local Branding, Media

INTRODUCTION

The meaning of regional development includes four dimensions, namely (1) dynamic changes always occur, (2) implementing policies in stages, (3) benefiting the entire community and (4) the impact of development must be more beneficial and liked by the community. The dimensions of being useful and liked by the community are an indication of the success of regional development management and environmental management which have resulted in the development of sustainable competitiveness. State/regional competitiveness is obtained, among other things, from the tourism sector, bearing in mind that tourism in the last period has been able to develop into a large and reliable industry, which is marked by increased revenue generation from the number of tourist visits. The Indonesian Tourism Index (IPI)

launched by the Ministry of Tourism revealed that Semarang City is ranked 5th out of 505 regencies/cities in the country. The ranking is compiled through a survey and based on the Tourism and Travel Competitiveness Index (TTCI) issued by the World Economic Forum with adjustments to conditions in Indonesia.

(Cibinskiene & Snieskiene, 2015) shows that a major contribution to economic growth with a much faster growth rate than the service economy such as financial and business services, transportation and manufacturing in a country is the tourism sector. The advantages of a country if it succeeds in developing tourism when viewed from an economic perspective include (1) business opportunities will be opened, (2) employment opportunities will be wider, (3) tax revenue will increase (4) national income will increase, (5) the process of equalizing income the faster, (6) the added value of cultural products is getting better,



(7) gain market for domestic products, (8) form a multiplier effect in the economy due to transactions carried out by tourists and investors (Cristina, 2015).

The research difficulties and problems inherent in evaluating the competitiveness of the tourism sector have received wide acclaim and been identified for analysis in many scientific studies (Navickas & Malakauskaite, 2009). The tourism industry has seen many studies trying to measure the level of competitiveness of various countries and sectors, however, despite the diversity within these studies, the literature reveals a lack of research focusing on destination competitiveness models (Omerzel & others, 2006). Research since the early 1990s on competitiveness, then focused on research on destination competitiveness both conceptually and empirically (Crouch, 2011), but in the last period Aguiar, (2021) showed that the analysis of the competitiveness of sustainable destinations based on the supply and demand side experienced decline.

The findings of (Kuswardani et al., 2023) prove that Destination Competitiveness is able to function as a perfect mediation for Sustainable Tourism Marketing. (Cucculelli & Goffi, 2016) developed a destination competitiveness model through a sustainable perspective with dimensions of (a) macro (global environment) and micro (competition), (b) destination policies, (c) tourism management, (d) supporting resources, (e) planning and development and (f) obtaining awards. The success of tourist destinations is formed based on efforts to build, maintain, protect and strengthen tourist destinations and the destination's position in an increasingly competitive market. The economic concept that influences sustainable tourism destinations is competition, and success in winning the competition can be implemented through the creation of sustainable destination competitiveness.

The tourism industry is a business that is always changing, therefore success in competing in this industry requires the ability to offer the overall attractiveness of destinations beyond competing alternative destinations which will lead to the development of sustainable destination competitiveness. The key factor that can guarantee the sustainability of destinations in a destination is the consistency of destination attractiveness and competitiveness. Irwansyah,

(2013) stated that the development of destination competitiveness begins with establishing local branding, and (Salah & Abeer, 2019) revealed that local branding has received priority in the field of research due to increasing market complexity and the importance of market competitiveness. Local branding if managed properly,

Semarang City as a transit city and is ranked 5th according to the Indonesian Tourism Index as the readiness of tourist destinations to become a tool for regional economic growth. The establishment of Local Branding is indicated to be able to realize Sustainable Destination Competitiveness, therefore, the research problem is how to build Local Branding to realize Sustainable Destination Competitiveness in Semarang city tourism objects through the formation of Local Culture and Destination Image moderated by Social Media.

The development of the marketing discipline shows the importance of the company's external relations, especially in customer relations. Relationship marketing has contributed most to the shift from viewing exchange marketing as a transactional phenomenon to seeing it as an ongoing relationship and providing both theoretical and practical content to the relationship-marketing concept.

In the late 1970s, the marketing management tradition was also being questioned by service-minded researchers. Their main concern is that the marketing mix approach does not provide a conceptualization for modeling and managing the service provider-customer relationship. Service researchers argue that consumers experience quality and subsequent satisfaction with services as a result of the interactional relationships between personnel and customers augmented by traditional marketing communications, institutional image, and service delivery technologies through which the importance of developing and maintaining relationships is emphasized.

In principle, tourism will result in increased social welfare. The relationship between the components of tourist destination competitiveness will have an impact on sustainable tourism (Goffi, 2013; Gomezelj & Mihalič, 2008). Competitiveness is one of the criteria for determining the success and achievement of a better goal by a country in increasing income and economic growth. Furthermore, Porter explained the importance of competitiveness because of the following three

things (1) encouraging productivity and increasing self-sufficiency; (2) can increase economic capacity, both in the context of regional economies and economic actors so that economic growth increases; (3) the belief that the market mechanism creates more efficiency.

The ability of a region/country to optimize the attractiveness of its tourist destinations is the Competitiveness of Sustainable Destinations which, illustrated by providing quality, innovation, and attractive tourism services for tourists (Andrades & Dimanche, 2017). The goal of creating destination competitiveness is to gain and expand market share both domestically and globally by ensuring that available resources to support tourism are used efficiently and sustainably (Andrades & Dimanche, 2017)

Local branding has become more defined and organized with globalization (Papadopoulos & Heslop, 2002). When consumers buy products, choose destinations or make investments, they actually choose a particular country (Song & Sung, 2013), which has led to a growing trend recently among countries to build, enhance and promote their national image in order to build and maintain a strong national brand (He & Wang, 2015). Product image is an integral part of a country's brand (Barney & Zhang, 2008), which means that a strong product brand contributes to the formation of a national brand. Therefore, countries are actively committed to building strong local branding.

Previous research has shown that the perception of local branding is related to local culture and destination image and significantly influences the possibility of purchasing, therefore, in maintaining the competitiveness of destinations, one must consider local branding (Ozsomer, 2012). The key players in destinations are tourists and internal stakeholders, so ignoring internal stakeholders, destinations will not be able to maintain their competitiveness if they ignore Local Branding. Ritchie & Crouch (2003) revealed that most destinations look for ways to be competitive and continue to be competitive.

Destination sustainability in a destination is consistent destination competitiveness and attractiveness. Sustainable development emphasizes the needs of the present generation and the need to protect resources for future generations, including intergenerational and intragenerational justice. The development of sustainable destinations is expected to be able to

answer the needs of present and future tourists, as well as the host community, therefore, one way to achieve sustainable destination competitiveness is to consider Local Appeal in a destination. The development of sustainable destination competitiveness is highly dependent on Local Branding. The successful development of sustainable destination competitiveness is based on balance and harmonization between tourists, people, places,

Ismail (2011), local culture is all the ideas, activities and results of human activity in a community group in a certain location. The local culture is actually still growing and developing in the community and is agreed upon and used as a shared guideline. Thus local cultural resources are not only in the form of values, activities and results of traditional activities or the ancestral heritage of the local community, but also all cultural components or elements that apply in society and are characteristic and or only developed in society. the development of information technology and social media the relatively broad meaning of local culture is very important, because contact between cultures must occur, so that mutual accommodation and cultural acculturation are possible.

According to research, Local Branding often represents the culture of the country of origin (Chiu, et al., 2009; Torelli et al., 2011; He & Wang, 2017), so that Local Branding which combines elements of local culture creates a simultaneous presence of two different cultures, which researchers call cultural mixing (Chiu et al., 2009). The focus is on local culture, and how the interaction between global brands and local culture influences the effect of local branding is less explored. Studies mostly rely on qualitative research methods, such as case studies, and some studies use quantitative analysis (Wang & Lin, 2009; Song, 2013; Heine & Phan, 2013). This research explores the relationship between Local Branding and local culture so as to shape the Competitiveness of Sustainable Destinations.

The main components of image are functional and emotional, (Coban, 2012). Functional image is always related to what is easily seen and measured by tourists, while emotional image is related to psychological aspects that can only be felt and addressed at a destination. Destination image is a process made by tourists to compare attributes at different destinations. A topic of concern in modern tourism

is Destination image (Echtner & Ritchie, 2003; Pan & Xiang, 2011).

Haarhoff, (2018), Destination image is a collection of overall impressions felt by visitors, perceptual beliefs, knowledge of certain destinations, and plays a major role in determining purchasing decisions in the destination choice process, and destination attractiveness. A topic of concern in modern tourism is Destination image (Echtner & Ritchie, 2003; Pan & Xiang, 2011). Baloglu & McCleary, (1999); Beerl & Martin, (2004) stated that destination image is a valuable concept related to the choice of tourist destinations, while Echtner & Ritchie, (2003) stated that destination image is a major marketing tool that has a strong influence on tourists' decisions as their vacation spot. Destinations with strong images make it easier for tourists to choose destinations and differentiate from competitors (Lopes, 2011), and can increase market share if destinations are accompanied by strong infrastructure, adequate investment, positive image, and a variety of products (Aksoy & Kiyici, 2011). Image formation is determined by the attributes or characteristics offered by a destination, and by the exposure of information received by tourists about a destination. Based on this concept, the image of the destination must always be managed because it can determine the choice of vacation spots (Asli et al., 2007). Image formation is determined by the attributes or characteristics offered by a destination, and by the exposure of information received by tourists about a destination. Based on this concept, the image of the destination must always be managed because it can determine the choice of vacation spots (Asli et al., 2007). Image formation is determined by the attributes or characteristics offered by a destination, and by the exposure of information received by tourists about a destination. Based on this concept, the image of the destination must always be managed because it can determine the choice of vacation spots (Asli et al., 2007).

Some researchers show the impact of social media on tourist behavior, Milano et al. (2011) and Hays et al. (2013), very few studies have explored the impact of social media on the competitiveness of sustainable destinations, (Han et al., 2017). The potential of social media in promoting sustainable destinations is very high, considering its use for socialization and knowledge sharing, empirical research to do in depth about it

is relatively low (Ali & Frew, 2010; Sarkaret et al., 2014).

Social media was used to create public awareness of the destination's existence regarding demographic groups and found that no significant differences were found based on age and education. Even the variation in travel habits was found to be insignificant with social media use. Social media promotion activities indeed create awareness among the public about sustainable competitiveness, and lead to Local Branding. Social media promotional activities play a role in creating sustainable demand among tourists.

METHOD

Local Branding, Local Culture and Destination Image, as independent variables, Competitiveness of Sustainable Destinations as dependent variable and social media as moderator variable. The sample was determined using the Probability Sampling method, with the Proportionate stratified random sampling technique. The number of samples was determined based on the Isaac & Michael table, namely with a population of 270 (summed up from members of the WhatsApp group) with an error rate of 5%, the number of samples was 152.

The step for evaluating begins with conducting a validity test, which is testing reflective indicators by using the correlation between item scores and construct scores. Measurements with reflective indicators indicate a change in an indicator in a construct if other indicators in the same construct change (or are removed from the model). Validity test is done by looking at the Loading Factor value and or the square root of average variance extracted (AVE) value. The second step is to carry out the Reliability Test by looking at the Composite Reliability value. Composite reliability results show a satisfactory value if it is above 0.7. The hypothesis in this study was tested using the PLS method. PLS is an alternative method of analysis with variance-based SEM. The R-Square value for each research construct is used to test the Structural Good of Fit Model, namely looking at the significance of the latent model. Predict the endogenous latent variable with a reflection indicator through the Q Square value, with the condition that if Q Square > 0 then the latent variable has good relevance. Q2 value predictive relevance 0.02; 0.15 and 0.35 indicate weak, moderate and strong models.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Respondents were aged between 17-75 years, with the largest number of visitors to Semarang city tourism objects being 21 years old, this shows that the tourism objects offered in Semarang attract the attention of visitors who are of productive age, which means that tourism is carried out to provide refreshment after some time of activity. Visitors who are of productive age can justify the need to implement Sustainable Destination Competitiveness. The most visited

tourist object is Lawang Sewu followed by Sampoo Kong, this shows that a tourist attraction that attracts visitors at a productive age is a tourist attraction that shows the culture of the existence of the city of Semarang with the presence of buildings and architecture before they were born.

Loading factor on several variable indicators gives a value below the recommended value of 0.6. (Table 1). The loading factor value below 0.6 means that the indicators used in this study are not valid or do not meet convergent validity.

Table 1. Validity Test Results.

INDI CHAIRM AN	Local Branding(X 1)	Local Culture (X2)	Destination Image (X3)	Social media (M)	Competitiveness of Sustainable Destinations (Y)
X1.1	0.650872				
X1.2	0.481108				
X1.3	0.653850				
X1.4	0.572366				
X1.5	0.740430				
X1.6	0.726254				
X1.7	0.304453				
X1.8	0.645093				
X2.1		0.660465			
X2.2		0.775695			
X2.3		0.718522			
X2.4		0.742070			
X3.1			0.868057		
X3.2			0.593121		
X3.3			0.641800		
X3.4			0.695880		
X3.5			0.827769		
M1.1				0.646295	
M1.2				0.553266	
M1.3				0.757828	
M1.4				0.795798	
M1.5				0.775674	
M1.6				0.734204	

INDI CHAIRM AN	Local Branding(X 1)	Local Culture (X2)	Destination Image (X3)	Social media (M)	Competitiveness of Sustainable Destinations (Y)
M1.7				0.720881	
M1.8				0.471109	
M1.9				0.652734	
M1.10				0.628815	
M1.11				0.700457	
M1.12				0.214359	
M1.13				0.775242	
Y1.1					0.788409
Y1.2					0.724782
Y1.3					0.750635
Y1.4					0.734173
Y1.5					0.663294
Y1.6					0.775595
Y1.7					0.760831
Y1.8					0.589321

Source: processed primary data, 2022

Table 1 shows that the loading factor on the 8 variable indicators gives a value below the recommended value of 0.6. A loading factor value below 0.6 means that the indicator used is invalid or does not meet convergent validity, therefore to

get a valid indicator it is necessary to get rid of indicators with a loading factor value <0.6. Figure 1. shows the loading factor value of each indicator in the research model after removing the indicator <0.5

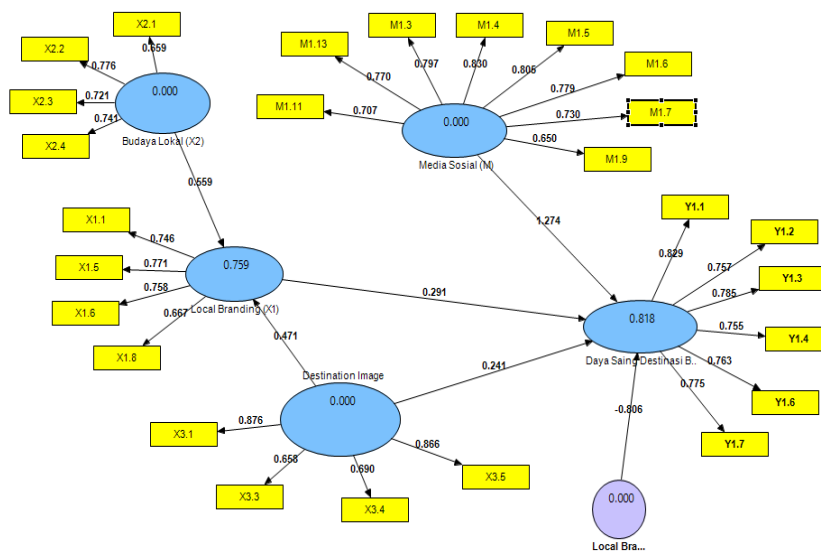


Figure 1. Loading Factor Value

Another method is to look at discriminant validity by looking at the square root of average variance extracted (AVE) value. The recommended value when looking at discriminant

validity through the AVE value must be above 0.5. Table 2 through the AVE value shows a value > 0.5 which has removed invalid indicators to produce variables with valid indicators.

Table 2. Average Variance Extracted (AVE) Value

Variable	Average Variance Extracted(AVE)
X1 – Local Branding	0.642641
X2 –Local Culture	0.626207
X3 - Destination Image	0.606884
M – Social Media	0.620932
Y - Competitiveness of Sustainable Destinations	0.604638
X1 – Local Branding* M – Social Media	0.667917

Source: processed primary data, 2022

The reliability test is carried out by looking at the Composite Reliability value, the composite reliability results will show a satisfactory value if

above 0.7 (as in table 3) it means that all the constructs in the estimated model meet the discriminant validity criteria.

Table 3 Reliability Test Results

Variable	Composite Reliability
X1 – Local Branding	0.825522
X2 –Local Culture	0.815749
X3 - Destination Image	0.858647
M – Social Media	0.916062
Y - Competitiveness of Sustainable Destinations	0.901634
X1 – Local Branding * M – Social Media	0.984680

Source: processed primary data, 2022

The reliability test can be strengthened by showing the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient results are suggested

above 0.6. Table 4 shows Cronbach's Alpha for all constructs above 0.6, which means that all constructs in the model meet the reliable criteria.

Table 4. Cronbach's Alpha Value

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha
X1 – Local Branding	0.717822
X2 –Local Culture	0.702842
X3 - Destination Image	0.782815

M – Social Media	0.895087
Y - Competitiveness of Sustainable Destinations	0.869346
X1 – Local Branding * M – Social Media	0.983927

Source: processed primary data, 2022

The hypothesis was tested using SmartPLS BootStraping analysis to determine the effect of latent/exogenous variables (variable X) on endogenous variables (Y). The results of the hypothesis test are known from the statistical t coefficient and the original sample estimate,

namely the statistical t coefficient shows the significance of the construct and the original sample estimate shows the nature of the relationship between constructs (positive or negative) as shown in Figure 2.

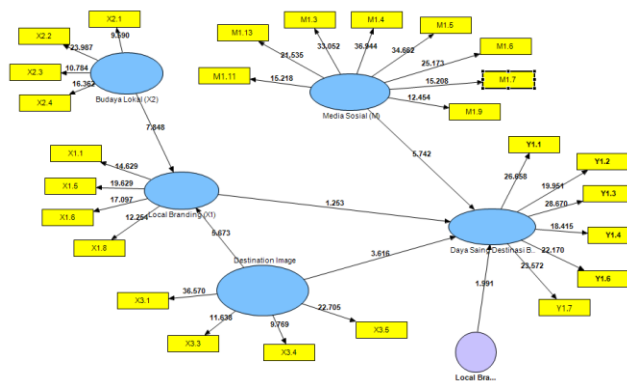


Figure 2. Bootstrapping Structural Model

The hypothesis is supported if the statistic is greater than the ttable, and vice versa if the statistic is smaller than the ttable, the research

hypothesis is rejected. The Original Sample coefficient shows the direction of influence between the construct variables.

Table 5. Hypothesis Test Results

Variable	Original Sample (O)	t Statistics (O/STERR)	hypothesis
Local Branding(X1) -> Competitiveness of Sustainable Destinations (Y)	0.291498	2.253403	supported
Local Culture (X2) -> Local Branding (X1)	0.558736	7.847889	supported
Destination Image(X3) -> Local Branding (X1)	0.470980	5.672802	supported
Destination Image-> Competitiveness of Sustainable Destinations (Y)	0.240934	3.616424	supported
Social Media (M) -> Competitiveness of Sustainable Destinations (Y)	1.274472	1.741601	Not supported
Local Branding(X1) * Social Media (M) -> Competitiveness of Sustainable Destinations (Y)	0.805647	2.991498	supported

The direct effect of Local Branding (X1) on the Competitiveness of Sustainable Destinations (Y) Tourism Objects in Semarang City as shown in Table 5 shows that the statistical value is 2.253403 (> 1.96), this means that Local Branding (X1) is proven to have a significant effect on Competitiveness of Sustainable Destinations (Y) Tourism Objects in Semarang City. It means that hypothesis 1 which states that Local Branding (X1) has a direct effect on the Competitiveness of Sustainable Destinations (Y) Tourist Attractions in Semarang City is supported.

The statistical value of 7.847889 (> 1.96) for Local Culture (X2) as shown in Table 5 means that Local Culture (X2) has proven to have a significant effect on Local Branding (X1). This means that Hypothesis 2 which states that Local Culture (X2) has an effect on Local Branding (X1) of Tourism Objects in Semarang City is supported. Destination Image (X3) is proven to have a significant effect on Local Branding (X1), this is indicated by the statistical t value of 5.672802 (> 1.96) as shown in Table 5. This proves that Hypothesis 3 which states that Destination Image (X3) has an effect on Local Branding (X1) is supported.

Table 5 shows that the statistical t value of the effect of Destination Image (X3) on the Competitiveness of Sustainable Destinations (Y) Tourism Objects in Semarang City is 3.616424 (> 1.96), this means that the effect of Destination Image (X3) on the Competitiveness of Sustainable Destinations (Y) Tourism Objects in Semarang City are significant. This means that Hypothesis 4 which states that Destination Image (X3) has an effect on the Competitiveness of Sustainable Destinations (Y) Tourism Objects in Semarang City is supported. The highest value of the original sample estimate variable that influences the

Table 6. Value of R - Square

Variable	R-Square
X1 (Local Branding)	0.758536
Y (Sustainable Destination Competitiveness)	0.568352

Source: processed primary data, 2022

The R-Square value in the Local Branding construct is 0.758536 as shown in Table 6 which

Competitiveness of Sustainable Destinations (Y) in Table 5 of +0.291498 is Local Branding (X1).

The t statistic value is 1.741601 (< 1.96) as shown in Table 5 which means that the effect of Social Media (M) on the Competitiveness of Sustainable Destinations (Y) Tourism Objects in Semarang City is not significant while the statistical value is 2.991498 (> 1.96) as in Table 5 means that the indirect effect of Local Branding (X1) on the Competitiveness of Sustainable Destinations (Y) moderated by Social Media (M) on Tourism Objects in Semarang City is significant. The meaning of the results of this study is that Social Media functions as a pure moderator, meaning that hypothesis 5 which states that the influence of Local Branding (X1) on the Competitiveness of Sustainable Destinations (Y) moderated by Social Media (M) on Tourism Objects in Semarang City is supported. The original sample estimate value is +0.805647, shows that the direction of influence of Local Branding (X1) on the Competitiveness of Sustainable Destinations (Y) moderated by Social Media on Tourism Objects in Semarang City is positive. This means that Social Media is able to strengthen the influence of Local Branding on the Competitiveness of Sustainable Destinations.

Table 6 shows the R-Square value for each research construct. R Square is used to test the Good of Fit Structural Model, namely looking at the significance of the latent model, while predicting endogenous latent variables with reflection indicators through the Q Square value, provided that if Q Square > 0 then the latent variable has good relevance. Q2 value predictive relevance 0.02; 0.15 and 0.35 indicate weak, moderate and strong models. The results of the Q Square calculation can be seen in Table 6.

means that Local Branding is influenced by Local Culture and Destination Image in Tourism Objects in Semarang City by 75.85%. Q-Square is calculated to show that the research model has relevance in predicting Local Culture (X2) and Destination Image (X3) with Local Branding (X1) in Tourism Objects in Semarang City, this is evidenced by the composition of $Q = 0.568352 > 0$. Q Square value on Local Branding variable (X1) indicates that the model has strong predictive relevance because the resulting value is 0.575377.

Table 6. shows that the R - Square value in the construct of Sustainable Destination

Competitiveness (Y) is 0.817528 meaning that the Competitiveness of Sustainable Destinations (Y) is directly influenced by Local Branding (X1) and Destination Image of 81.75%. The Q Square value of 0.668352 (> 0) indicates that the model has strong predictive relevance

Discussion

The results of the hypothesis test show that Local Branding (X1) is directly proven to have a significant effect on the Competitiveness of Sustainable Destinations. This means that the Competitiveness of Sustainable Destinations can be formed if the management of Semarang city tourism objects is able to offer charming regional culture, maintain unique buildings, maintain buildings with historic architecture, always present various artistic performances. The research findings are in line with the research results of Tanja, et al., (2012); Nikolova & Hassan, (2013); Lidia, et al., (2013); Jose, et al., (2016); Wrong, (2019).

Local culture (X2) according to the results of the Hypothesis test proved to have a significant effect on Local Branding (X1). This can be explained that to form Local Branding (X1) managers of tourism objects in the city of Semarang need to always maintain tourism objects which are original tourist objects from Semarang and their existence is hereditary as a reflection of the habits and traditions of the people of Semarang city. The positive direction of Local Culture (X2) on Local Branding (X1) can be interpreted if the provider of tourism objects in the city of Semarang is getting better at maintaining the existence of tourism objects, it will be easier to build Local Branding (X1). This is in line with the research findings of Sobol, et al., (2018); Steenkamp, et al., (2010); Sinha & Sheth, (2017); Hall, (2014).

Destination Image(X3) proved to have a significant effect on Local Branding (X1), this shows that Local Branding (X1) can be realized through the efforts of tourism object managers in the city of Semarang to provide a series of differences in each show offered to visitors, provide different offers so that visitors Tourist attractions are always reminded of the tourism objects they visit, provide various wishes for visitors which have an impact on a pleasant atmosphere and make visitors comfortable at tourist attractions. Destination Image (X3) has a

positive direction influencing Local Branding (X1), meaning that the better the image of the destination, the easier it will be for tourism object managers in the city of Semarang to build Local Branding. This finding is in line with the results of Hailin's research, (2011); Hasliza et al., (2013), Stylos et al., 2016,

Destination Image(X3) has an effect on the Competitiveness of Sustainable Destinations (Y) Tourist Attractions in Semarang City, this can be explained that the Competitiveness of Sustainable Destinations can be realized through the availability of a variety of entertainment held at Semarang city tourism objects, fulfilling the wishes of visitors, creating an atmosphere of attractive tourist attractions. fun, impressive and comfort. The effect of Destination Image (X3) on the Competitiveness of Sustainable Destinations (Y) has a positive direction, which means that the better the image of the destination offered to visitors, the more it will be able to shape the competitiveness of a sustainable destination. This finding is in line with the research results of Andrades, (2013); Hua, et al., (2016); Kara & Kunt, (2020); Oyunchimeg, et al. (2022), Hamid, et al. (2022)

The influence of Social Media (M) on the Competitiveness of Sustainable Destinations (Y) of Tourism Objects in Semarang City is not significant, it can be explained that the establishment of Competitiveness of Sustainable Destinations is not due to efforts to provide educational information related to tourism objects, the availability of comment space that is easy for visitors to review tourism, the openness of the comment column space to provide answers to questions from social media users, the existence of an easily accessible comment space, giving answers that can be accounted for and actively interacting with social media users. The indirect effect of Local Branding (X1) on the Competitiveness of Sustainable Destinations (Y) moderated by Social Media (M) on Tourism Objects in Semarang City is significant. This can be explained that Social Media functions as a pure moderator, meaning that Social Media is able to strengthen the influence of Local Branding (X1) on the Competitiveness of Sustainable Destinations (Y). the meaning of these findings is that the competitiveness of Sustainable Destinations can be formulated if the management of Semarang city tourism objects is able to offer charming regional culture, maintain unique buildings, maintain

buildings with historic architecture, always present various artistic performances. Support for efforts to provide educational information related to tourism objects, the availability of comment rooms that are easily reviewed by visitors to tourist attractions, the openness of the comment column space to provide answers to questions from social media users, the existence of an easily accessible comment space,

Conclusion

Competitiveness of Sustainable Destinations in Semarang city tourism objects can be manifested through optimal Local Branding and Destination Image management. Local Branding on Tourism Objects in Semarang City can be fulfilled through Local Culture and Destination Image. Local Branding directly significantly affects the Competitiveness of Sustainable Destinations. Local Culture directly significantly influences Local Branding in Tourism Objects in the City of Semarang. Destination Image directly significant effect on Local Branding Tourist Attractions in the City of Semarang. Destination Image directly significantly affect the Competitiveness of Sustainable Destinations in Tourism Objects in the City of Semarang. Social Media can function as pure moderator influence Local Branding on the Competitiveness of Sustainable Tourism Destinations in the City of Semarang.

Implications

Social Media is able to function as a pure moderator of the influence of Local Branding on the Competitiveness of Sustainable Tourism Destinations in Semarang City. Managers of tourism objects in Semarang City must optimally manage the existence of social media through the growth of Local Branding for visitors so that the Competitiveness of Sustainable Destinations in Tourism Objects in Semarang City can be realized.

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