

CUSTOMER-BASED BRAND EQUITY FOR A TOURISM DESTINATION (CBBETD): THE SPECIFIC CASE OF BANDUNG CITY, INDONESIA

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Abstract. *This study examines in detail the use of customer-based brand equity for a tourism destination (CBBETD) as a strategic tool for use with a specific city (Bandung City, Indonesia in this instance). The CBBETD scale developed by Konecnik (2005) and empiricized by Konecnik and Gartner (2007) was successfully adapted using qualitative and quantitative refinements for the city of Bandung. A sample of 400 visitors to Bandung was surveyed, and empirical psychometric assessment was run. The scale required minor adaptations but was found to be appropriate for use in this new context. The components of customer-based brand equity for a tourism destination were found to be: awareness, image, quality and loyalty. The successful adaptation of the scale is encouraging as it provides strategic insight on strengthening destination positioning in the minds of both current and future tourists. Managerial implications and suggestions for future research are provided.*

Key words: *tourism marketing, city branding, brand equity*

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Introduction

There is little question as to the importance of branding as a marketing strategy tool. Successful companies depend upon branding efforts to attract and maintain customers through identifying a unique position for their product/service offering (Keller, 1993). Cities as tourist destinations also benefit from concerted branding strategies (Kemp et al., 2012). In today's global world of tourism, traveling to distant vacation destinations is increasingly popular. As a result, the competition between cities to attract more tourists is intensifying. In order to enhance their tourism revenues, cities must develop effective city branding strategies to stand out in potential tourists' minds as viable choice possibilities. This kind of strategy will effectively build upon such attributes as unique cultural heritage and local amenities (Ashworth & Kavaratzis, 2009). As Hankinson (2001, 2004) suggests, it is vital for cities to create a brand which immediately generates images and expected experiences which will enhance the chance of travelers choosing that city over others competing for their business. The key according to Hankinson and Cowking (1993) is the creation of a relationship between the brand and the consumer so that the values associated with the city brand immediately mesh with the desires of the consumer. It is important to note here that city branding is not just for the benefit of tourist destination choice. It also enhances the chance for the city to obtain new residents, new businesses and new financial investors as well as travelers. All of these potential attractees will bring economic growth to the city that effectively presents itself as a preferred destination and a place to live and work (Popescu, 2012).

Branding Literature

According to the American Marketing Association, a brand is "a name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or a combination of them, intended to identify the goods and service of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors" (Keller, 2008, p.2). Brands help consumers to identify and differentiate goods and services. Brands also play an important role in building relationships between customers and products. Obviously a destination is a product under the definition of brand, but place branding is quite complex as there are so many facets to a city as a location for branding purposes given the economic, social, cultural, political and technological issues associated with cities as products (Anholt, 2004; Kerr, 2006; Koenig, 2011). In order to address the various facets of a brand associated with a city, the process for image building will require a longer time horizon and require cohesion in terms of city policies and marketing efforts to build consumer credibility due to the variety of constituencies involved with no clear ownership and transient political offices (Freire, 2005; Dinnie, 2011).

There are three main elements that are necessary to consider in the branding of a city as a travel destination (Hadrikurnia, 2011). The first element involves the physical components of the city (i.e., buildings, infrastructures, etc.). The second element includes the individual components of the city (i.e., people, citizens, and tourists who are all

affected by cultural factors – which creates different values, beliefs, and characteristics; social factors, personal factors, such as personal objectives, personal preferences, and so on; and psychological factors). The third element involves organizational elements (i.e., the group that consists of individuals who share the same objectives, beliefs, etc.). What becomes more nebulous in the branding process is the creation of trust in the various constituencies of the city regarding what the city is doing to protect and enhance the living conditions for all of its residents and visitors (Kavaratzis, 2008; Underwood & Fray, 2008; Konig, 2011). The challenge is that while cities have a variety of different target audiences to serve, the core brand position must be consistent (Dinnie, 2011).

Brand Equity

The concept of brand equity is important when addressing branding strategy. Brand equity involves the assets, liabilities and value added to a brand involving the product or service's name and accompanying logos and symbols, which help it to be differentiated from all other competitors (Aaker, 1991; Kamakura & Russel, 1993; Keller, 2008). Keller (1998, 2008) suggests that brand equity is comprised of brand awareness, brand image, perceived brand quality, and brand loyalty:

- **Brand Awareness**
Brand awareness involves the consumer's recognition of the brand. It is about how to move the brand to a top-of-mind position in his or her head. Logos, tag-lines, packaging and such are things that can create this type of awareness for consumers.
- **Brand Image**
Brand image is about any association related to a brand that helps the customers differentiate the brand from the others. In order to create a close fit between brand positioning and the expectations of the consumer, the image of the brand must be effectively communicated with the goal of alignment with what the consumers see and expect to get from the use of the branded product/service.
- **Perceived Quality**
Perceived quality becomes crucial in terms of brand equity as it affects the awareness, image, and also the customer's loyalty. It affects the image of the brand, particularly in terms of perceptions of price and value. Perceived quality is a major affector of brand loyalty and ultimately firm profitability.
- **Brand Loyalty**
Brand loyalty is at the core of brand equity. The customer who feels a bond with the brand will exhibit loyalty towards the brand. In this era of relationship marketing, keeping the customer loyal will result in increasing positive effect in terms of volume of purchases and positive word of mouth. The tighter the fit between the brand and the individual, the more important the brand becomes and the more loyal the customer will become.

Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) and Travel Destinations

In order to create strong brand equity, especially for a place, destination, or a city, it is vital to analyze brand equity from the standpoint of the consumer and his or her perceptions of the location in question. The concept known as customer-based brand equity was defined by Keller in 1998 as *“the differential effect that brand knowledge has on consumer response to the marketing of that brand”*. This study builds heavily on the foundation built by Keller regarding customer-based brand equity, and it is extended to the particular application involving tourist destination cities in the use of Customer-Based Brand Equity for a Tourism Destination (CBBETD) as proposed by Konecnik (2005) and later empiricized by Konecnik and Gartner in 2007. Table 1 provides an overview of the literature reflecting the CBBETD construct.

The first mention of the construct was by Konecnik in 2005 in which the proposed four components as discussed by Keller (1998) were suggested with regard to a tourist destination city. This was later refined and the manifestations associated with the four sub-dimensions of CBBETD were presented in the study by Konecnik and Gartner in 2007. The authors found that the four dimensions worked well in the development of a brand equity measure for a tourist destination. They found that awareness entailed what tourists know or perceive about the destination in question asking whether they had heard of the city, what characteristics came to mind, and recognition of pictures, tag-lines and logos connected to the city. They also found that brand image involved what they perceived about the image associated with the city destination, its surroundings, and its amenities (e.g., nature, landscape, weather, cultural offerings, etc.). This dimension was later found by Konecnik (2010) to be the most critical component of CBBETD in terms of customer choice of a travel destination. The third dimension, brand quality, was also found to be important for its impact upon consumer behavior (Konecnik & Gartner, 2007). This dimension focused on the respondent's perception of how high the quality was of the overall environment surrounding the city destination (e.g., the quality of the accommodations, food, atmosphere, personal safety, services and value for money). Brand image deals with what comes to mind in terms of city attributes given the city name and general image have been created while brand quality deals with the perceptions of quality associated with those particular attributes. Finally, the fourth dimension is brand loyalty, which was found to have a significant impact upon the choice of a particular destination (Konecnik & Gartner, 2007). This dimension focused on intention to revisit the city along with desire to recommend the destination to others. This construct has proven to be important in a consumer destination choice, and tourism research has built upon this seminal work (cf., Cai, 2002; Gartner & Ruzzier, 2011; Gnoth, 2002; Konecnik, 2004, 2010; Konecnik & Gartner, 2007; Olins, 2002; Tasci & Gartner, 2009). The conceptual framework for the study is found in Figure 1.

TABLE 1. Literature Review of CBBETD

Author	Objectives	Construct		Result
Konecnik (2005)	To investigate the potential of transferring the branding principals to tourism destination	CBBETD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness • Image • Perceived Quality • Loyalty 	Branding principals can be transferred to destination from product
Konecnik and Gartner (2006)	Introducing the concept of CBBETD and the application to a destination	CBBETD Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heard of TD • Name of TD • Characteristics of TD • Imagining TD • Symbol / Logo of TD 	All of the dimensions are important toward destination evaluation and can be expressed through the concept of CBBETD
		CBBETD Image	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nature • Mountain and Lakes • Beaches • Town and Cities • Health Resorts • Historical Attractions • Nightlife and Entertainment • Recreation Activities • Friendly people • Pleasant weather • Cultural Attractions • Political Stability • Adventures • Shopping Facilities • Relaxing Atmosphere • Exciting Atmosphere 	
		CBBETD Perceived Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unpolluted Environment • Accommodations • Infrastructure • Cleanliness • Personal safety • Local Food • Services • Communication • Low Prices • Good Value for Money 	
		CBBETD Loyalty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of Previous Visitations • Time of Last Visitations • Preferred TD to Visit • TD More Benefits • Visit TD in Future • Recommend TD • Only Visit TD 	

Konecnik (2010)	Examining the demand-size perspective on tourism destination and investigating more comprehensive measure that can be applied to destination brand as to introduce the concept of CBBETD	CBBETD Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name of TD • Characteristics of TD 	Image attributes found out to play the most important role in evaluating a destination – but tourists in different countries may find different dimensions of CBBETD concept that are important for them – such as in the German case – quality is the most important one.
		CBBETD Image	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nature • Mountain and Lakes • Beaches • Town and Cities • Health Resorts • Historical Attractions • Entertainment • Recreation Activities • Friendly people • Pleasant weather • Cultural Attractions • Shopping Facilities • Relaxing Atmosphere • Exciting Atmosphere 	
		CBBETD Perceived Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accommodations • Infrastructure • Cleanliness • Personal safety 	
		CBBETD Loyalty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preferred TD to Visit • TD More Benefits • Visit TD in Future • Recommend TD • Only Visit TD 	
Mok Kim Man (2010)	Examining the image of Sabah state as eco-tourism destination	CBBETD Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heard of TD • Name of TD • Characteristics of TD • Picture of TD • Symbol or Logo of TD 	Sabah's nature evaluated by foreign tourists as the highest level so that it needs a brand identity in combining ecology with a modern city.
		CBBETD Image	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beautiful Nature • Beautiful Mountain and Lakes • Good Beaches • Lovely Town and Cities • Modern Health Resorts • Interesting Historical Attractions • Good Nightlife and Entertainment • Good Opportunity for Recreation Activities • Friendly people • Pleasant weather • Interesting Cultural Attractions • Political stability • Good Opportunity for Adventures • Shopping Facilities • Relaxing Atmosphere • Exciting Atmosphere • Availability of International Flights 	

		CBBETD Perceived Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unpolluted Environment • High quality of accommodation • High quality of infrastructure • High quality of cleanliness • High quality of personal safety • Appealing Local Food (cuisine) • Low Prices of Tourism Services • High Quality of Services • Ease of Communication • Good Value for Money 	
		CBBETD Loyalty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preferred TD to Visit • TD More Benefits • Visit TD in Future • Recommend TD • Only Visit TD • Have Grown to Like TD • Continue Visiting TD 	

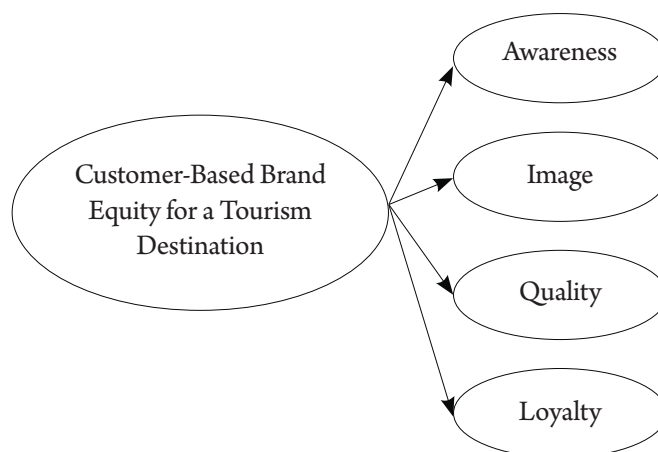


FIGURE 1. Customer-Based Brand Equity for a Tourism Destination

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to further develop and test the Consumer-Based Brand Equity for a Tourism Destination (CBBETD) construct scale in the context of the third largest city in Indonesia, Bandung, and examine the impact of CBBETD on destination preference. The psychometric properties of the scale will be examined in this new context and regressions will be run to examine causal relationships between CBBETD and destination travel planning and preferences. The two major research questions for this exploratory research focus on the possibility of the scale to be adapted and utilized for the city of Bandung:

RQ1: Can the Consumer-Based Brand Equity for a Tourism Destination (CBBETD) scale be adapted for the city of Bandung?

RQ2: Which of the sub-dimensions of Consumer-Based Brand Equity for a Tourism Destination will be useful for strategic decisions regarding tourism in the city of Bandung?

Bandung City

Bandung is the capital city of West Java Province. It is the third largest city in Indonesia after Jakarta and Surabaya with a population of around 2.5 million. In Dutch colonial times, Bandung is known as 'Parijs van Java' related to its European ambiance. The city is also known as 'The Flower City' due to its prevalent trees and gardens. Bandung has many historical heritage buildings and houses the Asia-Africa museum in the building which served as the site for the Asia-Africa Conference held in 1955. In terms of climate, the mountains surrounding the city provide a conduit for cooler, pleasant temperatures.

Research Methodology

The research methodology uses the foundation for the CBBETD scale as developed and tested by Konecnik (2010) and Mok Kim Man (2010). As there were some changes in the manifestations of the scale for CBBETD, and since the scale was not heavily tested in prior research, Exploratory Factor Analysis was used to test a new version of the scale for use in a Bandung-specific context. Extensive qualitative assessment was utilized to identify relevant manifestations for the four sub-dimensions associated with CBBETD (awareness, image, quality and loyalty). The research involved the use of questionnaires in a face-to-face setting using domestic and international visitors to Bandung as well as the use of online questionnaires with those who are considered to be visitors to Bandung. There were 250 completed questionnaires from locations around Bandung and 214 that were filled out by qualified Bandung visitors bringing the total sample size to 465. The elimination of problematic questionnaires reduced the final sample size to 400. The data were collected in January of 2012 with no resident of Bandung being utilized. All respondents were either Indonesians from other parts of the country or international visitors.

For the CBBETD measure, the measures of awareness and loyalty are borrowed measures, while the sub-dimensions of image and perceived quality are modified measures. In the previous research conducted by Mok Kim Man (2010) for Sabah State, adaptations to the Konecnik (2010) measure were made to include such attributes in image as good beaches, lovely town and cities, modern health resort, which were not appropriate for Bandung city so those items were eliminated from the scale. Other relevant attributes that were appropriate for Bandung were then added to reflect important aspects such as beautiful Dutch architecture, comfortable resorts and hotels, interesting events, and delicious cuisine. Also there was a need to add relevant items to perceived quality such as the ease associated with finding helpful information and ease of access. A complete listing of all of the manifestations that made up the CBBETD scale is found in Table 2.

TABLE 2. Operational Variables

No	Variable	Sub-Variable	Measures
1	Respondent's Profile	Socio-demographic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender • Age • Occupation • Origin
		Travel Behavior Characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequency of Visit • Time of Visit • Visit Companion • Purpose of Visit
2	CBBETD	Awareness – what the tourists know or think they know about a destination (Konecnik & Gartner, 2006)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heard of TD • Name of TD • Characteristics of TD • Picture of TD • Symbol or Logo of TD
		Image – as the most critical dimension in CBBETD (Konecnik, 2010)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nature • Mountains & Scenery / Landscape • Architecture • Resorts & Hotels • Nightlife & Entertainment • Recreation Activities • Friendly People • Pleasant Weather • Cultural Attraction • Events • Political Stability • Shopping Facilities • Relaxing Atmosphere • Exciting Atmosphere • Interesting Atmosphere • Delicious Culinary • International Flights
		Quality – which is a vital element affecting consumer behavior (Konecnik & Gartner, 2006)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unpolluted environment • Accommodation • Infrastructure • Cleanliness • Personal Safety • Local Food • Low Price • Services • Ease of Communication • Value for Money • Gathering Information • Visit Access
		Loyalty – which influences tourism decision, especially destination choice (Konecnik & Gartner, 2006)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preferred TD to visit • TD More Benefits • Visit TD in the Future • Recommend TD • Only Visit TD • Have Grown to Like TD • Continue Visiting TD

Respondents

In collecting the data, the portion of male and female as the correspondent is almost the same – 208 (52%) female and 192 (48%) male. In terms of the age of the visitors, most (256 or 64% of the total) were in the 18-24 age range. This reflects the fact that many visitors to Bandung represent different schools and school groups or visits with their family. The next largest group of respondents (99 or 24.75% of the total) were aged from 25 to 34. The remainder included 45 (11.25% of the total) aged more than 35 years. In terms of stated occupations, the majority (232 or 58% of the total) identified themselves as students or scholars. The other respondent categories represented were employed (98 or 24.5%), self-employed (49 or 12.25%), housewives (19 or 4.75%) and the retired (2 or 0.5%). Finally, in terms of national origin, the vast majority were from West Indonesia (343 or 87.75%), followed by Asian not from Indonesia (22 or 5.5%), Middle Indonesian (20 or 5%), European (6 or 1.5%), North American (3 or 0.75%), Australian (3 or 0.75%), East Indonesian (2 or 0.5%) and other (1 or 0.25%). What is worth mentioning is that out of 400 visitors 365 were all from Indonesia as opposed to only 35 from other areas.

Testing of CBBETD as a Valid and Reliable Measure

Validity analysis results are shown in Table 3. Looking at the table, all of the variables can be considered as valid since the KMO value is above 0.5 for each. Table 4 shows the Cronbach Alpha Coefficients to reflect the reliabilities associated with each of the sub-dimensions.

TABLE 3. Validity

Variable	KMO	Total Variance Explained
Awareness	0.733	75.335
Image	0.838	54.008
Perceived Quality	0.861	55.287
Loyalty	0.801	68.411

TABLE 4. Reliability

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha
Awareness	0.770
Image	0.847
Perceived Quality	0.853
Loyalty	0.835

Factor analysis was run to check the various components of CBBETD. The first of the sub-dimensions to examine is awareness. Respondents' awareness of Bandung as a tourism destination is actually quite high as can be seen in Table 5. Most of the respondents can easily recognize Bandung as a tourism destination. Most of the respondents can easily remember some characteristics of Bandung (mean 4.04) and can picture Bandung in their minds (mean 3.96). Unfortunately, the respondents tend to be unsure about any symbols or logos associated with Bandung as a tourism destination (mean 3.40). Moreover, factor analysis was conducted since the results of using KMO (Kaiser, Meyer, Olkin) measures at 0.733 were above 0.5, and Bartlett's test below 0.05 – which is significant. Two of the items were found to be problematic and

were removed from the analysis. The remaining three items are found to load highly on a single factor. These three items are able to explain 54.39% of the observed variance, and the reliability is reasonably high at 0.770 (from Table 4).

TABLE 5. Awareness

Measures	Mean	Factor Loading
Some characteristics of Bandung come quickly to my mind	4.04	0.817
I can picture Bandung in my mind	3.96	0.842
I can recall the symbol or logo of Bandung as a tourism destination	3.40	0.603
% Variance extracted		54.39

The second sub-dimension that was examined is image. There were a number of scale items that were eliminated since they did not clearly resonate with the respondents or were part of factors that were superficially relevant or simply redundant. The analysis potentially suggested four separate factors, but two of these were problematic with very low loadings indicating validity concerns. Two were eliminated leaving only two items which focused on the events and the museums, and these were identified as Old Style/ Historical and the other was labeled as Ambiance Image. The two groups of items are seen in Table 6. What was supported by our qualitative work is that while many items were descriptive of the city and its surroundings, only the old style offerings focusing on the historical aspects (museum and cultural/historical events) were relevant in what was termed Old Style and those aspects associated with city ambiance reflecting such features as atmosphere, weather, shopping facilities, entertainment and nightlife. Our qualitative work did indicate that the knowledge of the tourists concerning other aspects of image (the mountains, surrounding amenities, etc.) were not particularly strong, so the results are not surprising. The removed items allowed us to rerun the factor analysis with fairly straightforward results as can be seen in Table 6. The fact that the original work had produced many items which were not necessarily appropriate for research involving Bandung reflects the need for this type of perceptual scale to be adapted for each new tourism destination context.

TABLE 6. Image

Measures	Mean	Factor Loading	
		Old Style	Ambiance Image
Good nightlife and entertainment	3.68		0.618
Interesting events	3.57	0.610	
Interesting museums	3.21	0.695	
Good shopping facilities	4.01		0.565
Relaxing atmosphere	3.94		0.715
Exciting atmosphere	3.83		0.785
% Variance extracted		20.173	38.79

The third sub-dimension is quality. The factor analysis results can be found in Table 7. In this case there were two separate sub-scales that were identified. One focused on manifestations associated with cleanliness and environmental concerns while the other concentrated on services provided and accessibility. When looking at the reactions of the respondents to the various scale items, many problems were identified with the city's level of cleanliness (mean 2.86), as there is often evidence of garbage in the surrounding area. Tourists also felt unsatisfied with the polluted environment as the city is getting more crowded and full of vehicles, and they also indicated problems with a lack of proper maintenance for public buildings and perceived concerns about public safety. Other aspects of city quality were more promising. Tourists found Bandung a good value for money, easy to find information, and very accessible. The most positive reactions were for the ease of access to the city and its amenities (mean 3.63) with qualitative research indicating tourist positive reactions to the ready availability of good cafés and restaurants providing good value for money. An interesting strategic issue can be found in the fact that there was such a negative reaction of the tourists to the first sub-dimension for quality as opposed to the reactions to the second sub-dimension. In a way the services and accessibility dimension would seem to reflect the best qualities of Bandung, with appealing local food supported by high quality of services and good value for money, but one concern that arises is that if the local food is appealing while overall service quality is perceived to be poor, this might result in overall bad feelings about service and infrastructural quality. These somewhat opposing views of the quality of the city by the tourists create a need to look more deeply into these reactions and perceptions and consider upgrades in buildings and services to create a better overall impression for present and future visitors.

TABLE 7. Quality

Measures	Mean	Factor Loading	
		Cleanliness	Services
Unpolluted environment	2.92	.649	
High quality of infrastructure	3.07	.537	
High level of cleanliness	2.86	.664	
Low price for tourism services	3.43		.581
High quality of services	3.34		.701
Ease of communication (low problems)	3.57		.613
Good value for money	3.52		.708
Ease of gathering information	3.56		.720
Ease of visit access	3.63		.738
% Variance Extracted		19.281	41.937

The final sub-dimension to examine is loyalty. The factor analysis results can be found in Table 8. In this case, three of the sub-scale items proved to be problematic

and factor analysis was run with the remaining four items. These results showed high loadings on a single factor and the reliability was high at 0.835 (Table 4). Most of the respondents who have already visited Bandung stated that Bandung is one of the preferred destinations they want to visit (mean 3.92). These tourists would like and intend to continue visiting Bandung in the future. They even intend to recommend Bandung to others. These four items were able to explain 51.36% of the observed variance.

TABLE 8. Loyalty

Measures	Mean	Factor Loading
Bandung is one of the preferred destinations I want to visit	3.92	0.789
I would like to visit Bandung in the future	4.07	0.720
I intend to recommend Bandung to people I know	3.80	0.755
I intend to continue visiting Bandung in the future	3.74	0.707
% Variance extracted		51.36

Conclusion

In conclusion, the construct in question, Consumer-Based Equity for a Tourism Destination was found to be adaptable for the city of Bandung and, with some item eliminations, appropriate for use in this new context. The only problematic component would seem to be the image dimension, and this may be an issue resulting from inconsistencies that were noted by respondents and during qualitative assessments in the reactions of individuals to various aspects of Bandung city that were not meaningful to them (e.g., mountains and scenery). What does seem to be helpful is the ambiance factor that reflects such attributes as weather and atmosphere and nightlife/entertainment along with the old style offerings like the cultural events and museums. It was also found that there were two separate dimensional factors for the sub-dimension known as perceived quality, which is also reflective of the things discovered during the qualitative preliminary phase of the study when it was learned that there were basic inconsistencies like concerns over pollution, cleanliness and personal safety while respondents also felt that the city had good cuisine options, was a good value for money and easily made relevant information available.

The use of the CBBETD measure is helpful since it does provide strategic options for Bandung to improve its positioning with current and future tourists. There is a need to repair buildings, clean up parts of the city, and provide better public safety, but there is also a positive foundation to build upon as the city is seen as having good weather, nice atmosphere and provides good cuisine for its visitors to enjoy. There are encouraging indications from the loyalty dimension that these visitors do have good experiences regarding the city and feel some loyalty and will recommend the city to others as a tourist destination.

Suggestions for Future Research

There is certainly a potential demonstrated here for the use of this construct in future research. The scale and its sub-components should be tested in other contexts to find commonalities that might lend themselves to more of an etic type of modeling. This type of modeling is best when it is able to reflect all relevant attributes associated with the particular tourist dimension from the perspective of city tourism appeals and sound strategic decision making, but it is also potentially valuable to take less of an emic approach and look into the possibility of a more parsimonious scale that might be useful in a wider variety of locations. One particular issue that is worth mentioning here is that this study just built from the perspective of tourists to the city. The research on city branding discussed earlier in this paper also reflects the need to consider city branding from a variety of stakeholder perspectives as the citizens, administrative officials and local business leaders and employees also have their perceptions of the city and its image. These must also be examined.

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