The Role Of Agrarian Cultural Values In Building Destination Brand Equity In Jatiluwih Rice Terraces

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to inspect the role of agrarian cultural values in mediating the influence of destination brand awareness, association, image, quality, and satisfaction on destination brand equity and expand the Jatiluwih Rice Terraces branding by including cultural aspects by considering visitors' points of view regarding destination brand awareness, association, image, quality and satisfaction. This research was conducted to support the Bali Provincial Government, which focuses on developing tourism based on agrarian culture to reduce the conversion of agricultural land to non-agricultural use. This research was using Latent Variable Analysis (Lavaan) to analyze data. The number of samples in this study was determined to be 68 respondents. The data collection technique through interviews with questionnaire tools starts from measuring variables which are carried out by creating indicators to prevent deviations from the main problem. This paper provides empirical insight into how agrarian cultural values are influenced as a mediating variable. Based on the research results, the p-value, β, and z-value of the indirect relationship (b) are p-value = 0.818; = 0.031; z value = 0.230. These results indicate that agrarian cultural values did not succeed as a mediating variable between the dependent and independent variables, which means that agrarian cultural values are not the reason why visitors visit Jatiluwih Rice Terraces. Two dependent variables have a significant effect on agrarian cultural values, namely destination brand quality (β = 0.239; z-value = 2.200) and destination brand satisfaction (β = 0.612; z-value = 5.915), which means that the two variables have a positive and significant influence on the emergence of tourist interest in the agrarian cultural values that exist in the Jatiluwih Rice Terraces. However, it can be seen that the more satisfied visitors are, the greater their curiosity about the agricultural and cultural values. The study's findings might not broadly apply because of the selected research methodology. As a result, researchers are encouraged to test the suggested theories further. This article contains implications for developing agrarian cultural values, namely by collaborating with the tour guide, and providing provision or training so that the tour guide is able to explain the cultural values of the Jatiluwih Rice Terraces. Apart from that, the management of Jatiluwih Rice Terraces can add in-depth cultural information on the website and flayer which will be given to visitors at the entrance.

Keywords: Agrarian cultural values, Agrotourism, Destination brand, Lavaan, World Cultural Heritage

BACKGROUND

Food is crucial to protect the survival of society. The availability of rice must be maintained because rice is the staple food of people in Indonesia. Cahyaningrum (2019) stated that the widespread conversion of food agricultural land to non-food agricultural land threatens the government's efforts to achieve food security. This statement is supported by BPS Bali data, which shows that in 3 years

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(Pradnyandari etal., 2025)

(2019-2022), the conversion area of rice fields in Tabanan Regency reached 322.15 hectares. This land conversion will undoubtedly threaten the availability of rice fields, impacting the amount of rice produced. Bali, as a tourism area, is very vulnerable to the conversion of land, which was initially agricultural land, into non-agricultural lands, such as shophouses, hotels, villas, night clubs, and others, which causes a reduction in green open land and makes Bali vulnerable to flooding. Therefore, a strategy is needed to synergize tourism with agriculture so that tourism can continue to run without changing land functions, which disrupts food security. In recent years, the Bali Provincial Government has focused its tourism development on an agrarian culture-based tourism development model (Utama et al., 2023). The development of tourism based on agrarian culture is carried out to uphold sustainability by utilizing our natural resources without destroying them. One form of agricultural culture in Bali that is famous and used as a tourist destination is the terraced rice field landscape with an irrigation system called subak (Ayun et al., 2020). Subak in Bali Province is famous for its terraced landscape as a tourist attraction. One of them is Subak Jatiluwih, which has been recognized as a cultural heritage site by UNESCO. Subak is an agricultural culture-based destination visited by many tourists from various parts of the world. However, Subak Jatiluwih must have a strategy to survive the increasingly fierce competition for agrotourism. In intense global competition, how visitors perceive the destination brand is essential in determining whether a destination can be successful (Zhang et al., 2021). Based on these, the management must focus on destination brand equity. Tourists' perceptions of destination brand equity play a significant role in the characteristics and segmentation of tourist destinations and in increasing tourist loyalty and income earned from these tourist destinations (Álvarez et al., 2020). Destination brand equity is influenced by destination brand awareness, destination brand association, destination brand image, destination brand quality, and destination brand satisfaction (Chi et al., 2020; Gómez et al., 2015; Keller, 2003; Larasati, 2023; Qu et al., 2011; Virutamasen et al., 2015). This research uses latent variable analysis (Lavaan) in the RStudio software to answer the objectives of the research, i.e., testing, analyzing, and carrying out simulation models of the role of agrarian cultural values in mediating between the variables that influenced destination brand equity and destination brand equity Jatiluwih rice terraces. There are two hypotheses used, namely H0: Agrarian cultural value variables do not mediate the relationship between variables that influence destination brand equity and Jatiluwih Rice Terraces destination brand equity, and H1: Agrarian cultural value variables mediate the relationship between variables that influence destination brand equity and Jatiluwih destination brand equity. Rice Terraces.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research is descriptive and uses quantitative and qualitative methods. The research was completed over three months, from April 29 to July 29, 2024. The research's data are divided into two categories: primary data and secondary data. Primary data are gathered from interviews with respondents, observation results, and documentation results. Secondary data includes the number of tourists visiting the Jatiluwih rice terraces. Data was processed using quantitative and qualitative descriptive analysis.

The target population is foreign tourists visiting the Jatiluwih rice terraces. The choice of foreign tourists is based on the desire to see what extent the value of agrarian culture is known to the

international community, considering that UNESCO recognized the Jatiluwih Rice terraces as a World Cultural Heritage. This sample was determined using an accidental sampling technique because the population was unknown. The number of samples was determined using the Lemeshow theory. Based on these calculations, the sample in this study was determined to be 68 respondents. The data collection techniques used were interviews, observation, and documentation.

The questionnaire is the main instrument in this research. The questionnaire used is an open questionnaire, which contains two essential parts. The first part concerns demographic data, including gender, age, and educational background. The second part is questions regarding the role of agrarian cultural values mediating the impact of the variables of the independent variable on the dependent variable. This research consists of five independent variables, i.e., destination brand awareness measured by nine indicators, destination brand association measured by nine indicators, destination brand image measured by eight indicators, destination brand quality measured by six indicators, and destination brand satisfaction measured by seven indicators. Apart from that, one mediating variable, i.e., agrarian cultural values, was measured by 11 indicators, and one dependent variable, i.e., destination brand equity, was measured by seven indicators.

The role of agrarian cultural values as a mediating variable was analyzed using Latent Variable Analysis (Lavaan) in RStudio software. Latent variable analysis (Lavaan) is an analysis tool based on SEM equations created by Yves Rosseel in 2012 with the help of the R Development Core Team 2012 (Rosseel, 2012). Its name reveals the long-term goal: to provide a collection of tools that can be used to explore, estimate, and understand a wide family of latent variable models, including factor analysis, structural equation, longitudinal, multilevel, latent class, item response, and missing data models. There are several stages in carrying out this analysis, the first stage in this analysis is to create a path diagram with the aim of finding out the pattern of relationships between the variables to be studied. In the second stage, an outer model analysis was carried out to test the validity and reliability of the data that will be used in the research. The third stage, an inner model analysis was carried out to provide an overview of the relationship between the variables forming the model in the research. The final stage, namely the fourth stage, interprets the analysis results based on calculations.

Path Diagram

Path diagrams are used to describe and analyze relationship patterns between variables with the aim of making it easier to determine the direct or indirect influence of a collection of independent variables on the dependent variable which is mediated by the mediating variable. The path diagram was created according to the research model used in this research. The path diagram model used in this research can be seen in Figure 1.

The frequency and percentage of respondents' demographic data used in this research shows that most respondents were female, with the percentage of females being 57.35% and males being 42.65%. According to the respondents' age, 39.70% were in the 17-30 age category, which constituted the majority of respondents, 38.24% in the 31-50 year category, and 22.06% were in the 50-year and above age category. Furthermore, the respondents' educational background, 45.59% hold a bachelor's degree, 30.88% hold a master's degree, 16.18% hold a diploma, 5.88% are high school graduates, and 1.47% have a doctorate.
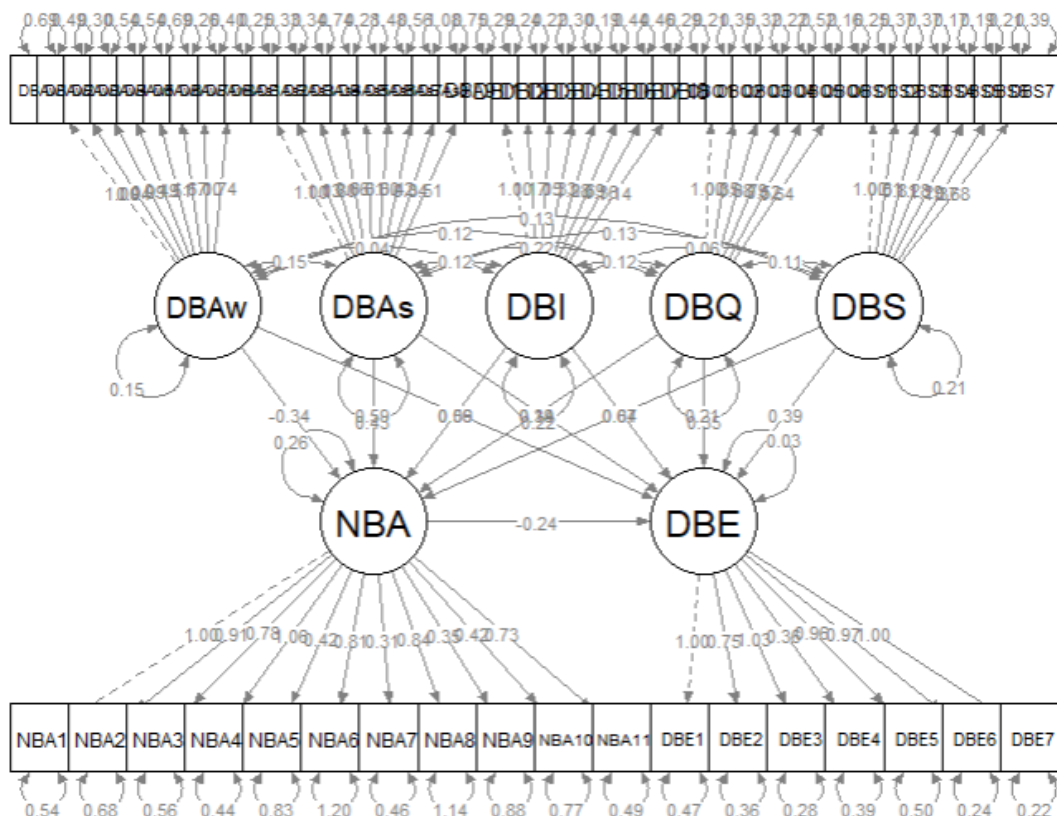
Figure 1. Path Diagram
Source: Primary Data, 2024

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Convergent Validity and Composite Reliability Test

The validity and reliability tests are performed using the accuracy questionnaire-based instrument utilized in this research. Validity testing to measure the accuracy of the data on each indicator in explaining the latent construct is carried out using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). An indicator is considered valid in the convergent validity test if its loading factor value exceeds 0.5 (Bahri & Zamzam, 2015; Gana & Broc, 2019). Indicators with a loading factor value less than 0.5 will be eliminated. An AVE calculation also requires that the AVE value be more significant than 0.5. Accepting an AVE of less than 0.5 is possible if the composite reliability is more significant than 0.6 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Lam, 2012). Reliability shows the consistency of measuring instruments in measuring variables. A measuring instrument is considered to have good reliability if the values of Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability (CR) are ≥ 0.6 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Ghozali, 2016; Hair et al., 2010). Based on these criteria, elimination is carried out so that the model meets the requirements. Table 1 provides the result of the convergent validity and reliability tests.

Table 1. Assessment of Convergent Validity and Composite Reliability

Construct	Items	Loading Factors	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE	$\sqrt{AVE}$
Destination Brand Awareness (DBAw)	DBAw3	0.566	0.719	0.741	0.505	0.710
	DBAw5	0.744				
	DBAw6	0.756				
Destination Brand Association (DBAs)	DBAs1	0.771	0.798	0.798	0.582	0.763
	DBAs2	0.836				
	DBAs3	0.663				
Destination Brand Image (DBI)	DBI2	0.786	0.845	0.843	0.576	0.759
	DBI3	0.756				
	DBI5	0.781				
	DBI8	0.717				
Destination Brand Quality (DBQ)	DBQ1	0.955	0.740	0.775	0.553	0.744
	DBQ3	0.563				
	DBQ4	0.605				
Destination Brand Satisfaction (DBS)	DBS4	0.862	0.870	0.872	0.693	0.832
	DBS5	0.791				
	DBS6	0.743				
Agrarian Cultural Values (ACV)	ACV1	0.791	0.834	0.844	0.568	0.754
	ACV3	0.781				
	ACV4	0.646				
	ACV11	0.787				
Destination Brand Equity (DBE)	DBE1	0.580	0.674	0.661	0.335	0.579
	DBE3	0.528				
	DBE6	0.590				
	DBE7	0.664				

Source: Processed Primary Data, 2024

After that, it is necessary to estimate model fit in this research by calculating model fit indicators. Model fit is seen from four indices based on the fit function with estimation methods, i.e. RMSEA (root mean square error of approximation) is more significant than 0.08 (Browne & Cudeck, 1992), SRMR (standardized root mean square residual) is more significant than 0.08 (Hu & Bentler, 1998), CFI (comparative fit index) and TLI (tucker-lewis index) are more significant than 0.90 (Bentler & Bonett, 1980). This research shows the values of SRMR = 0.059, RMSEA = 0.076, CFI = 0.919, and TLI = 0.903. Based on these, the model in this research has met the requirements and can continue to the following analysis stage.

Discriminant Validity Measurement

$\sqrt{AVE}$ is compared with correlations between factors in the discriminant validity test to ensure discriminant validity (Hair et al., 2010). The correlation between factors must be lower than the value

of each factor. Based on these criteria, the discriminant validity test in this research has been achieved. Table 2 shows the result of the discriminant validity test.

Table 2. The Result of The Discriminant Validity Test

	DBAw	DBAs	DBI	DBQ	DBS	ACV	DBE
DBAw	**0.710**						
DBAs	0.094	**0.763**					
DBI	0.019	0.098	**0.759**				
DBQ	0.100	0.190	0.122	**0.744**			
DBS	0.142	0.123	0.060	0.124	**0.832**		
ACV	0.119	0.389	0.283	0.273	0.271	**0.754**	
DBE	0.117	0.205	0.065	0.152	0.126	0.171	**0.579**

Source: Processed Primary Data, 2024

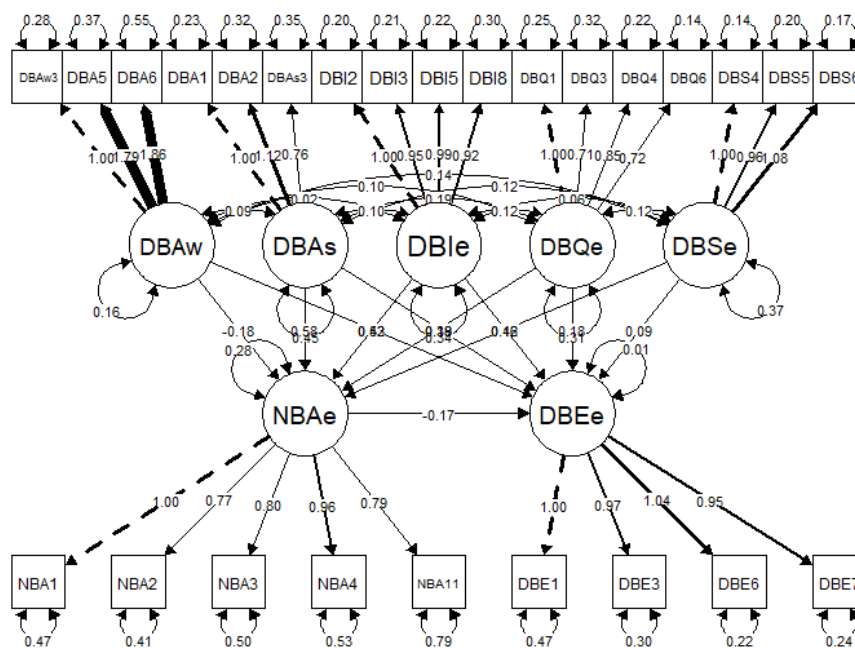**Structural Model Evaluation**

Figure 2. Structural Model Evaluation
Source: Processed Primary Data, 2024

The role of ACV in mediating the relationship between DBAw, DBAs, DBI, DBQ, and DBS on DBE is examined using structural equation modeling (SEM). Figure 2 shows an illustration of the structural model in this research.

The direct and indirect effects between independent variables on the dependent variables that are mediated by a mediating variable are tested using structural equation modeling (SEM). The direct effects are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Estimation of The Direct Efects

Direct Relationships			Standardized Coefficient	Standard Error	z-value	p-value
DBAw	->	ACV	-0.008	0.164	-0.076	**0.940**
DBAs	->	ACV	0.070	0.161	0.736	**0.462**
DBI	->	ACV	0.074	0.117	0.838	**0.402**
DBQ	->	ACV	0.239	0.152	2,200	0.028
DBS	->	ACV	0.612	0.151	5,915	0,000
DBAw	->	DBE	0.078	0.178	0.648	**0.517**
DBAs	->	DBE	0.137	0.173	1,264	**0.206**
DBI	->	DBE	0.022	0.125	0.223	**0.824**
DBQ	->	DBE	-0.064	0.123	-0.684	**0.494**
DBS	->	DBE	0.563	0.175	4,400	0,000
ACV	->	DBE	0.031	0.129	0.230	**0.818**

Source: Processed Primary Data, 2024

Based on the direct effects estimation results, two independent variables influence the mediating variable, namely DBQ and BDS. First, DBQ is directly related and significantly influences ACV with a value of $\beta = 0.239$ and p-value < 0.05. This shows that improving the quality of destination brands directly contributes to increasing agricultural cultural values. However, the strength of the relationship between DBQ and ACV is still considered weak because the β value is less than 0.3. Second, DBS significantly positively affects ACV with $\beta = 0.612$ and p-value < 0.05. This indicates that satisfaction with the destination brand significantly enhances the value of agrarian culture. The β value shows > 0.5, which means this relationship's strength has a strong influence. In other words, the higher the visitor satisfaction after visiting Jatiluwih Rice Terraces, the higher their interest in knowing the cultural values at Jatiluwih Rice Terraces. Furthermore, DBS is the only independent variable with a direct effect and a strong and significant positive relationship on DBE with a value of $\beta = 0.563$ and p-value < 0.05. This shows that satisfaction with the destination brand significantly influences the strength of destination brand equity. The higher the level of satisfaction with a destination, the greater the strength of the destination's brand equity.

After seeing the direct effect results, the coefficient of determination analysis will be carried out. The coefficient of determination (R-Square) was analyzed to show the model's ability to explain the variability of a dependent latent variable. The results show that the ACV r-square value is 0.458. This means that DBAw, DBA, DBI, DBQ, and DBS can explain 45.8% of the ACV variance, and the remaining 54.2% is explained by other variables not included in the model. Meanwhile, the r-squared value of DBE is 0.394. This means that DBAw, DBA, DBI, DBQ, DBS, and ACV can explain 39.4% of the DBE variance, and 60.6% may be explained by other variables not included in this study. Analysis of the indirect relationship between independent and dependent variables through mediating variables is presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Estimation of The Indirect Efects

Indirect Relationships			Standardized Coefficient	Standard Error	z-value	p-value
DBAw ->	**ACV ->**	**DBE**	0,000	0.025	-0.015	**0.988**
DBAs ->	**ACV ->**	**DBE**	0.002	0.029	0.123	**0.902**
DBI ->	**ACV ->**	**DBE**	0.002	0.020	0.149	**0.882**
DBQ ->	**ACV ->**	**DBE**	0.008	0.052	0.191	**0.849**
DBS ->	**ACV ->**	**DBE**	0.019	0.118	0.223	**0.824**

Source: Processed Primary Data, 2024

It is shown in Table 4 that there are no indirect effects that have a significant effect because all p-values are greater than 0.5. Fisher (1925) suggests 0.05 as the cutoff value. These findings suggest that ACV does not mediate the correlation between DBAw, DBAs, DBI, DBQ, and DBS on DBE.

Discussions

This research aims to test, analyze, and achieve a model of the role of ACV in mediating the influence of DBAw, DBAs, DBI, DBQ, and DBS on DBE of Jatiluwih rice terraces. The result shows that ACV, as determined by four indicators (water as a creation of God almighty, Hindu religious acculturation, cultural heritage, and irrigation system management), does not significantly mediate the influence of DBAw, DBAs, DBI, DBQ, DBS, and DBS toward DBE. These outcomes are consistent with the circumstances in the field. Most respondents said they did not visit the Jatiluwih rice terrace because of ACV. The result also shows that DBAw, DBAs, DBI, and BQ do not directly affect DBE. Most respondents had never heard of the Jatiluwih rice terrace and only found out about it after visiting Bali. This indicates that destination awareness at Jatiluwih Rice Terrace needs to be increased because destination brand awareness has yet to develop among the respondents. It is difficult for the respondents to build a destination brand association in their minds, and it is also difficult for them to visualize the destination brand image of the Jatiluwih rice terrace. This statement aligns with the brand equity theory Aaker (1991) put forward, which emphasizes that brand awareness is an important foundation for building brand associations and brand image. Furthermore, Aaker (1991) stated that without adequate brand awareness, consumers will have difficulty forming positive associations and a clear image of the brand. Apart from that, this statement is supported by the results of research by Kladou & Kehagias (2014), which shows that destination brand awareness has a positive effect on destination brand associations and research by Kim & Lee (2018) and Martín et al. (2019) which states that destination brand awareness has a significant effect on destination brand image. Furthermore, DBQ does not directly influence DBE. However, analysis of the direct influence between variables shows a significant influence between ACV and DBQ as measured by three indicators (cleanliness, service, and activity). Similarly, there is a significant effect between ACV and DBS as measured by three indicators (level of satisfaction, satisfying experience, and expectations). DBQ and DBS significantly directly affect ACV because most of the respondents' curiosity about

Jatiluwih Rice Terrace and agrarian cultural values increases when they are satisfied with the views and quality of service provided by Jatiluwih Rice Terrace. Increasing visitor satisfaction will increase visitor interest in the history and culture of the destination, which will be reflected in visitors' interest in revisiting the destination. This is in line with the results of research by Cahyaditya & Permadi (2024), which states that tourist satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on post-visit behavior. In addition, there is a significant effect between DBS and DBE as indicated by four indicators (want to visit again, suggestions, consumer interest, and decision to visit). This is understandable since highly satisfied respondents often inform their relatives about the destination they have been to, increasing the probability that they will return and increasing DBE. This statement aligns with the research results of Dedy (2020), which show that green equity in the West Java creative tourism sector is significantly influenced by green satisfaction. According to the research, satisfied customers will be more interested in a destination and more likely to return and recommend it. Apart from that, two other studies show the same thing, namely research belonging to Dedeoğlu et al. (2019) and Chen & Chen (2010) , who show that brand satisfaction influences customers' interest in revisiting and recommending a brand to their family and friends. This statement certainly supports the results of this study, which state that DBS has a significant effect on DBE. Recommendations and the high interest in revisiting a destination will increase the strength of DBE, where the DBE concept itself refers to the value or strength of a tourist destination brand based on the perceptions and experiences visitors have with that destination.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Agrarian cultural values did not mediate the relationship between destination brand awareness, destination brand association, destination brand image, destination brand quality, and destination brand satisfaction with destination brand equity. Most visitors are not too interested in the agrarian cultural values of Jatiluwih Rice Terraces. They are more interested in views, atmosphere, and felt experiences. Tourists' perceptions of destination brand equity play a significant role in the characteristics and segmentation of tourist destinations and in increasing tourist loyalty and income earned from these tourist destinations (Álvarez et al., 2020). Considering the findings of this research, brand satisfaction, which consists of expectations, satisfying experiences, and level of satisfaction, is an important thing that must be maintained and improved by cultural heritage managers. Suppose the management of the Jatiluwih Rice Terraces cultural heritage wants to develop a strategy to promote this cultural heritage. In that case, tourist satisfaction with the experience is a critical factor that needs to be considered. Satisfaction with tourist experiences can be achieved by meeting tourist expectations, maintaining beautiful views, maintaining cleanliness, improving services, and increasing activities, according to the results of this research. Strategies that Jatiluwih Rice Terraces cultural heritage managers can implement include holding large-scale events involving local communities and foreign tourists that provide learning and enjoyable experiences regarding agricultural culture. The management must also work together with the guide to provide time for tourists to read the informative panels that have been provided because some tourists complain that the guide does not give enough time to read the information provided. Apart from that, the management can ask for help from the guide to explain the history of Jatiluwih and other information

to increase tourists' interest in the history and culture of the Jatiluwih rice terraces. Therefore, tourists are not only attracted by the easily forgotten visuals but are also interested in the culture and history, which will make a memorable impression in the minds of tourists. This could be a strategy to introduce the agrarian cultural values of the Jatiluwih cultural heritage. Apart from that, the Jatiluwih management can also produce brochures containing explanations about the history, philosophy, and cultural values, and also maps of the environment at Jatiluwih Rice Terraces to be given to visitors when they have finished paying the entrance fee so that can make it easier for visitors to find out what is there at Jatiluwih Rice Terraces, what is the history, philosophy and culture at Jatiluwih Rice Terraces. It has the potential to raise global awareness of the Jatiluwih rice terrace cultural heritage, which will increase the destination brand association (strength of the association, uniqueness of the association, and customer benefits). Eventually, this will help to establish a positive destination brand image (characteristics superior to its competitors, stunning views, nature, and an excellent place to visit), which will have a positive impact on destination brand equity (interest to visit, return, and recommend Jatiluwih rice terraces on social media or word of mouth).

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