

TOURIST LOYALTY ANALYSIS: THE INFLUENCE OF SERVICE QUALITY AND EMOTIONAL VALUE

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ABSTRACT

The research paper examines the interplay between service quality, emotional value, and tourist loyalty within the tourism sector, which significantly contributes to the global economy. Utilising Structural Equation Modeling-Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) for data analysis, the study involved 100 respondents who visited Kebumen's Menganti Beach. Findings reveal that service quality positively influences emotional value, which in turn significantly affects tourist loyalty. Specifically, 60.6% of tourist loyalty can be attributed to both service quality and emotional value. The research underscores that high-quality service enhances emotional experiences, fostering stronger connections between tourists and destinations, thereby promoting repeat visits. The study concludes that emotional value is a vital yet often neglected factor in developing strategies to enhance tourist loyalty.

KEYWORDS

Service quality, Emotional Value, Tourist Loyalty, Tourism, Destination



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INTRODUCTION

The tourism industry is one of the fastest-growing sectors globally, making a significant contribution to the world economy. According to the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC, 2022), this sector accounts for over 10% of the global Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and generates millions of jobs. As competition in the tourism market intensifies, it is crucial for service providers to comprehend the factors influencing tourist loyalty. This loyalty not only affects tourists' decisions to return but also their likelihood of recommending destinations to others.

Despite the substantial potential of this industry, many tourism service providers continue to face challenges in maintaining customer loyalty. A study by Chen and Tsai (2021) revealed that over 60% of tourists claimed to lack a strong preference for a single service provider. This indicates that factors such as service quality and emotional value play a vital role in shaping tourist loyalty. Consequently, it is essential to explore the relationship between these two factors and their impact on tourists' decisions to revisit.

Loyalty among tourists may be characterized as a sustained dedication to revisit a certain location or make use of the same service provider. The three stages of loyalty are cognitive, emotional, and conative, according to Oliver (1999). The affective stage is concerned with the sensations and emotions that the tourists' encounters generate, the

cognitive stage is with their knowledge and experiences, and the conative stage is with their decision to return. According to research, satisfied visitors are more likely to show loyalty and be prepared to pay more on repeat visits (Kwortnik & Thompson, 2020).

Tourist loyalty is a complex concept involving various psychological and emotional factors. Behavioural loyalty refers to the actual actions of tourists returning, while affective loyalty relates to positive feelings towards a destination. Research conducted by Hsu et al. (2020) suggests that affective loyalty has a more significant influence on tourists' decisions to return than behavioural loyalty. This underscores the importance of creating experiences that are not only satisfying but also resonate emotionally with tourists.

Service quality is a primary factor influencing tourist satisfaction and loyalty. According to Zeithaml et al. (1996), service quality can be assessed through five dimensions: reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangible elements. Research by Ryu et al. (2019) indicates that tourists who perceive high service quality are more likely to be satisfied and have a greater probability of returning. For instance, in the hotel context, excellent service quality—such as attention to detail and responsiveness to guest needs—can enhance the overall experience and foster loyalty.

Service quality stands as a cornerstone in the tourism industry, significantly affecting tourist satisfaction and loyalty. The SERVQUAL model, developed by Parasuraman et al. (1988), has become a benchmark for measuring service quality. In the tourism context, service quality encompasses aspects such as service speed, reliability, and the ability to meet tourists' expectations. Research by Ali and Raza (2021) demonstrates that improvements in service quality can substantially enhance tourist satisfaction and loyalty, particularly in the hospitality and restaurant sectors.

Emotional value pertains to the feelings and experiences tourists encounter during their journeys. This includes aspects such as happiness, satisfaction, and a sense of connection with the places visited. Research by Pine and Gilmore (2019) indicates that experiences capable of generating positive emotional value can enhance tourist loyalty. Unique experiences, such as cultural festivals or interactions with local residents, can create lasting memories and forge strong emotional bonds with destinations.

In the context of tourism, emotional value refers to the emotional experiences felt by tourists throughout their travels. According to Holbrook and Hirschman (1982), emotional experiences can influence tourists' perceptions of service quality and their overall satisfaction. Research by Kim et al. (2021) suggests that positive emotional value can strengthen the relationship between service quality and tourist loyalty. For example, heartfelt experiences, such as warm interactions with locals, can create profound memories and increase the likelihood of tourists returning.

While numerous studies have been conducted on service quality and tourist loyalty, there remains a gap in understanding how emotional value interacts with service quality to influence loyalty. This research aims to bridge that gap by exploring the relationship between service quality, emotional value, and tourist loyalty. Additionally, this study aspires to provide new insights for stakeholders within the tourism industry to develop more effective strategies for enhancing tourist loyalty.

RESEARCH METHOD

A quantitative methodology is used in this work, with analysis conducted using Structural Equation Modeling-Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS). All 100 respondents in the sample are travelers who have spent the previous year visiting Kebumen's Menganti Beach tourist spot. A random online poll that was disseminated via travel forums and social

media sites was used to identify respondents. The researcher evaluated the measurement model (outer model) and the structural model (inner model) using data analysis utilizing SMART-PLS software. The objective of the outward model evaluation is to evaluate the indicators' validity and reliability, whereas the inner model assessment looks at the connections between the variables.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The following presents the findings from the data analysis conducted using Structural Equation Modeling-Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) to examine the relationships between service quality, emotional value, and tourist loyalty.

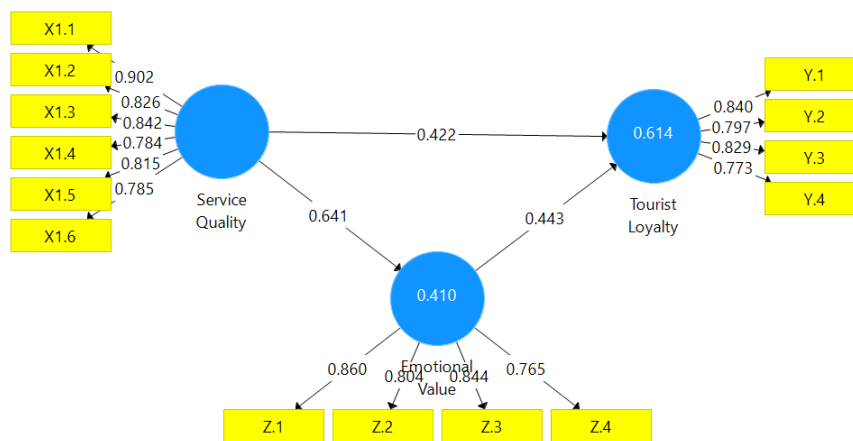


Figure 1. Output Outer Loading SmartPLS

Table 1. Validity and Reliability of Variables

Constructs/Indicators (Reflective)	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha	Standardized Loading	Average Variance Extracted
Service Quality	0,928	0,907		0,684
SQ1			0,902	
SQ2			0,826	
SQ3			0,842	
SQ4			0,784	
SQ5			0,815	
SQ6			0,785	
Emotional Value	0,890	0,835		0,671
EV1			0,860	
EV2			0,804	
EV3			0,844	
EV4			0,765	
Tourist Loyalty	0,884	0,825		0,656
LY1			0,840	
LY2			0,797	
LY3			0,829	
LY4			0,773	

The loading factor values of each indicator are examined in order to evaluate the veracity of convergence. There are outside loading values larger than 0.70, as shown in Figure 1 and Table 1. This means that every indication that has been used is considered reliable.

Table 2. Cross Loading Discriminant Validity Test Results

	Emotional Value	Service Quality	Tourist Loyalty
SQ1	0,614	0,902	0,673
SQ2	0,555	0,826	0,681
SQ3	0,547	0,842	0,560
SQ4	0,518	0,784	0,586
SQ5	0,451	0,815	0,457
SQ6	0,460	0,785	0,494
LY1	0,577	0,518	0,840
LY2	0,578	0,654	0,797
LY3	0,586	0,575	0,829
LY4	0,570	0,530	0,773
EV1	0,860	0,547	0,589
EV2	0,804	0,502	0,539
EV3	0,844	0,526	0,626
EV4	0,765	0,521	0,579

As can be seen from Table 3's results, the data's authenticity is confirmed by the targeted constructions' higher cross-loading values than those of the other constructs. Moreover, Table 2 shows that all research variables had Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values greater than 0.5, indicating the validity of each variable in this study. Moreover, this implies that at least half of the variation is explained by each latent construct indicator. Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability values are both over the minimal cutoff point of 0.70.

The following is the output from the Bootstrapping analysis:

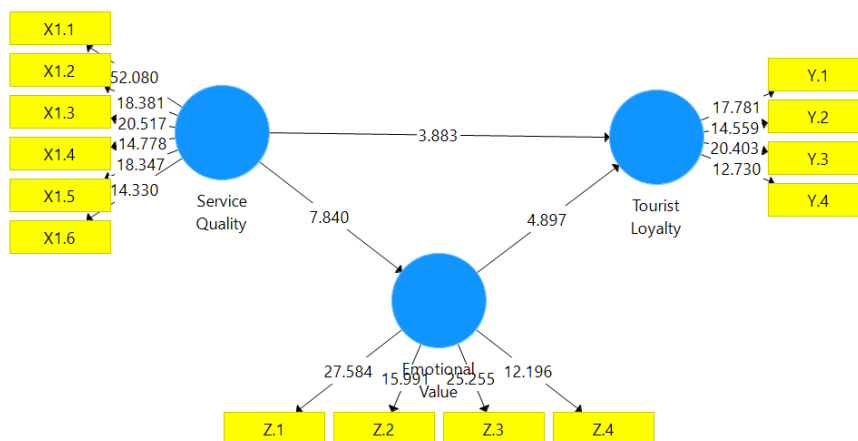


Figure 2. Output Structural Model of Bootstrapping SmartPLS

Table 3. R-Square Value

	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Emotional Value	0,410	0,404
Tourist Loyalty	0,614	0,606

Table 3 illustrates that the R-squared value for the emotional value variable is 0.404, indicating that 40.4% of emotional value is explained by service quality, while the remaining 59.6% is attributed to other variables. The R-squared value for tourist loyalty stands at 0.606, suggesting that 60.6% of tourist loyalty is accounted for by both service quality and emotional value, with 39.4% explained by other variables.

In this study model, path estimates (path coefficients) and significance levels (p-values) are used to evaluate the correlations between the latent components. This study has chosen a significance level of 0.05 (5%). The significant values between constructs, t-statistics, and p-values must all be taken into account when deciding whether to accept or reject the study hypothesis. When the p-value is less than 0.05 and the t-statistic value is greater than 1.96, the hypothesis is accepted.

Tabel 4. Hypothesis Testing based on Path Coefficient

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
Emotional Value -> Tourist Loyalty	0,443	0,457	0,091	4,897	0,000
Service Quality -> Emotional Value	0,641	0,644	0,082	7,840	0,000
Service Quality -> Tourist Loyalty	0,706	0,707	0,069	10,271	0,000
Service Quality -> Emotional Value -> Tourist Loyalty	0,284	0,296	0,077	3,685	0,000

Based on Table 4, the following four hypotheses can be addressed:

1. The Effect of Emotional Value on Traveler Loyalty.

The findings show a t-statistic of 4.897 (>1.96) and a p-value of 0.000 (<0.05). This shows that emotional value influences visitor loyalty in a favorable and noteworthy way. Positive emotional travel experiences have been shown to increase travelers' desire to return and refer others to the destination. A survey conducted in 2021 by Chen and Tsai found that almost 70% of travelers who report feeling happy with their trip intend to go back to the same location in the future. Deep engagement with the community's culture, its warmth, and the stunning natural beauty are frequently the sources of these happy feelings.

2. The Effect of Service Quality on Emotional Value.

Results show that the t-statistic is 7.840 (>1.96) and the p-value is 0.000 (<0.05). This shows that emotional value is positively and considerably influenced by service quality. Travelers are more likely to feel good when they receive excellent service, which enhances their whole experience. Research by Ali and Raza (2022) suggests that high satisfaction levels regarding the services received can enhance the emotional value perceived by tourists, subsequently influencing their decisions to revisit the destination. Good service quality, characterised by staff friendliness, promptness, and attention to detail, can create unforgettable experiences for tourists.

3. The Effect of Service Quality on Tourist Loyalty.

The t-statistic is 10.271 (>1.96) and the p-value is 0.000 (<0.05) according to the results. This shows that visitor loyalty is positively and significantly impacted by service quality. Studies show that visitors who experience excellent service are more satisfied, which influences their propensity to return. A survey conducted in 2024 by Hossain and Rahman found that almost 80% of travelers who are happy with the level of care they receive say they would suggest the location to others. This

illustrates how providing high-quality services may boost customer loyalty and be a useful marketing strategy.

4. The Impact of Service Quality on Visitor Loyalty, Mediated by Emotional Worth.

The findings show a t-statistic of 3.685 (>1.96) and a p-value of 0.000 (<0.05). This implies that, through emotional worth as a mediator, service quality has a favorable and substantial impact on visitor loyalty. Emotional value has the potential to moderate the relationship between service quality and tourist loyalty, underscoring the significance of emotional experiences in forging meaningful bonds between travelers and locations. Excellent service quality influences visitor satisfaction and also fosters favorable emotional experiences, which strengthens repeat business. According to a study by Zhang and Wu (2023), positive emotional experiences can increase the impact of high-quality service, and emotional value serves as a link between it and visitor loyalty.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, it can be said that: (1) Service quality has a positive and significant effect on emotional value; (2) Emotional value has a positive and significant effect on service quality; (3) Service quality has a positive and significant effect on tourist loyalty; and (4) Service quality, through emotional value, has a positive and significant effect on tourist loyalty. A recommendation that can be made is that the influence of emotional value on tourist loyalty is an important aspect in the tourism industry that is often overlooked. In this context, emotional value can be defined as the positive feelings experienced by tourists during and after their experiences, which can create a strong bond between tourists and destinations. Conversely, tourists' perception of the emotional value of a destination is greatly influenced by the level of service offered by tourism service providers. Aspects like staff friendliness, response time, and the capacity to satisfy customers are all included in the service quality spectrum. Travelers' emotional experiences are improved when they receive excellent service because they are more likely to feel appreciated and cared for.

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