



RELEVANCE FOR TOURIST VISITING DECISIONS – DESTINATION BRANDING VS DESTINATION IMAGE: CASE STUDY FROM LARITI BEACH, BIMA REGENCY

Saida Zainurossalamia ZA^{a,*} , Irsan Tricahyadinata^b

^a Universitas Mulawarman (Samarinda, Indonesia), Faculty of Economics and Business; <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8046-0343>;
e-mail: saida.zainurossalamia.za@feb.unmul.ac.id

^b Universitas Mulawarman (Samarinda, Indonesia), Faculty of Economics and Business; <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7949-0684>;
e-mail: irsan.tricahyadinata@feb.unmul.ac.id

* Corresponding author.

How to cite (APA style): ZA, S.Z., & Tricahyadinata, I. (2025). Relevance for tourist visiting decisions – destination branding vs destination image: Case study from Lariti Beach, Bima Regency. *Turyzm/Tourism*, 35(1), 111–121. <https://doi.org/10.18778/0867-5856.2025.15>

ABSTRACT

Today, there are disciplines that concentrate on tourism, some of which highlight a tourist's visiting decision; this is not only associated with the brand or reputation of a destination but also its image. From this premise, this study aims to find the relationship between destination branding and destination image on tourists' visiting decisions. With a focus on tourists visiting Lariti Beach, Bima Regency (Indonesia), data collection via interviews based on non-probability sampling techniques were made. Using the partial least squares (PLS) method, the results of the study reveal that both destination branding and destination image affect tourists' visiting decisions systematically. When compared, destination branding is the more important instrument for increasing visiting decisions compared to image. Therefore, this research opens space and attention for further studies to consider destination image as a critical function in stimulating visiting decisions. Future implications include tourism policies that lead to optimal branding and image.

KEYWORDS

destination branding, destination image, visiting decisions, partial least squares, PLS, Lariti Beach

ARTICLE INFORMATION DETAILS

Received:

19 March 2024

Accepted:

10 February 2025

Published:

13 June 2025

1. INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the modernization of the era, a brand can not only be owned by a product but also by a city, commonly labeled as 'place branding' or 'city branding', and this leads to progress in various directions. In principle, the premise of city branding has pioneered the term 'destination branding'. According to Ilmi et al. (2022) and Kasapi and Cela

(2017), destination branding describes the image management of a destination through innovation and coordination of social, economic, commercial, cultural and government regulations. Destination branding can be linked as a strategy from a particular country or region to create a strong position in the minds of tourism actors (Insch, 2014). Like the positioning of a service or product, its orientation needs to be widely recognized throughout the world (Donner



& Fort, 2018; Kindermann et al., 2021; Oliva et al., 2022; Rua & Santos, 2022; Saqib, 2019).

In destination development, the above perspective is in line with the arguments expressed by Audouin (2022) and Setianti et al. (2018), which state that destination branding is one of the solutions for supporting the image management of a destination through government regulations. Shirvani Dastgerdi and De Luca (2019) define a brand as a name, term, sign, symbol or design, or a combination of all of them to identify a tourism product. The status of 'destination branding' means that the characteristics of competitors' products can be distinguished.

Technically, several cities in Indonesia have focused their attention on branding to explore their potential, use local wisdom, and take advantage of regional identity. Such is the case in Java, where Solo, as a pioneer city synonymous with the 'spirit of Java', is considered one that has succeeded in popularizing city branding. Apart from these areas, Batu has also had dedicated destination branding with the tag 'shining Batu' since it was launched in May 2013, when it coincided with the celebration of National Awakening Day. Previously, Batu had also introduced the tag 'Batu Tourism City / Kota Wisata Batu' (KWB) and the change of from KWB to 'shining Batu' was triggered by its strong meaning covering the foundations of Batu community life (Panjaitan, 2020; Zahrah, 2023).

At the same time, West Nusa Tenggara is one of the provinces in Indonesia with extensive tourism market segmentation, and where one of the most stunning destinations is Lariti Beach. This coastal tourism site is located in Soro Village, Lambu District, Bima Regency. Lariti Beach has made a breakthrough because of its own advantages and uniqueness compared to other beaches. In addition to a natural panorama that is still sustainable and a beautiful atmosphere, Panrai Lariti is supported by management skills in serving tourists. Every year, Lariti Beach is visited by foreign and domestic tourists, and it has experienced an increase in visits over time. When the COVID-19 pandemic arrived in early 2020, the majority of open-air destinations that triggered crowds of visitors were closed, including Lariti Beach, and it experienced a critical decline. In 2021, the level of decline detected amounted to 487,560 domestic and 5,069 foreign tourists. Lariti Beach, which has a natural beauty with a unique beach that is split into two, is highlighted, so that it is made one of the top priority beach destinations for tourists. Before the COVID-19 outbreak, especially during 2016–2019, there was progress in increasing tourists for holidays, festivals and religious celebrations. Therefore, the tourism management for Lariti Beach promotes and boasts this destination with the term 'Pantai Kekinian'.

From a holistic viewpoint, tourism is an activity that distributes accommodation, food, transportation,

recreation and other services concerning the tourism trade, which allows for the involvement of various dimensions including social, cultural, economic, environmental, security and the exchange of insights that contribute to tourism affairs (Capineri & Romano, 2021; Chuang, 2023; Rodríguez Rangel et al., 2020). Tourism has been one of the sectors that supports the economy in several countries (Holik, 2016; Manzoor et al., 2019; Naseem, 2021; Rasool et al., 2021). The position of the tourism sector can contribute to the welfare of local residents, especially with growing income from entrance fees to tourist sites, parking fees, hotel rentals and other aspects that enable transactions in the tourism economy. In its role as a favorite destination in Bima Regency, Lariti Beach has the attraction that it is integrated into the coastal tourism assets in Bima Regency and must be protected.

It is known that although Lariti Beach is growing as a destination, it is not yet fully popular compared to similar destinations with great reputations located in Bima Regency, such as Pink Beach and Lawata Beach. The area discussed in this paper however is Lariti Beach. To get there, visitors need a time allocation of from 75 minutes to two hours from the Regency center (Woha District) via the land route called 'Raba-Sape' using four-wheeled or two-wheeled vehicles. The main obstacle to Lariti Beach not being better known is because promotional techniques are less than optimal (Taufiqurrahman et al., 2023). Ideally, by promoting through certain attractions, festivals and events, a tourist destination can have strong branding (Khairunnisah, 2022; Purwadi et al., 2023). With beautiful natural panoramas, it is hoped that Lariti Beach can take advantage of this prospect through strengthening its branding.

The study approach here is based on the direct interview method, where the sampling technique is operated by collecting information face to face. The interview data was then tested using PLS.

The motivation for this paper is to identify the effects of destination branding and destination image on tourists' decisions to visit Lariti Beach. The results of the investigation are useful in determining the direction of policies to strengthen destination branding and destination image in the future. In addition, it will evaluate which factors indicate success in accommodating tourist interests at Lariti Beach. The article is divided into six parts. First, the introduction reviews the issue, background, motivation and contribution. Second, a literature review contains the theoretical basis for developing proposed hypotheses. Third, materials and methods contain data classification, sample determination criteria, variables and data analysis. Fourth, details of the findings are given based on objectives and hypotheses. Fifth, the discussion justifies the study results based on the existing

situation with a comparison of empirical literature. Sixth, the conclusion summarizes the results, implications and policy suggestions, and states the study's weaknesses as follow-up preferences for the direction of future work.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. DESTINATION BRANDING

In essence, city branding is used to market a region by providing branding to make it better known. In its interactions, destination branding can generate tourist interest by highlighting a uniqueness that is different from other cities, thus reflecting the branding and tagline attached to each city. The concept of city branding has similarities with destination branding and the two are in fact interrelated and cannot be separated. Most striking is the memorability of the brand. With a brand that is appropriate to a city, positive perceptions and enthusiasm are given and influences visiting decisions (Castillo-Villar, 2018; Chan et al., 2021; Mišić & Podnar, 2019; Mujihestia et al., 2018; Purwanto & Soliha, 2017; Putra et al., 2019). Operationally, there is a difference between destination branding and destination image. According to Kavaratzis and Hatch (2013), destination branding is realized by complex efforts that go beyond just building symbols and slogans, but also creating a destination with multidimensional strategies to develop relationally, emotionally and functionally. Another goal of destination branding is to form a parallel network of unique associations in the minds of consumers (Ruiz-Real et al., 2020). In the marketing context, a brand is a sign in the form of an image, name, word, letters, numbers, color arrangement or any combination of these elements that has distinguishing features and is applied to the routine trading of goods and services (Avis & Henderson, 2022). Rita et al. (2019) and Zhimin (2007) consider a brand as more than just quality assurance because it includes the following six pillars: (a) attributes; (b) benefits; (c) value; (d) culture; (e) personality and (f) usage. Based on these premises, the first hypothesis is formulated:

H₁: There is a partial connection between destination branding and visiting decisions.

2.2. DESTINATION IMAGE

Išoraitė (2018), Kaur and Kaur (2019) and Stern et al. (2001) articulate brand image as a form of trust embedded in the minds of consumers towards associations that last in the memory. Theoretically, the image represents the accumulation of exposure, knowledge and experience

in an individual's mind towards certain entities, such as sites or places. Broadly speaking, destination image is a derivative of city image which is how individuals perceive and navigate the urban landscape (Avraham, 2004; Badami, 2025; Hu & Gong, 2021; Huang et al., 2021; Su et al., 2023). Specifically, Balmer and Gray (2000), Balmer and Yen (2017), Melewar et al. (2017) and Zenker and Braun (2017) divide destination image into three different stages of communication: (a) primary, related to communication channels from all tourism sectors; (b) secondary, which aims to calibrate formal and planned communications; and (c) tertiary, related to word of mouth (WoM) in connection with communication media and competitors.

In its terminology, destination image is the perspective through which tourists make decisions before traveling to a particular destination, a key pillar of which is tourist loyalty. Lopes (2011) represents destination image as an expression of the emotional thoughts, imagination, prejudice and objective knowledge held by individuals or groups about certain locations. In the tourism sphere, destination image consists of a combination of feelings, impressions, ideas and beliefs about tourist sites that come from direct and indirect information (Jebbouri et al., 2022).

The key to implementing a brand strategy in city image communication is to increase market share (Ma et al., 2021; Mohamad et al., 2022; Prilenska, 2012; Primorac, 2018). The most rational reason is that if a city has a brand foundation, it can change how it is perceived as it may have been originally identified by a poor image both internally and externally. With a strong brand, it can form a model or vision for the future for city residents and stakeholders in a sustainable manner. Then, by triggering a consistent representation and helping a create a bond through increasing awareness of the city's position at regional, national and global levels. Finally, it can eliminate and replace stereotypes that are detrimental to the destination. To that end, it makes sense to construct a second hypothesis as follows:

H₂: There is a partial connection between destination image and visiting decisions.

2.3. VISITING DECISIONS

From the main literature, visiting decisions are similar to purchasing decisions which reflect consumer behavior after the process of obtaining information about a desired product, and tools for conducting assessments and making decisions by choosing the option that is considered the best (Tao et al., 2022). Nuraeni et al. (2015) and Saito and Strehlau (2018) investigated the fact that the decision to visit is an option that tourists choose before visiting a place. Based on these preferences, buying decisions can also be compared with visiting

decisions (Cai et al., 2004; Chen et al., 2022; Hanaysha, 2018). Basically, the visiting decision is a desire by individuals before traveling to an area by considering several criteria (Perdue & Meng, 2006). Dahiya and Batra (2016), Do and Shih (2016), Kim et al. (2021), Liu et al. (2020) and Orden-Mejía et al. (2022) describe the decision to visit as tourist insights into selecting the most preferred travel pattern.

3. MATERIALS AND METHOD

3.1. PARTICIPANTS AND DATA

In the existing scheme, the sample is drawn from all tourists visiting Lariti Beach (Bima Regency). With a non-probability approach, the study provides an equal opportunity for each respondent to be selected as part of a sample. The tools for classifying the sample were set via purposive sampling which can verify the compiled material to serve as a data source (Tricahyadinata et al., 2020). The sample was selected based on the population of tourist visits in 2023 and the number of respondents was 541, which is a combination of foreign and domestic visitors. The respondents interviewed form two basic categories: respondents who have visited Lariti Beach (minimum twice) and respondents within age limits (minimum 18 years and maximum 57), with the assumption that the age thresholds contain those considered mature enough to make decisions that affect return visits.

The data collected is primary, obtained directly from informants without intermediaries. Data collection was done by distributing questionnaires at Lariti Beach. To facilitate data documentation, an offline face-to-face questionnaire was also implemented. The questionnaire model is in a closed format where respondents are only allowed to answer or give opinions based on the answer choices provided. The instrument used in filtering the data according to the Likert scale guide, where each answer choice has its own rating with the following details: 1 – *strongly disagree*, 2 – *don't agree*, 3 – *neutral*, 4 – *agree*, and 5 – *strongly agree* (ZA et al., 2021).

Based on the list of questionnaire scores, the scale range is estimated as follows:

$$SR = \frac{m - n}{b} \quad (1)$$

$$SR = \frac{5 - 1}{3} = 1.33 \quad (2)$$

where: SR – scale range; m – maximum value of the questionnaire scale points; n – minimum value of the questionnaire scale points; and b – number of points on the questionnaire scale.

From the statistical guidelines above, the scale range score is 1.33. The lowest rating is $1 + 1.33 = 2.33$, while $2.34 + 1.33 = 3.67$ forms the medium rating, and the highest is calculated as $3.68 + 1.33 = 5.01$ or rounded down to 5.

3.2. VARIABLES AND DATA PROCESSING

The key variables that become attributes in this study include visiting decisions (dependent variable) and city branding and destination image (independent variables). Within the theoretical scope, each variable has limitations, which are summarized in Table 1. In this case, the total number of indicators of the three variables is fourteen. In substance, the visiting decision variable consists of five indicators, while destination branding and destination image each have four.

Table 1. Variable description

Variable name (code)	Indicators		Adopted from
Visiting decisions	VD.1	Service	El Fikri et al. (2020), Lutfie and Marcelino (2020)
	VD.2	Travel agent	
	VD.3	Type of trip	
	VD.4	Cost and time	
	VD.5	Destination area	
Destination branding	DB.1	Place	Hereźniak and Anders-Morawska (2015), Hereźniak et al. (2018), Soleimani Sheijani et al. (2023), Vahabian et al. (2021)
	DB.2	Tourists	
	DB.3	Awareness	
	DB.4	Potential	
Destination image	DI.1	Presence	Asnawi et al. (2018), Mohamed Thabet (2022), Su et al. (2023)
	DI.2	Behavior	
	DI.3	Affective	
	DI.4	Cognitive	

Source: authors.

In the processing phase, the data is tested with partial least squares (PLS) whose function is to analyze the link between destination branding and destination image on visiting decisions. To confirm the closeness of the relationship between variables, an evaluation of the outer and inner models is carried out. First, the outer model reviews convergent validity, the discriminant validity of indicators and reliability. Second, the inner model follows up on the proposed hypothesis through the R -squared and partial test. Finally, after statistical analysis of the data has been carried out, the next step is verification and justification of the findings from the field.

4. FINDINGS

4.1. RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

Table 2 describes the characteristics of the respondents who visited Lariti Beach: 45.1% were female and 54.9% male. According to nationality, 62.5% of them were domestic, while 37.5% were foreign. The professional backgrounds of the respondents varied greatly: 29.9% (university students), 22% (private employees), 16.5% (high school students), 14.8% (self-employed), 12% (state employees) and 4.8% (entrepreneurs). In terms of age, 34% were 42–49, 27.9% – 18–25, 23.1% – 34–41, 8.7% – 26–33 years, and 6.3% – 50–57 years.

Table 2. Profile of respondents ($n = 541$)

Profile	Items	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Sex	Man	297	54.9
	Female	244	45.1
Nationality	Foreign	203	37.5
	Domestic	338	62.5
Profession	State employees	65	12.0
	Private employees	119	22.0
	Self-employed	80	14.8
	Entrepreneurs	26	4.8
	University students	162	29.9
	High school students	89	16.5
Age	18–25	151	27.9
	26–33	47	8.7
	34–41	125	23.1
	42–49	184	34.0
	50–57	34	6.3
Visit repetition	2 times	218	40.3
	3 times	200	37.0
	4 times	79	14.6
	> 4 times	44	8.1

Source: authors.

In 2023, 40.3% of respondents had visited Lariti Beach at least twice, 37% of respondents claimed to have visited three times, 14.6% four times, and the rest (8.1%) more than four times.

4.2. EVALUATION OF THE OUTER MODEL

In testing the outer model via convergent validity, variable indicators are assessed based on scores from the outer loading (*OL*) weights. In its interpretation, the correlation score is calculated through the components of the model construct measurement (see Table 3). The requirement for an *OL* score is more than 0.7. Quantitatively, of the seventeen indicators evaluated, only three were invalid with each variable having one invalid indicator: VD.2 (*OL* = 0.633), DB.2 (*OL* = 0.524) and DI.4 (*OL* = 0.606). Interestingly, all fourteen other indicators met the required figure (*OL* > 0.7). The convergent validity score with the highest performance for the visiting decision variable was VD.3 (*OL* = 0.919). Then, looking at the other two variables (destination branding and destination image), it is evident that the highest are DB.3 (*OL* = 0.893) and DI.2 (*OL* = 0.939).

In addition to measuring validity based on the *OL* score, the indicator validity test can also be identified by cross loading (*CL*). Cross loading values are converted to average variance extracted (*AVE*). This model is an alternative series to improve and evaluate invalid indicators based on convergent validity. In reality, the indicator is assumed to be valid if the *AVE* score is higher than 0.5.

Through the discriminant validity parameter, only the visiting decision variable has valid indicators, while there is one indicator for both destination branding and destination image which is not valid. Surprisingly, there was a shift in the indicators from the previously valid *OL* values to invalid, based on the *AVE* calculation. The two indicators are DB.3 (*AVE* = 0.416) and DI.3 (*AVE* = 0.345). Even so, the *AVE* score is slightly better than the *OL* because fifteen indicators matched expectations (*AVE* > 0.5). Table 4 ensures that there are no contradictions in the respondents' reactions to understanding the questionnaire. Based on the second scenario using *AVE* per indicator, Table 4 above presents VD.3 (*AVE* = 0.860) as the largest indicator representing the visiting decision variable. The two indicators (DB.4 and DI.2) which are the constructs of destination branding and destination image, have the highest *AVE* scores, reaching 0.939 and 0.943.

Table 5 describes the reliability results supported by two parameters. Firstly, for composite reliability (*CR*), the criteria use a minimum standard above 0.6. Second, for Cronbach's alpha (α), the minimum requirement is more than 0.7. Thus, of the three variables destination branding and destination image have *CR* (> 0.6) and Cronbach's alpha (> 0.7) values that exceed the threshold and are thus concluded to be reliable. When compared, based on the acquisition of each score on both parameters, destination image is the more dominant variable for *CR* and α than the other two where the statistical output shows scores of 0.956 and 0.944.

Table 3. Convergent validity

Variable	Indicators and questions		Outer loading (OL)	Remarks	
				Valid	Not valid
Visiting decisions	VD.1	Services provided according to speculation	0.905	+	–
	VD.2	Travel agents have ideal standards	0.633	–	+
	VD.3	Travel type accessible to tourists	0.919	+	–
	VD.4	Cost and time to the destination according to the estimated route	0.892	+	–
	VD.5	Strategic destination areas are easy to reach	0.915	+	–
Destination branding	DB.1	The places I've visited have changed significantly	0.841	+	–
	DB.2	Tourists are presented with stunning attractions	0.524	–	+
	DB.3	I realize that the destinations visited correspond to reality	0.893	+	–
	DB.4	This tourism has the potential to be developed	0.884	+	–
Destination image	DI.1	The presence of this destination gives me new enthusiasm	0.916	+	–
	DI.2	Friendly behavior from destination managers and local residents in welcoming tourists	0.939	+	–
	DI.3	I feel that this destination presents beautiful nature	0.905	+	–
	DI.4	The condition of this tour is better managed than before	0.606	–	+

Source: authors.

Table 4. Discriminant validity

Variable	Indicators questions		Average variance extracted (AVE)	Remarks	
				Valid	Not valid
Visiting decisions	VD.1	Services provided according to speculation	0.792	+	–
	VD.2	Travel agents have ideal standards	0.728	+	–
	VD.3	Travel type accessible to tourists	0.860	+	–
	VD.4	Cost and time to the destination according to the estimated route	0.813	+	–
	VD.5	Strategic destination areas are easy to reach	0.746	+	–
Destination branding	DB.1	The places I've visited have changed significantly	0.893	+	–
	DB.2	Tourists are presented with stunning attractions	0.884	+	–
	DB.3	I realize that the destinations visited correspond to reality	0.416	–	+
	DB.4	This tourism has the potential to be developed	0.939	+	–
Destination image	DI.1	The presence of this destination gives me new enthusiasm	0.905	+	–
	DI.2	Friendly behavior from destination managers and local residents in welcoming tourists	0.943	+	–
	DI.3	I feel that this destination presents beautiful nature	0.345	–	+
	DI.4	The condition of this tour is better managed than before	0.906	+	–

Source: authors.

Table 5. Reliability test

Variables	Cronbach's alpha (α)	Composite reliability (CR)
Visiting decisions	0.952	0.933
Destination branding	0.950	0.929
Destination image	0.956	0.944

Note: all values are reliable.
Source: authors.

4.3. EVALUATION OF THE INNER MODEL

Concerning the strength of the relationship, which is clarified using the coefficient of determination (R^2) which reaches 0.799, it is concluded that the visiting decisions is influenced by destination branding and destination image. Linking the two variables to visiting decisions, the figures lie within the higher criteria, indicating that destination branding and destination image are reliable measures, although there is a coefficient value of 0.201 that is outside the study model (see Table 6). Kurniawan et al. (2023) states that there are five classifications where 0–0.20 indicates a very low coefficient, 0.21–0.40 a low coefficient, 0.41–0.60 a moderate coefficient, 0.61–0.80 a high coefficient and 0.81–1 a very high coefficient.

Based on Table 6, it was found that the two hypotheses offered were in line with partial significance. The calculation of significance uses the t -statistic value (minimum requirement is 1.96). In SmartPLS, each hypothesized relationship is simulated by bootstrapping the sample data. Testing bootstrapping is also intended to minimize the problem of abnormalities in observations. As a result, there is a positive causality between both destination branding and destination image on visiting decisions: destination branding (t -statistic = 35.998) and destination image (t -statistic = 13.922), the most dominating was the relationship between destination branding and visiting decisions. Table 6 also verifies that both destination branding and destination image have a significant impact however on the decision to visit. Overall, both first and second hypotheses are accepted.

5. DISCUSSION

This study ensures that by involving two important instruments in tourism such as destination branding and destination image, an impact on visiting decisions can be made. Tourists who have confidence in a choice directly have full awareness of making the right decision. In this case, a destination with a positive record will affect perceptions that lead to positive emotional ties. Conversely, a bad reputation for a destination will have a negative effect on tourist interest.

A series of studies link causality between destination branding and destination image on visiting decisions. To strengthen the decision to visit, a relevant program is needed. Take, for example, destination branding. Successful tourism destinations rely on being attractive in the eyes of tourists (Baloch et al., 2022; Caprioli et al., 2021; Chiang & Chen, 2023; Dakwah et al., 2022; Majeed et al., 2024; Roostika, 2012; Srivastava et al., 2022). The experience during the visit will be a positive benchmark mediated by WoM. Often, the increasing level of tourist satisfaction further increases the loyalty of tourists who enjoy traveling to several developing markets: Swat District (Pakistan), *hygge* style in Denmark and *fika* phenomenon from Sweden, Pier-2 Art Center (Taiwan), Lombok Island (Indonesia), Prambanan Temple in Yogyakarta (Indonesia) and India.

Another justification put forward by Al-Kwafi (2015), Fatmawati et al. (2023), Moustaka and Constantoglou (2021) and Susanti et al. (2023) relies on strengthening the destination image to increase visiting decisions through experiments in Doha (Qatar), natural destinations in Yogyakarta (Indonesia), mountainous city destinations (Greece), or tourists who are domiciled in East Java (Indonesia). What is more, the presence of social media can make it easier for millennial tourists to plan, get to know, select and compare types of tourism before deciding on a destinations. Also, the advantage of electronic WoM is that it can track feedback based on the comments of previous tourists who have visited certain places.

From various other empirical examples, destination branding has a crucial impact by allowing tourists to make decisions, increase their interest in visiting, give more value to a destination compared to similar ones, and help them to look for differences between

Table 6. Path coefficient

Linkages	Original sample	Sample mean	Standard deviation	t -statistic	p -value	R^2
Destination branding → visiting decisions	0.894	0.895	0.025	35.998	0.000	0.799
Destination image → visiting decisions	0.874	0.876	0.063	13.922	0.000	

Source: authors.

one destination and another (Damarwulan, 2021; Guo et al., 2024; Marchat & Camelis, 2017; Widayati et al., 2020). With an attractive tagline and design, destination branding will become the foundation for various marketing patterns to promote destinations and attract new visitors. Furthermore, Yadindrima et al. (2021) has stated that destination image influences tourist behavior in making decisions about which destination to choose. In turn, destination image is also integrated into the desire to revisit and increase satisfaction (Al-Kwafi, 2015; Noviana et al., 2022; Satyarini et al., 2017).

6. CONCLUSIONS

This study is committed to examining the link between destination branding and destination image on visiting decisions targeted at tourists at Lariti Beach during 2023. Using the PLS method, it is concluded that:

1. Destination branding and destination image have a significant impact on visiting decisions.
2. Destination branding and destination image, which are growing, are increasingly influencing tourists' visiting decisions.
3. The implication shows that by providing a comprehensive destination branding and destination image system at Lariti Beach, it has facilitated tourist interest, and this has a positive synergy with visiting decisions.

Despite these positive results, the barriers that are the weaknesses for each indicator trigger disruptions in travel that need to be solved. First, the roots of the problem, based on convergent validity assessment, are travel agents, attractions and tourist conditions. Second, the obstacles that result in uncertainty in visiting decisions based on discriminant validity parameters are tourist awareness and affective factors. By looking at these six issues, the main recommendation is directed to destination managers to conduct more detailed dissemination on marketing aspects. Post-pandemic economic recovery, especially in the business sector, is not easy. However, managers need to rearrange marketing strategies that can transition according to trending patterns. Also, further suggestions to the local government as a bureaucratic actor can consider regulations that make it easier for visitors. In that context, this includes reducing restrictionx on entry routes to Bima Regency without ignoring health protocols. With careful control in the tourism development plan, it will automatically open up a wide tourist network. It also appreciates the interests of tourists who are planning to visit.

For the long-term sustainability of tourism, the distribution of information that prioritizes transparency regarding the situation of destinations must also

be implemented, thereby reducing discriminatory actions. Considering the present findings, there are still weaknesses in this work, such as testing with three variables that are considered limited. Therefore, there are hopes that in the future attention will be paid to the composition of variables referring to issues with the aim of surpassing the empirical results of this article. Another limitation of the current study is the sample size while further studies need to consider broader sample characteristics.

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