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Exploring The Relationship Between Destination Image, Tourist Satisfaction, Revisit and Recommendation Intentions in Yogyakarta

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Abstract

Existing tourism literature presents conflicting findings regarding how cognitive and affective components of destination image drive post-visit behavioral outcomes. This study examines the relationships between cognitive image, affective image, tourist satisfaction, and revisit and recommendation intentions in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. A quantitative survey was conducted with 238 tourists who had visited Yogyakarta, and data were analyzed using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with AMOS 25. The empirical results reveal that affective image positively influences tourist satisfaction ($p = 0.005$), whereas cognitive image has no significant direct effect on satisfaction ($p = 0.195$). Furthermore, tourist satisfaction significantly increases both recommendation intention ($p < 0.001$) and revisit intention ($p < 0.001$). Interestingly, affective image shows a direct negative association with recommendation intention ($p = 0.018$), while cognitive image has no direct effect on revisit or recommendation intentions. These findings indicate that emotional perceptions drive satisfaction, but unmet high emotional expectations may reduce direct recommendations when unmediated. Destination managers in Yogyakarta should prioritize fulfilling tourists' emotional expectations through authentic cultural and atmospheric experiences, ensuring that marketing promises align with on-site tourist reality.

Keywords: tourist destination; destination image; tourist satisfaction; revisit intention; Yogyakarta

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INTRODUCTION

Background

Destination image is an important consideration in destination management because tourists' perceptions of a place can shape their evaluations of the travel experience and their subsequent behavioral intentions. However, attracting visitors and maintaining their long-term interest are distinct management challenges. A destination may attract substantial visitor numbers without necessarily ensuring that visitors are satisfied with their experiences or intend to return. Destination managers therefore need to understand not only how a destination is perceived before or during a visit, but also how these perceptions relate to tourist satisfaction, revisit intention, and recommendation intention. Previous research has established destination image as a multidimensional construct associated with tourist evaluations and post-visit behavioral intentions (Li et al., 2021; Marques et al., 2021). Nevertheless, the relationships between its cognitive and affective components and different behavioral outcomes require further examination across destination contexts.

Destination image is commonly examined through cognitive and affective components, which represent related but conceptually distinct evaluations. In this study, cognitive destination image refers to tourists' perceptions of destination attributes, rather than merely the amount of information or knowledge they possess about a place. Consistent with the measurement instrument used in this research, these attributes include natural scenic beauty, the availability of recreational activities, environmental cleanliness, culinary variety, and accommodation quality. Affective destination image, in contrast, concerns tourists' emotional evaluations of the destination, including whether it is perceived as pleasant, relaxing, enjoyable, and interesting. Distinguishing these components is important because favorable evaluations of destination attributes do not necessarily correspond to equally favorable emotional responses. Consequently, cognitive and affective image may relate differently to satisfaction and post-visit behavioral intentions (San Martín & Rodríguez del Bosque, 2008; Marques et al., 2021).

Yogyakarta, Indonesia, provides a relevant setting in which to examine these relationships. The destination combines cultural and historical attractions with natural landscapes, culinary experiences, recreational activities, and accommodation services. According to Statistics Indonesia's provincial tourism release, domestic tourists made 38,030,739 trips to the Special Region of Yogyakarta during January–December 2024, while 7,167 international tourist visits were recorded in December 2024 alone (BPS-Statistics Indonesia, Special Region of Yogyakarta, 2025). These figures demonstrate the substantial scale of tourism activity in the region. However, visitation statistics alone cannot establish whether tourists are satisfied, loyal, or likely to return. The management issue addressed in this study is therefore not an assumed shortage of visitors, but the need to understand how tourists' attribute-based and emotional evaluations relate to satisfaction and their intentions to revisit and recommend the destination.

Previous empirical research has investigated destination image and post-visit behavior in Yogyakarta. For example, research on sustainable practices, destination image, perceived value, novelty seeking, tourist satisfaction, and temporal revisit intention examined these relationships using a sample of 420 tourists (2022). This study indicates that the relationship between destination image, satisfaction, and revisit intention is already an established research topic in the Yogyakarta context. Accordingly, the present study does not claim that examining revisit intention in Yogyakarta is itself a new contribution. Instead, it focuses on the relationships between the cognitive and affective components of destination image, tourist satisfaction, revisit

intention, and recommendation intention within a single structural model. This approach enables a direct examination of whether attribute-based and emotional evaluations exhibit comparable relationships with satisfaction and two distinct forms of post-visit behavioral intention.

A particularly relevant point of comparison is Marques et al. (2021), who examined cognitive, affective, and unique destination image in relation to tourist satisfaction, intention to recommend a destination, and intention to purchase products associated with the destination country. Their study of 314 international visitors to Sofia, Bulgaria, found that the three image components did not exhibit identical relationships with the evaluative and behavioral outcomes. In particular, unique image was associated with recommendation and product-purchase intentions, whereas cognitive and affective image exhibited different relationships with satisfaction and post-visit behavior. These findings demonstrate the importance of distinguishing destination-image dimensions and behavioral outcomes rather than treating destination image as a single, uniform predictor.

The present study differs from Marques et al. (2021) in its empirical setting and outcome structure. It examines Yogyakarta and considers revisit intention alongside recommendation intention, with tourist satisfaction included as an additional outcome of cognitive and affective destination image and as a potential explanatory pathway to post-visit behavior. Revisit intention is not introduced as a new construct; rather, its inclusion allows the model to examine whether the relationships identified for recommendation intention also hold for tourists' stated willingness to return. Furthermore, unique image is not included in the present model because its analytical scope is restricted to the two image dimensions operationalized in the existing questionnaire: cognitive image, measured through perceived destination attributes, and affective image, measured through emotional evaluations. This decision maintains consistency between the conceptual model and the empirical measurement instrument. Nevertheless, because Marques et al. (2021) demonstrated the relevance of unique image, its omission should be understood as a boundary of the present model rather than evidence that unique image is theoretically unimportant.

Despite the established literature, the relationships between cognitive image, affective image, tourist satisfaction, revisit intention, and recommendation intention may vary across destinations and empirical settings. In particular, the distinction between attribute-based evaluations and emotional responses warrants examination when both revisit and recommendation intentions are considered simultaneously. Examining these relationships in Yogyakarta can provide context-specific evidence about whether the two image components are associated differently with tourist satisfaction and whether satisfaction and image have distinct relationships with the two behavioral intentions. Such evidence may help destination managers distinguish between improving the attributes tourists evaluate and delivering emotional experiences that support favorable post-visit responses.

Accordingly, this study examines the relationships between cognitive destination image, affective destination image, tourist satisfaction, revisit intention, and recommendation intention among tourists who have visited Yogyakarta. Specifically, it investigates the relationships of cognitive and affective image with tourist satisfaction, the relationships of satisfaction with revisit and recommendation intentions, and the direct relationships of the two image components with these behavioral intentions. By examining these relationships within a single model, the study seeks to provide context-specific empirical evidence that can inform destination management and contribute to the continuing discussion of how different components of destination image relate to tourist

evaluations and post-visit behavior.

Destination image plays a key role in impacting tourists' decisions to visit a place. Destination image is often studied in well-known destinations, where excessive tourism challenges have been faced and marketing strategies have been well designed (Marques et al., 2021). Even though a destination is already well-known, it is still important to maintain and improve its image so that its appeal to tourists is maintained. Maintaining and improving destination image is important, (Almeida-García et al., 2020; Lee and Xue, 2020) state that destination image can impact tourist satisfaction levels and their intention to return or recommend the destination. According to Li et al. (2021), tourist experiences impacted by destination image can increase loyalty to the destination, as well as the intention to revisit. As the number of tourists visiting a destination increases, it is necessary to understand how destination image can impact tourist experiences and their behavior after visiting.

Destination image has an impact on tourist satisfaction, which in turn will affect post-visit behavior, such as the intention to recommend the destination and the intention to revisit. In this context, the cognitive and affective aspects of destination image play interrelated but different roles in impacting the tourist experience. The cognitive aspect focuses on the information and knowledge that tourists acquire about the destination. Meanwhile, the affective aspect focuses more on tourists' emotions towards the destination. A deeper knowledge of the relationship between cognitive and affective image can help destination managements in developing more effective marketing strategies to attract tourists and enhance tourist satisfaction. According to Marques et al. (2021), a positive destination image can directly impact tourist satisfaction levels and serve as an indicator of a destination's success in creating a satisfying experience. Meanwhile, a negative destination image or one that does not meet tourists' expectations can reduce their satisfaction levels and decrease the likelihood of them returning or recommending the destination to others (Almeida-García et al., 2020). The destination image that is formed can change over time, impacted by tourist experiences. In addition to improving the image of the destination, it is important to focus on creating memorable experiences that can increase tourist loyalty. Because tourist loyalty plays an important role in impacting their intention to recommend and revisit the destination (Chi and Giao, 2024).

Research on destination image has mostly focused on cognitive or affective aspects separately, with only a few studies comprehensively integrating both aspects in the context of tourist satisfaction and post-visit behavior. Liang et al. (2023) study emphasizes the role of affective image in impacting tourists' intention to revisit. With tourist destinations having high appeal, more specific research is needed to understand how the image formed in tourists' minds impacts their level of satisfaction and behavior after visiting. This study will deepen the knowledge of how tourist experiences can reinforce a positive destination image and encourage tourist loyalty. The quality of the experience provided during a visit can impact tourists' intention to revisit (Whitehead and Wicker, 2025). This study adopts the study conducted by Marques et al. (2021) on the relationship between destination image, satisfaction, and tourist loyalty, but this study has not considered the dimension of intention to revisit as an important factor that can impact tourist loyalty by revisiting the destination. The main difference with the Marques et al. (2021) study lies in the variables used to measure tourist loyalty. In Marques et al. (2021), loyalty was measured through the variable intention to country's product, while in this study it was measured through the variable intention to revisit.

A deep knowledge of how destination image impacts tourist satisfaction and behavior is crucial for destination

management. A positive destination image can increase tourist satisfaction and impact their intention to revisit or recommend the destination to others (Marques et al., 2021). This research can provide insights for destination management in developing more effective marketing strategies that are relevant to visitors' needs and expectations. Knowledge of how the interaction between cognitive and affective images can impact tourist experiences also allows managements to optimize tourist experiences and create long-term loyalty (Liang et al., 2023). The results of this study can be used to improve service quality and tourist experiences, as well as ensure that destinations remain attractive and competitive in the tourism market. This study provides knowledge of how both cognitive and affective aspects of destination image can interact with tourist satisfaction to shape their intention to revisit and recommend the destination. Previous research by (Almeida-García et al., 2020) examined one aspect of destination image separately, but this study combines both aspects to provide a more comprehensive perspective in the context of tourist destinations. By expanding the knowledge of the relationship between image, satisfaction, and post-visit behavior, this study is highly relevant in the context of tourism, particularly in destination management.

Research Objectives

This study aims to examine and analyze the relationship between destination image, tourist satisfaction, and their intention to revisit and recommend the destination. This study also aims to provide insights into how the cognitive and affective aspects of destination image impact tourist satisfaction and their intention to revisit or recommend the destination to others. This objective is very important because a positive destination image, both in terms of the information received by tourists and the emotion that comes up during the visit, has a direct impact on tourist satisfaction and loyalty (Liang et al., 2023). Understanding the factors that impact the intention to revisit can help destination management to develop experiences that meet tourists' expectations, with the main goal of increasing tourist loyalty in the future (Marques et al., 2021). This research not only contributes theoretically to deepening the knowledge of the relationship between destination image, satisfaction, and tourist behavior, but also has practical significance in helping destination management improve the quality of the tourist experience and support the development of a sustainable tourism industry (Çetinsöz and Ege, 2013).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Destination Image

Destination image plays an important role in shaping the perceptions, decisions, and behaviors of tourists throughout the stages of their travel experience. Marques et al. (2021) explain that destination image can be one of the most significant decision-making attributes because it helps differentiate a place in the minds of tourists, and destination image is related to tourist satisfaction and post-visit intentions to revisit and recommend, making it a good tool for predicting tourist behavior. Destination image is dynamic and can be modified at various phases of the tourist experience, namely before the trip, during the trip, and after the trip (Li et al., 2021). Destination image is also an important aspect in shaping tourist behavior and in tourist decision-making (Liang et al., 2023).

Destination image can be defined as a perception formed from various dimensions, which includes the cognitive and affective aspects of tourists towards a tourist attraction. The image of a tourist destination, especially its affective component, plays a crucial role in shaping tourist satisfaction and post-visit behavioral intentions towards that tourist destination (Marques et al., 2021). According to Liang et al. (2023), affective image is more important than cognitive image in impacting

potential tourists' visit intentions. This means that how tourists' emotion about a destination is more important than what they know about it when deciding to visit. Cognitive image has a positive impact on affective image, as evidenced by empirical results showing that visit intention is more impacted by affective image than cognitive image (Liang et al., 2023).

A positive destination image can be a key element in a successful tourism destination marketing strategy. Li et al. (2021) state that through appropriate marketing communications and positive word of mouth promotion, destination management can create a positive destination image to attract tourists to their destination. However, an established destination image can turn negative if tourists have a disappointing tourist experience. A negative or neutral pre-trip destination image can be improved after traveling to the destination (Li et al., 2021). Destination management must understand that image is not a stable element, rather it is dynamic and evolves as tourists gain more experience and acquire more information about the destination (Almeida-García et al., 2020). The imbalance between the projected and perceived image of a destination, especially when linked to the durability of a consolidated image, presents a significant challenge for destination management who wish to reposition their destination (Almeida-García et al., 2020).

Competition between destinations requires a deep knowledge of perception and satisfaction as key factors to impact tourist behavior. Destinations are like products, compete with each other because tourists often choose their next vacation destination by selecting places with similar attributes (Marques et al., 2021). Perceptions of destinations play a key role in the tourist decision-making process, both before and after choosing a destination (Almeida-García et al., 2020). An important determinant of the likelihood of tourists returning to a destination lies in the satisfaction gained from previous visits (Chi and Giao, 2024). Based on the research mentioned above, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1: Cognitive destination image and tourist satisfaction are positively related.

H2: Affective destination image and tourist satisfaction are positively related.

Tourist Satisfaction

Tourist satisfaction can be formed, among other things, through positive destination image. Supported by Marques et al. (2021), who state that destination image directly impacts tourists' perceptions of quality and satisfaction. According to Lee and Xue (2020), tourist satisfaction fully mediates the impact of destination image on loyalty, because without satisfaction, loyalty cannot be achieved. Meanwhile, Li et al. (2021) argue that satisfaction is impacted by tourism experiences and destination image, with tourism experiences having a direct impact on satisfaction and an indirect impact through destination image. Chi & Giao (2024) also state that overall tourist satisfaction is formed by evaluating the characteristics of tourist destinations in relation to their expectations. Satisfaction is defined as the consumer's response to fulfillment, whether the product or service is able to provide the desired level of enjoyment or not (Marques et al., 2021). Satisfaction is part of the tourist's evaluation of their values and expectations (Chi and Giao, 2024).

Tourist satisfaction is the result of cognitive evaluation and emotional value impacted by perceptions and experiences during a tourist trip. According to Li et al. (2021), satisfaction is considered an evaluative (cognitive) assessment resulting from a comparison between expectations and experiences. Marques et al. (2021) state that satisfaction is impacted by consumers' cognitive assessments, as well as their emotional responses to the experience. Satisfaction is also impacted by negative and positive emotions (Marques et al., 2021). According to Chi & Giao (2024) positive emotions have a significant impact on

tourist satisfaction, while negative emotions directly impact the choices made by tourists. Chi & Giao (2024) found a positive correlation between tourists' emotional responses and their level of satisfaction.

Destination image is recognized as one of the key factors in shaping tourist satisfaction levels. Marques et al. (2021) state that destination image is a direct determinant of satisfaction. The higher the destination image that tourists have, the higher their satisfaction level (Marques et al., 2021). This shows that positive perceptions of a destination not only reflect the quality of service and attractiveness of the destination, but also have a direct impact on the overall evaluation of the tourist experience. According to Li et al. (2021), tourists who have positive tourist experiences, a good destination image, and high satisfaction after visiting a tourist destination tend to want to explore other tourist destinations. To attract more tourists, tourist destinations need to create satisfying experiences and build visitor intent to return (Chi and Giao, 2024).

In service marketing, customer satisfaction plays a very important role. Customer satisfaction is considered to be the emotional state of customers towards the products or services they use (Chi and Giao, 2024). Satisfaction is not only impacted by service quality, but also impacted by the experience and perception of tourism towards the image of the destination. According to Li et al. (2021), satisfaction is impacted by tourism experiences and destination image, with tourism experiences having a direct effect on satisfaction and an indirect effect through destination image. Increasing the attractiveness of tourist destinations has a positive impact on tourist satisfaction (Chi and Giao, 2024). Therefore, destination management needs to pay attention to the elements of attractiveness and experience to create a memorable impression in order to create tourist loyalty.

Based on the research mentioned above, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H3: Tourist satisfaction and intention to recommend are positively related.

H4: Tourist satisfaction and intention to revisit are positively related.

Intention to Recommend

Destination image plays an important role in encouraging tourists to recommend tourist destinations they have visited. According to Marques et al. (2021), the image of a developing tourist destination is related to tourist satisfaction and the intention to recommend the place and purchase its products. The intention to recommend is one of the most important behavioral outcomes triggered by destination image (Marques et al., 2021). This finding is reinforced by previous research conducted by Baloglu (2014) in Marques et al. (2021), which shows that destination image is closely related to tourist satisfaction levels and impacts the intention to return and recommend the destination to others.

Satisfaction plays a strategic role in strengthening the image of a destination in relation to the intention to recommend it. Marques et al. (2021) state that the impact of overall tourist satisfaction with a tourist destination is not limited to the intention to revisit, but also mediates the relationship between affective image and the likelihood of recommending the destination to others. Marques et al. (2021) also explain that the intention to recommend a destination impacts tourists' intention to purchase products related to that destination. If a positive image of a tourist destination is not built, tourists may become dissatisfied and spread negative word of mouth, which will have a negative impact on the sustainability of the tourist destination's image (Çetinsöz and Ege, 2013).

Tourist loyalty is one aspect of tourism destination development, as it plays an important role in impacting the intention to revisit and the intention to recommend the destination to others. Li et al. (2021) define tourist loyalty as a psychological commitment to consistently repurchase a

product/service in the future, thereby encouraging repeat purchases at the same destination and recommendations to other potential visitors. In this regard, Çetinsöz and Ege (2013) emphasize that the risk dimension of satisfaction must be given special consideration by tourism managers and developers, given its impact on the intention to revisit.

Tourist satisfaction levels impact the intention to revisit, which in turn plays an important role in tourists' intention to recommend the destination to others. (Çetinsöz and Ege, 2013) state that the economic benefits gained from tourism make the intention to revisit important, as returning tourists not only play a role in increasing revenue, but also in spreading information about the destination to potential visitors. Several studies conducted by Gitelson & Crompton (1984) and Opperman (1977) in (Çetinsöz and Ege, 2013) attempted to identify the factors that cause tourists to visit a destination more than once, with an emphasis on knowledge of the importance of repeat visits as an element that can enhance destination promotion through recommendations from satisfied tourists. Tourists who are dissatisfied with their experience are unlikely to return and will not recommend the destination to others, as stated by Chi & Giao (2024), who emphasize that dissatisfaction can prevent visitors from returning, while also reducing the likelihood of them spreading positive information about the destination. Based on the research mentioned above, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H5: Cognitive destination image and intention to recommend are positively related.

H6: Cognitive destination image and intention to revisit are positively related.

Intention to Revisit

Tourist satisfaction plays a key role in shaping the intention to revisit, which is an important indicator of the success of destination management. Overall, satisfaction impacts tourists' intention to revisit (Çetinsöz and Ege, 2013). The intention to revisit is a concept that captures future behavioral intentions in terms of revisiting a destination (Whitehead and Wicker, 2025). A deeper knowledge of the relationship between satisfaction and revisit intention is an important foundation for tourism destination management and marketing strategies.

Tourists' perceived risk of a destination plays an important role in impacting their intention to revisit. Understanding the perceived vacation risks of tourists in a particular destination is essential to determine their likelihood of returning (Chi and Giao, 2024). Therefore, according to Chi & Giao (2024), the impact of perceived risk on revisit intentions requires tourism authorities and planners to prioritize this issue to encourage repeat visits. Knowledge of destination image is key to managing repeat visit intentions and tourist behavior towards a destination. For destination management, it is important to understand the extent to which changes in destination image attributes impact tourists' intentions to return and the behaviors they provide to the destination (Whitehead and Wicker, 2025). Destination image is not static, it can change over time through tourist experiences, marketing promotions, and information circulating on social media.

A positive destination image plays an important role in encouraging revisit intention through memorable experiences. The positive relationship between destination image and revisit intention indicates that experiences during a trip can be a significant motivator for repeat participation (Whitehead and Wicker, 2025). Strengthening destination image through memorable experience management strategies is one way to foster tourist loyalty by increasing the likelihood of repeat visits. Based on the research mentioned above, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H7: Affective destination image and intention to recommend are positively related.

H8: Affective destination image and intention to revisit are positively related.

Conceptual Model

Figure 1 presents a proposed conceptual model linking destination image with tourist satisfaction, intention to recommend, and intention to revisit. Destination image is divided into two main components, namely cognitive image and affective image. Cognitive image includes information received by tourists about the attributes and characteristics of the destination, while affective image focuses more on emotion and emotional experiences that arise during the visit. These two image components were specified as separate predictors of tourist satisfaction, which in turn impacts their intention to recommend the destination and their intention to revisit.

This model illustrates that destination image, both cognitive and affective, has an impact on tourist satisfaction, which was specified as a potential mediator between destination image and post-visit behavior. The intention to recommend and the intention to revisit are important indicators of tourist loyalty, which can be impacted by the experiences they have during their visit to the destination. This study focuses on Yogyakarta as a tourist destination, focusing on how the destination image that is formed has an impact on tourist experiences and their intention to revisit and recommend Yogyakarta to others. This is also related to the Tourism Area Life Cycle (TALC) proposed by Butler (1980), which identifies five stages that a tourist destination goes through: exploration, engagement, development, consolidation, and stagnation or revitalization.

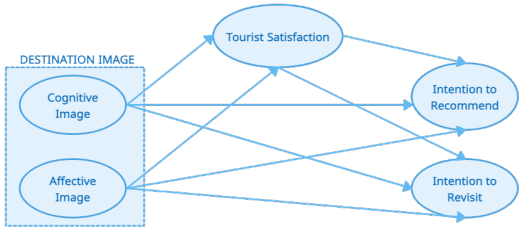


Figure 1. Conceptual Model
(Source: Author's own)

METHOD

The methodology used is a quantitative survey method, which focuses on quantitative analysis including questionnaire design, sample collection, and data analysis. The main purpose of this questionnaire is to analyze the relationship between destination image, tourist satisfaction, and tourist loyalty, taking the city of Yogyakarta as the object of research, considering that Yogyakarta is one of the favorite destinations in Indonesia that has a variety of attractions for domestic and foreign tourists.

Sample and Data Collection Procedure

To test this research model, a quantitative survey method was conducted by distributing questionnaires as the main data collection instrument. The sample in this study consisted of tourists who had visited the city of Yogyakarta. Data collection was carried out during the period from March to May 2025. The questionnaires were distributed online through several social media platforms. The questionnaires were designed in a form format with Likert scale statements to facilitate quantitative data analysis.

Each construct was analyzed using Cronbach's alpha to evaluate the extent of the correlation between items in a group of questions. The higher the correlation between items, the higher the alpha value, so this indicator is used as a measure of the reliability of an instrument. The test results showed that the Cronbach's alpha value for all constructs was in the range of 0.829 to 0.906, indicating a good level of reliability.

Measures of The Model Constructs

The measurement model reported in Table 1 contains 20 indicators developed independently based on previous literature reviews that are quite relevant. These are mainly related to destination image theory, which is categorized into two dimensions, namely cognitive and affective images. The questionnaire also includes statements

related to tourist satisfaction and their behavior (tourists) after their visit, including their intention to recommend Yogyakarta as a tourist destination to others, as well as their intention to visit again. Each statement in the questionnaire was measured using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

The instrument includes destination image variables, which are divided into two sub-variables, namely cognitive image and affective image. Cognitive image measurement was developed by selecting items from several previous studies (e.g., Lee and Xue, 2020; Lin et al., 2007; Marques et al., 2021). The affective image measurement was also developed by selecting items from previous studies (e.g., Almeida-García et al., 2020; Lee and Xue, 2020; Schofield et al., 2020). Tourist satisfaction was measured with four items developed from Lee & Xue (2020), Marques et al. (2021), and Nguyen Viet et al. (2020). The intention to recommend was measured with three items developed from Marques et al. (2021) and Lee & Xue (2020). The intention to revisit was measured using four items developed from the studies by Hosany et al. (2020), Nguyen Viet et al. (2020), and Çetinsöz and Ege (2013).

Statistical Analysis

Structural equation modelling (SEM) was conducted with AMOS 25 using maximum-likelihood estimation. The study followed a two-stage approach: confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) of the measurement model, followed by estimation of the proposed structural relationships. For transparency, average variance extracted (AVE) and composite reliability (CR) were recalculated from the rounded item loadings shown in Table 1. AVE was computed as the mean squared standardized loading; CR was based on the squared sum of loadings and the sum of error variances, assuming standardized indicators. Overall fit indices and confidence intervals for indirect effects are not available in the reported results. Consequently, structural-path estimates are interpreted as provisional associations rather than evidence of confirmed mediation or causality.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Sample Characterization

The sample consisted of 238 respondents, of whom 51% were women and 49% were men. The ages of the respondents were mostly distributed between 18 and 45 years old, with the majority of respondents being in the 18-24 age range (65.2%), followed by the 25-34 age range (30.3%), and the smallest number in the 35-45 age range (4%). The majority of respondents had an education level of elementary/junior high/high school (48.5%) and a bachelor's degree (40.4%), with an average income of IDR 1,000,000 - Rp 3,000,000 (35.4%) and an income of Rp 3,000,001 - Rp. 5,000,000 (25.8%). The respondents came from West Java province (47%), followed by DKI Jakarta province (45%) and Lampung province (4%).

The main purpose of visiting Yogyakarta is for tourism/vacation/recreation (71.7%), followed by visiting family (14.6%), and business/work (11.1%). The length of stay is mostly 2-3 days (45.5%), 4-6 days (37.4%), more than 1 week (10.6%), and rarely do tourists take a one-day trip (5.6%). Most respondents traveled with their family (38.4%), with friends (23.2%), with a tour group (17.2%), with a partner (10.6%), and as a solo traveler (9.1%).

Overall measurement model

CFA results for five constructs are summarised in Table 1. To resolve discrepancies between the published AVE/CR labels and their displayed factor loadings, both statistics were recomputed from the rounded loadings using the standardised-indicator formulas described in the Methods. These recalculated values are approximate because the underlying unrounded AMOS estimates are unavailable. Four constructs have AVE below 0.50; only

intention to revisit reaches that threshold. Thus convergent validity has not been established for the full measurement model.

Most reported indicator loadings are below 0.70, and the recalculated CR for intention to recommend is below 0.70. These results suggest weaknesses in the measurement specification, although acceptable thresholds must be considered alongside theory and item content. The structural estimates should not be presented as fully validated until the measurement model has been reassessed. Univariate skewness and kurtosis alone do not establish multivariate normality or overall SEM model fit.

Table 1. Descriptive and reliability measures of the overall measurement model items.

Items	Loading	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Cognitive Image (AVE = 0.323; CR = 0.704)					
This destination offers a lot in terms of natural scenic beauty.	0.565	4.23	0.839	-1.192	1.744
This destination provides a variety of recreational activities.	0.538	4.22	0.773	-1.073	2.104
This destination has a clean environment.	0.630	3.88	0.913	-0.651	0.514
There are various types of culinary options at this destination.	0.538	4.49	0.772	-1.781	3.921
The accommodations at this destination are of good quality.	0.565	4.19	0.813	-0.940	1.234
Affective Image (AVE = 0.444; CR = 0.761)					
I feel that this destination is pleasant.	0.708	4.32	0.803	-1.485	3.042
This destination has a relaxing atmosphere.	0.619	4.16	0.896	-1.098	1.486
I enjoy discovering new attractions.	0.653	4.17	0.853	-0.833	0.560
This destination is something interesting for me.	0.681	4.29	0.820	-1.483	3.472
Tourist Satisfaction (AVE = 0.372; CR = 0.703)					
My tourist experience at this destination exceeded my expectations.	0.631	3.89	0.931	-0.237	-1.027
Visiting this destination is enjoyable.	0.578	4.11	0.815	-0.891	1.253
My visit to this destination is worth my time and effort.	0.606	4.15	0.716	-0.230	-1.010
Overall, I am satisfied with my decision to visit this destination.	0.624	4.31	0.787	-0.994	0.509
Intention to Recommend (AVE = 0.404; CR = 0.670)					
I will recommend this destination to my friends and family.	0.613	4.31	0.813	-0.975	0.237
I will speak about my good impressions of destination to my friends and family.	0.660	4.23	0.737	-0.549	-0.422

Items	Loading	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Willingness to bring friends & family to visit this destination.	0.633	4.33	0.766	-0.782	-0.387
Intention to Revisit (AVE = 0.524; CR = 0.814)					
This destination could be the next vacations place.	0.645	4.14	0.876	-0.554	-0.814
Revisiting this destination would be worthwhile.	0.740	3.95	0.968	-0.512	-0.469
This destination is safe to revisit.	0.691	4.29	0.795	-0.818	-0.167
I would like to visit this destination in the future.	0.810	4.19	0.837	-0.478	-1.115

Source: Recalculated from reported loadings.

Table 2. Inter-construct correlations (square roots of AVE on diagonal).

	Cognitive	Affective	Tourist Satisfaction	Intention to Recommend	Intention to Revisit
Cognitive	0,568				
Affective	0,613	0,666			
Tourist Satisfaction	0,591	0,586	0,610		
Intention to Recommend	0,534	0,589	0,670	0,636	
Intention to Revisit	0,466	0,537	0,604	0,667	0,724

Source: Authors' correlations and calculations.

Table 2 shows positive correlations among the five constructs. The diagonal contains the square roots of AVE recalculated from the loadings in Table 1, while the remaining entries are the inter-construct correlations as originally reported. The satisfaction–recommendation correlation (r = 0.670), for instance, exceeds both associated diagonal values (0.610 and 0.636). Therefore, the Fornell–Larcker criterion is not met across all constructs, and discriminant validity cannot be claimed for the complete model.

The cognitive–affective correlation is 0.613, greater than the recalculated diagonal value for cognitive image (0.568). Other relationships, such as the correlation between recommendation and revisit intentions (r = 0.667), also warrant scrutiny. These associations may reflect overlap among constructs, so comparisons of structural paths and their practical importance should be treated cautiously. The present correlations alone do not resolve measurement overlap or establish the distinctiveness of every latent construct.

Table 3. Reported structural-path coefficient estimates.

Hypothesis	Relationship	Std Estimate	Unstd Estimate	Standard Error	t Statistic	Sig.
H1	Cognitive > Tourist Satisfaction	0,282	0,380	0,293	1,296	0,195
H2	Affective > Tourist Satisfaction	0,625	0,656	0,235	2,791	0,005
H3	Tourist Satisfaction > Intention to Recommend	1,855	1,459	0,330	4,421	***
H4	Tourist Satisfaction > Intention to Revisit	1,818	2,026	0,452	4,483	***
H5	Cognitive > Intention to Recommend	0,215	0,228	0,443	0,514	0,607
H6	Cognitive > Intention to Revisit	-0,136	-0,204	0,486	-0,419	0,675
H7	Affective > Intention to Recommend	-1,131	-0,933	0,395	-2,362	0,018
H8	Affective > Intention to Revisit	-0,826	-0,966	0,544	-1,776	0,076

Source: Author's own

Table 3 reports the estimated structural relationships. The following statements describe the reported coefficients and p-values but remain conditional on the adequacy of the measurement and structural models. Affective image was positively associated with tourist satisfaction (H2: $p = 0.005$), while the direct path from cognitive image to satisfaction was not significant (H1: $p = 0.195$). Satisfaction was positively associated with intention to recommend (H3: $p < 0.001$) and intention to revisit (H4: $p < 0.001$). These are direct relationships in the fitted model; the indirect effects required to establish mediation were not estimated. None of these findings alone establishes a causal relationship, particularly because the survey was cross-sectional and global model-fit diagnostics were not reported.

The direct paths from cognitive image to recommendation (H5: $p = 0.607$) and revisit intention (H6: $p = 0.675$) were not significant. Affective image had a negative reported direct association with recommendation intention (H7: $p = 0.018$), while its direct path to revisit intention was not significant (H8: $p = 0.076$) at the 5% level. Several standardised coefficients in Table 3 have absolute values exceeding 1 (H3, H4 and H7), which can occur with suppression or correlated predictors but raises questions about model specification and interpretability. The negative association cannot be explained as unmet expectations because that mechanism was not directly measured or tested.

Satisfaction was positively associated with both post-visit intentions in the reported model. However, convergent and discriminant validity problems, missing overall fit indices and the absence of an indirect-effect test preclude a confirmed mediation claim. These findings are useful as exploratory relationships to be reassessed with a validated measurement model before any strong managerial recommendations are made.

Discussion

In the reported model, the cognitive-image path to satisfaction was not statistically significant; this finding is provisional given the measurement-model limitations. Destination image, especially cognitive image, is often considered to play an important role in shaping tourist satisfaction. However, the results of this study indicate that its impact is not significant enough in the context tested. Beerli & Martín (2004) state that tourists' perceptions of a place are strongly impacted by their individual characteristics, which can cause significant differences in how the cognitive image impacts satisfaction levels. Elliot & Papadopoulos (2016) also emphasize that the image of a destination built through external information does not always reflect the actual experience of tourists. Although cognitive images are important in the early stages of the decision-making process, they are not always directly related to the satisfaction felt after the experience at the destination. Often, expectations built through external information do not match the reality faced by tourists, which in turn impacts their assessment of satisfaction. These results indicate that although cognitive image plays an important role in shaping tourists' initial perceptions, other factors related to direct experience and service quality have a greater impact in determining tourist satisfaction.

The reported model suggests a positive association between affective image and tourist satisfaction, subject to the limitations of measurement validity. Destination images consist of various dimensions that are interrelated, including affective aspects that shape tourists' perceptions of a tourist destination. This emphasizes the important role of emotions in shaping tourist satisfaction levels. The positive emotions that tourists feel towards a place play a direct role in increasing their satisfaction. Hosany et al. (2020) state that the positive emotions felt by tourists towards a place will significantly increase their satisfaction. This shows that the emotional impact caused by the tourist experience can have a greater impact on satisfaction ratings than other factors that are more cognitive or rational. Positive emotional experiences during a visit increase the likelihood of tourists giving good reviews and revisiting the destination. According to Schofield et al. (2020), positive emotional experiences during a visit increase the likelihood of tourists giving positive reviews and revisiting the destination. Tourist satisfaction is easier to achieve if they have pleasant emotional experiences during their visit (Morrison et al., 2025). Positive emotional experiences in the form of emotions such as joy, awe, or satisfaction are key to creating high levels of satisfaction among tourists.

The reported path from tourist satisfaction to recommendation intention was positive, although the measurement and fit limitations constrain interpretation. The hypothesis suggests that tourist satisfaction not only impacts their perception of the experience they have had, but also plays an important role in increasing the likelihood of them recommending the destination to others. Tourist satisfaction can impact destination loyalty, namely the intention to recommend (Lee and Xue, 2020). When tourists are satisfied with their experience, they are more likely to spread positive information, which can increase the attractiveness of the destination to other potential tourists. Lin et al. (2007) highlighted the importance of satisfaction in building loyalty and encouraging other positive behaviors, including providing recommendations to others. Positive emotional connections formed during visits to tourist destinations increase tourists' intention to recommend the destination to friends or family (Woosnam et al., 2020). When tourists feel emotionally connected to a destination, they are more likely to share the experience with others. Mensah et al. (2025) state that tourist satisfaction is directly related to an increase in positive reviews given by tourists, which in turn impacts the intention of other tourists to visit the destination. High satisfaction can serve as a

motivator to provide positive reviews that will impact other potential tourists. These findings provide clear evidence that tourist satisfaction plays a very important role in shaping their intention to recommend tourist destinations to others.

The reported path from satisfaction to revisit intention was positive, but a causal effect has not been established. This confirms the hypothesis that tourist satisfaction is a key factor in shaping revisit intentions, which is also an important indicator in assessing the success of destination management. According to Chen et al. (2024), tourist satisfaction is the main factor that impacts tourists' intention to revisit a particular destination. Positive tourist experiences, in facilities, services, and attractions, will increase the likelihood of tourists considering the destination in their future trips. Satisfied tourists tend to develop loyalty to the destination, which is reflected in their intention to revisit (Wang et al., 2025). Satisfaction is important in building a deeper emotional bond with tourists, which will ultimately increase the likelihood of revisits. According to Su et al. (2020), tourists who feel that they have had a good experience at a reasonable price tend to be more satisfied and have a higher intention to revisit. An experience that is comparable to the price paid creates a high sense of value, which contributes to greater satisfaction and as a result, strengthens the intention to revisit. Managing a good experience not only has a positive impact on satisfaction levels, but also increases tourist loyalty and encourages them to recommend the destination to others, thereby strengthening the overall appeal of the tourist destination.

The findings show that cognitive variables do not have a significant effect on tourists' intention to recommend a destination. This indicates that although tourists' knowledge about a destination can play a role in shaping their initial perceptions, this knowledge is not enough to encourage them to recommend the destination after their experience. According to Lee et al. (2022), knowledge about a destination is indeed important in determining tourists' initial choices, but it does not always have a direct impact on their intention to recommend the destination after their experience. The actual experiences felt by tourists during their visit, including the quality of service and facilities, are more influential in motivating them to share their positive experiences with others. Suhartanto et al. (2020) revealed that a satisfying travel experience has a much greater impact on recommendation intentions than mere information or cognitive knowledge. According to Woosnam et al. (2020), although cognitive knowledge about destination quality can increase tourists' understanding, it's not enough to encourage them to recommend the destination. Although information about destination quality can help tourists build a better understanding of a place, it's not enough to motivate them to share their experiences with others. These findings show that although cognitive knowledge about a destination can influence tourists' initial decision to visit that place, direct experience factors, especially those related to the quality of the experience and satisfaction gained, are more dominant in shaping tourists' intention to recommend the destination.

The findings of this study also show that cognitive variables do not have a significant effect on tourists' intention to revisit a tourist destination. The intention to revisit is more often influenced by social influence than by the knowledge or information that tourists have about the destination. The results of this study confirm that cognitive variables are not sufficient to encourage tourists to plan a return visit after they have visited the destination. Lee et al. (2022) state that cognitive knowledge about a destination plays a greater role in the initial decision when choosing a tourist destination, but does not have a long-term impact on tourists' intention to revisit. This shows that although cognitive knowledge is important in the decision-making stage, its impact on revisit behavior is limited.

Positive experiences that create deeper and longer-lasting emotional memories make tourists more likely to plan a revisit than if they rely solely on their cognitive knowledge about the destination (Hosany et al., 2020). This highlights that experiences that trigger strong and positive emotional responses are more influential in motivating tourists to revisit than mere knowledge about the destination. These findings suggest that to increase tourists' intention to revisit, destination management should focus on creating satisfying and memorable experiences that are not only based on cognitive information but also on the emotional factors evoked during the visit.

The reported H7 path was negative ($p = 0.018$), but its interpretation remains tentative because the measurement model was not fully validated. Not all tourists will experience the same affective factors when visiting a tourist destination, some tourists are more focused on comfort, facilities, and service efficiency. Some tourists may be more focused on the practical and functional aspects of a destination, such as the quality of facilities or service comfort, which are more important to them than the emotional experience that the destination may offer. According to Suhartanto et al. (2020), even though the level of emotional satisfaction may be high, this does not always correlate with the intention to recommend a tourist destination, especially if tourists feel that the destination does not meet their specific needs. If the destination is considered to not meet the expectations and specific needs of tourists, even positive emotional factors can lose their appeal in motivating recommendation behavior. These findings indicate that to encourage tourists' intention to recommend a destination, destination management must consider various factors, not just emotional ones. While positive emotional experiences can enrich the visit, other factors more related to expectations and the practical value of the destination also play an important role in motivating tourists to recommend the place to others.

The reported direct path from affective image to revisit intention was not statistically significant ($p = 0.076$). Although positive affective experiences during a visit can contribute to feelings of happiness and temporary satisfaction, these findings confirm that emotional factors are not strong enough to encourage tourists to revisit a destination. The affective experiences felt by tourists during their visit do not always contribute to their intention to return if the experience is inconsistent or if tourists do not feel that the destination provides sustainable value. When the tourist experience does not provide a consistent impression or does not fully meet tourists' expectations, their intention to return to the destination will be lower. Research by San Martín & Rodríguez Del Bosque (2008) reveals that although affective feelings can contribute to positive tourist experiences, overall satisfaction which is influenced by many other factors is more dominant in shaping the intention to revisit. This confirms that although affective factors play a role in creating positive experiences during visits, other factors that are more functional and practical, such as the quality of facilities, services provided, and value received by tourists, are far more decisive in shaping the intention to revisit. These findings show that a comprehensive experience influences the intention to revisit rather than relying solely on emotional factors.

CONCLUSION

The reported SEM results suggest that affective image is positively associated with tourist satisfaction ($p = 0.005$), whereas the direct association for cognitive image is not statistically significant ($p = 0.195$). Satisfaction is positively associated with recommendation and revisit intentions (both $p < 0.001$). The direct relationship between affective image and recommendation intention is negative ($p = 0.018$), while its direct relationship with revisit intention is not significant ($p = 0.076$).

These associations cannot yet be considered conclusive because the AVE values recomputed from the reported loadings fall below 0.50 for four of the five constructs, discriminant validity is not established across the correlation matrix, and global model-fit indices are absent. The reported standardised coefficients above 1 also warrant examination of model specification. Indirect effects were not tested, so mediation by tourist satisfaction is not established. The results provide preliminary evidence for further research, not a validated causal explanation or a definitive basis for destination-management policies. Future work should reassess measurement validity and structural model fit before testing mediation or deriving stronger policy implications.

Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

This study offers preliminary evidence about destination image and post-visit intentions in Yogyakarta, but the reported measurement and structural diagnostics are insufficient for definitive conclusions. First, this study only examined the destination of Yogyakarta City broadly, which may not fully represent the characteristics of tourist destinations specifically in Yogyakarta City or in other cities and countries. The findings cannot be generalized broadly without taking into account contextual differences in other tourist destinations (Almeida-García et al., 2020). Second, this study has limitations in terms of the demographic aspects of the respondents. This study relied on a sample of tourists who had visited Yogyakarta, with most respondents being young and middle-aged, between 18 and 34 years old. The findings of this study may not fully reflect the perceptions or behaviors of tourists from demographic groups that were less represented in the sample. Therefore, it is important to conduct further research by expanding the sample so that the results obtained are more representative and cover all relevant demographic groups (Lee and Xue, 2020). Lastly, the influence of social media as the main platform for disseminating information and destination image has not been analyzed in depth. Social media plays an increasingly important role in shaping tourist perceptions through reviews, images, and stories shared by previous tourists. Therefore, further research is recommended to expand the scope by exploring how social media influences destination image and affects tourists' decisions to revisit or recommend destinations to others.

To solve the limitations of this study, future research should expand its scope by analyzing various tourist destinations both in and outside Yogyakarta, as well as in other countries with different destination characteristics. This will allow for a more comprehensive understanding of the influence of destination image on tourist loyalty, taking into account the contextual differences that exist in various tourist destinations. To solve the limitations of the demographic aspect, which only focuses on certain age groups, future research should involve a more diverse sample in terms of age, cultural background, level of education, and income, so that the findings reflect the perspectives of all relevant tourist demographic groups. It is important to deepen the analysis of the influence of social media on destination image and tourist behavior. Social media has rapidly developed as a major platform for the distribution of information and destination image, playing an important role in shaping tourist perceptions (Li et al., 2021). Therefore, further research is recommended to integrate social media analysis as part of a broader study of the influence of destination image on tourist loyalty.

AI USE STATEMENT

Artificial Intelligence (AI) ChatGPT was used in some parts of this paper to recheck spellings and to improve the coherence of sentences in some paragraphs. To

maintain academic integrity, the originality, accuracy, and credibility of data or contents are highly warranted.

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