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Culinary Experience of International Tourists in Indonesia

A Study on Denpasar and Yogyakarta Tourist Destinations

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Abstract: Culinary tourism offers tourists to learn new cultures through their experiences with local food of the visited destinations. The literature shows that although the concept of experience quality, tourist satisfaction in the context of culinary tourism has been confirmed in many previous studies, a study that examines the linkages between those variables and destination experience specifically the culinary experience with local Indonesian food is still rare. The aim of this study was to investigate the effect of culinary experience quality on destination experience satisfaction with culinary experience satisfaction as a mediating variable. In total, 202 international tourists who were in Denpasar and Yogyakarta participated in the survey. The result showed that culinary experience quality positively and significantly influenced culinary experience satisfaction. Further, culinary experience satisfaction was proven to have a positive significant effect on the overall destination experience satisfaction.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of the fastest growing sectors in Indonesia. In 2017, the country welcomed about 14.04 million international visitors, a growth rate of 21.88% over the figure for 2016 (Kemenpar, 2017). Statistics generated from the Passenger Exit Survey (PES) in 2015 showed that out of total international tourists visiting Indonesia, 29.47% of them took part in culinary tourism activities (Kemenpar, 2015).

Culinary tourism has been prioritized for development as one of the seven types of special interest tourism. In 2012, the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy officially launched 30 signature traditional dishes of Indonesia aiming to improve the awareness of Indonesian culinary diversity in the international market (Prawitasari, 2012). Moreover, in 2015, the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy designated five cities as Indonesia's gastronomy destinations namely: Bandung, Yogyakarta, Solo, Semarang and Denpasar (Widianto, 2015).

Chen et al. (2016) argue that tourist experience of local culinary in one place could influence the overall destination experience. When enjoying local cuisines, a tourist would make an

assessment of the culinary experience quality they engaged with. Such an assessment leads to the satisfaction levels of the consumption experience. An impressive culinary experience could trigger the branding of the destination as a result of the overall satisfaction of the destination experience.

Despite the raising importance of culinary experience as a means of destination attraction, the literature indicates that most of the culinary tourism studies were mainly accomplished in more developed tourist destinations (Cohen and Avieli, 2004, Henderson, 2009). To the authors' knowledge, there has not been much research on the relationship between culinary experience quality and tourist satisfaction in Indonesia. On this basis, the authors are interested in analyzing more deeply about the extent to which the quality of the culinary experience of tourists in Denpasar and Yogyakarta could affect destination experience satisfaction. Out of Indonesia's five gastronomy destinations, Denpasar and Yogyakarta were selected considering their well-known reputation worldwide as cultural tourism destinations of Indonesia. Besides, compared to other cities, these two cities are well known of their local culinary precincts that cater to international tourists who would like to explore Indonesian local foods.

The aims of the study are three folds namely:

1. to examine the effect of culinary experience quality on culinary experience satisfaction;
2. to examine the effect of culinary experience satisfaction on overall destination experience satisfaction;
3. to examine the effect of culinary experience quality on the overall destination experience satisfaction.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Culinary Tourism

According to Karim and Chi (2010), there has been little consensus about a single definition that describes food-related tourism. The terms food tourism, gastronomy tourism, and culinary tourism have been used interchangeably and scholars have described the various terms inconsistently (Long, 2004, Ignatov and Smith, 2006, Mitchell and Hall, 2003). Wijaya et al. (2017) in their study interpreted culinary tourism as a trip during which the consumption or experience of local food and beverages is expressed in various food-related activities, regardless of whether experiencing local food is or is not a primary purpose for travel.

2.2 Culinary Experience Quality

Food is a basic sustenance for every tourist during their travel. Regardless of whether culinary activity becomes the main goal or just as a satisfying need during the trip, a person's culinary experience would shape the image of the culinary enjoyed. One's culinary experience could affect the overall experience of the visited destinations (Ignatov and Smith, 2006).

Wijaya et al. (2013) propose a conceptual framework of international visitor dining experiences with local food, by examining the experiences in the course of the pre-, during, and post-dining stages. The pre-dining stage refers to how international visitors foresee their engagement with the various aspects that may concern dining with local food, as well as the prospect of associated experiential outcomes. The during-dining stage relates to actual encounters with local food within the destination, as reflected in visitor perceptions of the dining experience. Lastly, the post-dining stage refers to visitor satisfaction and

behavioral intentions that emerge after the dining experience has been concluded. It is important to note that culinary experience is subjective, meaning the culinary experience is influenced by the individual's own experience (Sfandla and Björk, 2012).

Destination management organizations (DMOs) could use culinary as a representative of cultural experience, status, cultural identity, as well as how to communicate the tourist destinations (Horng and Tsai, 2012). Further, Silkes et al. (2013) noted that food could show a unique and most memorable experience for the whole trip.

Andersson and Mossberg (2004) state that culinary experience is multi-dimensional, that is, the measurement of the quality of the culinary experience can not be seen only from one dimension of the food, but there are other dimensions especially in the context of a tourist experience with a culinary region that is never consumed previous. Review of the literature has shown that there are three major dimensions to measure the quality of culinary experience with local food at a destination. These dimensions are: 1) food dimension that relates to attributes of taste, food authenticity and food uniqueness; 2) social dimension that includes the extent of which tourists could interact with the locals and experience the hospitality and distinct culture of the host; and 3) place and time dimension that refers to the physical place where the eating experience with local food take place, as well when the eating experience occurs (Hendijani et al., 2013, Peštek and Činjarević, 2014, Wijaya et al., 2017).

2.3 Culinary Experience Satisfaction

Satisfaction is commonly viewed as an indicator of experience quality (Ryan, 2002). Ryan further asserts that a satisfactory experience encompasses congruence between expectations and performance, while dissatisfaction is reflective of a gap between expectations and the perceived quality of the tourism consumption experience. In other words, satisfaction is generated when consumers compare their initial expectations with perception (Correia et al., 2008). Satisfaction is not just about the joy of travel experience but also an evaluation that makes the experience as good as it should be.

In line with the culinary experience dimensions as described earlier, Björk and Kauppinen-Räsänen (2014) in their study explain that tourist satisfaction towards culinary

experience could be measured based on three aspects of: 1) what food or local cuisine being served; where the food is served; and how the food is served.

Extensive research has been devoted to investigating the linkage between culinary experience and tourist behavior constructs such as satisfaction, behavioral intention, and loyalty. For example, Sulek and Hensley (2004) found that compared to physical environment and service quality aspects within the restaurant, food quality is the most important element in determining customer satisfaction. A study by Correia et al. (2008) identified the determinants of international visitor satisfaction with Portugal's gastronomy tourism. It revealed three significant factors: local gastronomy; atmosphere; and food quality and price as the most important determinants of visitors' satisfaction. Research by Hendijani et al. (2013) also confirmed that in Malaysia, food plays an important and interesting role in enhancing destination experience. A positive culinary experience quality perceived by tourists specifically the first-time travellers indicating culinary satisfaction, which in turn, it can be used to trigger revisit intention. The foregoing discussion has led the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1: culinary experience quality has a positive significant influence on culinary experience satisfaction.

2.4 Destination Experience Satisfaction

According to Murphy et al. (2000), destinations can be viewed as a set of complementary tourism products and services to form travel experience in an area visited by tourists. Tourist perception on the quality of destination experience is determined by service infrastructure and destination environment. Service infrastructure consists of a set of products and services that offer a direct experience for travellers when they are in a destination, which includes travel agency services, food service businesses, accommodation and transport services. Destination environment is a component supporting the provision of experience for tourists covering the natural environment, political conditions, availability of technology, economic conditions, and socio-cultural factors of a destination.

The experience of tourists with local culinary influences the perception of tourists of their overall experience with the visited destination (Karim and

Chi, 2010). Moreover, the perception of tourists towards the experience of destination will have a positive effect on satisfaction, which in turn, could give a positive impact on the intention to revisit the destination and the intention to give referrals to others (Barnes et al., 2014). Based on the above discussion, the following hypotheses were proposed:

Hypothesis 2: culinary experience satisfaction has a positive significant influence on destination experience satisfaction.

Hypothesis 3: culinary experience quality has a positive significant influence on destination experience satisfaction.

The research model is depicted in figure 1.

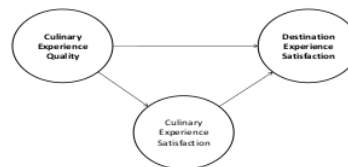


Figure 1. Research Model

3 RESEARCH METHOD

The samples were representative of the indefinite population of international tourists both in Denpasar and Yogyakarta. A questionnaire-based survey incorporating a total of 202 international tourists who travelled to Denpasar and Yogyakarta was completed. A minimum of 100 participants were selected from Denpasar and Yogyakarta, respectively. They were asked: 1) basic profiles relating to demographics and travel characteristics; 2) perceived quality of culinary experience; 3) culinary experience satisfaction; 4) destination experience quality (using a seven-point Likert scale). A review of relevant literature was contributed to the development of the items of the instruments. The questionnaire was divided into four parts. The participants were approached mainly at tourist attractions and culinary precincts in both cities. The sampling process was one of convenience.

At the end of the survey, 202 questionnaires were returned. Prior to data analysis, data-cleaning process was conducted to test the normality and possible outliers. Two incomplete questionnaires were dropped, leaving a total of 200 usable ques-

tionnaires ready for further data analysis. The study applied descriptive statistics to describe the participants' profiles meanwhile Partial Least Square (PLS) path modeling was applied to test the proposed research hypotheses.

4 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Participant Profiles

There were 53% female and 47% male participants. The majority aged between 21-30 years old (56%). Two major groups of university students (33%) and employees (28%) were dominating the total participants. Most of the participants were from Australia (28%). Moreover, most of the purpose of visit was for leisure (85%). Most of the participants travelled with friends (55%). The length of stay of most participants was less than 7 days (38%). Almost half of the participants (48%) were first time visitors.

4.2 Measurement Model

To test the research hypothesis and analyze the result, SEM-PLS was used. The result of the construct validity testing showed that there were three loading factors of Customer Experience Quality (CEQ) which were below the cut-off value of 0.50. They are cleanliness (CEQ-P3), different way of eating the food (CEQ-S3) and interaction with the local people (CEQ-S1). As a result, they were eliminated from the construct. The result of the path analysis after the elimination is showed in figure 2.

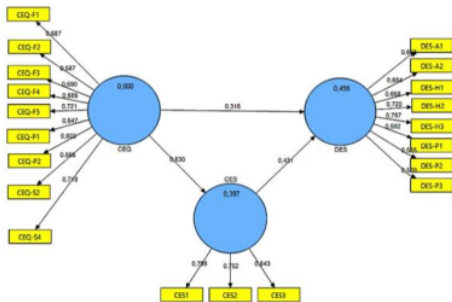


Figure 2. Path Analysis of Research Model

The values of the composite reliability and the Cronbach's Alpha value of the three laten variables were above the cut-off value of 0.70 (reliable).

Table 1. Composite reliability

Latent Variables	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha
CEQ (Culinary Experience Quality)	0.8730	0.8374
CES (Culinary Experience Satisfaction)	0.8403	0.7172
DES (Destination Experience Satisfaction)	0.8551	0.8091

The goodness of fit in PLS is determined from the Q^2 value. The Q^2 value is calculated from the R^2 values in table 2. The value of Q^2 value is: $Q^2 = 1 - [(1 - 0.4561^2) \times (1 - 0.3971^2)] = 0.366 = 36.6\%$. It shows that 36.6% of the change variation of destination experience satisfaction as the independent variable can be explained by culinary experience quality and culinary experience satisfaction as the dependent variables while 63.4% can be explained by other variables which are not analyzed in this research.

Table 2. R Square values

CEQ (Culinary Experience Quality)	0.0000
CES (Culinary Experience Satisfaction)	0.3971
DES (Destination Experience Satisfaction)	0.4561

Moreover, based on the path coefficients, it showed that the relationship among the variables was positive (original sample). From the t-statistic, it exhibits that all the three relationships were significant as all the values were all above the cut-off value of 1.96.

Table 3. Path Coefficients

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	Standard Error (STERR)	T Statistics (T/OSTERR)
CEQ → CES	0.6301	0.6	0.0	0.0	9.0
CES → DES	0.476	0.476	0.099	0.099	0.88
CEQ → DES	0.3149	0.3	0.1	0.1	2.4
DES → CES	0.201	0.201	0.267	0.267	0.858
CES → DES	0.4311	0.4	0.1	0.1	3.3
DES → CES	0.385	0.385	0.287	0.287	0.496

4.3 Discussions

The findings of this study has a significant contribution on understanding the variables influencing the destination experience satisfaction of the international tourists in Indonesia especially in Bali and Yogyakarta. Based on the data analysis of the t-statistics, it was proven that culinary

experience quality (CEQ) significantly influenced the culinary experience satisfaction (CES) as well as destination experience satisfaction (DES). It means that the higher the quality of the culinary experience as perceived by the respondents, the higher the satisfaction both of the culinary experience and destination experience. Moreover, culinary experience satisfaction (CES) gave a significant influence on destination experience satisfaction (DES). That is, the higher the satisfaction of the participants on the culinary experience, the higher the destination experience satisfaction as perceived by the participants. Accordingly, all the three research hypothesis were accepted.

On the basis of the total effect calculation, the direct effect is larger than the indirect effect. It means that culinary experience quality is partially mediated by culinary experience satisfaction in influencing the destination experience satisfaction. Furthermore, there are three main indicators constructing the culinary experience quality (CEQ), they are: the ambience of the dining place (CEQ-P2), the unique food presentation (CEQ-F5) and the local people's hospitality (CEQ-S4). This finding is in accordance with the previous studies that the three major dimensions to measure the quality of culinary experience with local food at a destination are food dimension (food uniqueness), social dimension (local people's hospitality) and place and time dimension (ambience) (Hendijani et al., 2013, Peštek and Činjarević, 2014, Wijaya et al., 2017).

Contrary from the previous study, the main satisfier indicator of culinary experience satisfaction is the quality of the dining place (CES3) instead of the food quality by Peštek and Činjarević (2014). It means that the satisfaction of the participants who were international tourists was basically determined more by the dining place quality than the food quality.

Conversely, the two main indicators of destination experience satisfaction were the cost spent (DES-H3) and level of hospitality of local service staff (DES-H2). It indicates that the participants who were international tourists were satisfied with their visit to Denpasar or Yogyakarta basically due to the good value for money and the hospitality of the local staff giving service to them during their visit.

5 CONCLUSIONS

This study has contributed to the previous studies on culinary experience quality and its effects on culinary experience satisfaction and destination experience satisfaction. It has confirmed that culinary experience quality has a positive and significant influence on both culinary and destination experience satisfactions. Similarly, culinary experience satisfaction has a positive and significant influence on destination experience satisfaction. It has also confirmed the previous studies that the international tourists when appraising the quality of culinary experience, they will primarily assess the ambience of the dining place, the uniqueness of food presentation and the local people's hospitality.

It is important to note that this study has found that the culinary experience satisfaction of the international tourists was mainly determined by the dining place quality. Therefore, it is worth considering for local food service providers to pay attention to the design and comfort of the dining place representing the local ambience as it will influence the international tourists' satisfaction while enjoying the good quality of local food served.

Finally, this study has found that the destination experience satisfaction of the international tourists was mainly derived from good value for money and hospitality of local service staff. For that reason, it is of great importance for the government of Indonesia to keep the prices low and for the local service staff to maintain the hospitality high.

6 LIMITATIONS

Due to resources constraints, the empirical investigation was only conducted in the geographical scopes of Denpasar and Yogyakarta cities, thereby it might lead to possible bias because of the cultural setting. On this basis, the study does not claim to represent the whole of Indonesia with its diverse food cultures. It is therefore recommended that future studies should be conducted in other destination contexts and/or in other cultural settings.

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