

# The Role of Source Credibility and Place Attachment in Enhancing Visitors' Satisfaction

Ratna Roostika, Muafi

Fakultas Ekonomi, Universitas Pembangunan Nasional 'Veteran' Yogyakarta-Indonesia

**Abstract.** *Tourism is one of the important tools for development. In order to survive, credible resources and place attachment are keys for today's competition in the tourism sector. The objective of this study is to assess the relationships among source credibility, place attachment, and visitors' satisfaction. The study surveyed visitors in the World Heritage Site (WHS) Borobudur. Borobudur as a premium destination in Indonesia should be well managed so that it will strongly create attachment among visitors. A valid 132 questionnaires were analyzed using Partial Least Squares – Structural Equation Modeling. All the proposed relationships were supported meaning that the important role of both credible resources and place attachments to visitors' satisfaction was confirmed. The findings offer important implications where Government and tourism agency should take priority on the importance of source credibility and engaging marketing approaches for building place attachment. For academic, this study enriches and provides empirical evidence on the relationships proposed to the tourism and marketing literature.*

**Keywords:** *Source credibility, place attachment, satisfaction, WHS Borobudur.*

**Abstrak.** *Parwisata adalah salah satu senjata penting untuk pembangunan. Untuk bisa bertahan dalam persaingan pariwisata, kemampuan menawarkan sumber daya/informasi yang credible dan mendapatkan rasa keterikatan dari wisatawan sangat penting. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah menganalisis hubungan antara sumber daya yang credible, rasa keterikatan terhadap tempat, dan kepuasan wisatawan. Responden adalah pengunjung di kompleks Candi Borobudur. Survey dalam studi ini mengolah 132 data yang valid. Metode Structural Equation Modeling dengan Partial Least Squares dipilih untuk menganalisis data kuantitatif dan membuktikan hipotesa yang dikembangkan. Hasil analisis menunjukkan keempat hipotesis dapat diterima. Hal ini membuktikan pentingnya peran sumber daya kredibel dan rasa keterikatan destinasi terhadap kepuasan wisatawan. Implikasi terhadap pengelola pariwisata Borobudur dan pemerintah adalah untuk menekankan pentingnya mendapatkan kepercayaan dan respon positif wisatawan lewat penawaran wisata dan informasi yang kredibel serta penggunaan pendekatan pemasaran yang efektif. Secara teori menyumbangkan kekayaan literature di bidang pariwisata dan pemasaran terkait peran kredibilitas informasi dan rasa keterikatan terhadap kepuasan wisatawan.*

**Kata kunci:** *Borobudur, rasa keterikatan tempat, kredibilitas sumber daya, kepuasan wisatawan.*

Received: 1 September 2014, Revision: 3 November 2014, Accepted: 20 November 2014

Print ISSN: 1412-1700; Online ISSN: 2089-7928. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.12695/jmt.2014.13.3.1>

Copyright©2014. Published by Unit Research and Knowledge, School of Business and Management - Institut Teknologi Bandung (SBM-ITB)

## 1. Introduction

Tourism has been regarded as a tool for development. Developed and developing countries are seriously building the infrastructures and strategy in the tourism industry as it is believed that tourism can generate foreign exchange, attract investment, and increase job opportunities. Economic aspect is commonly the main reason for developing tourism sector. However, tourism can be said as capable of creating social transformation in that it can improve individual well-being and fostering cross-cultural exchanges.

In Indonesia, tourism began to demonstrate its significance effect in 1990 when it recorded as the third largest foreign exchange contributor in the non-oil sector. One among vital tourism object is the heritage and cultural objects. Indonesia is rich with heritage and cultural objects due to its long history as having rich and strong kingdoms ruling the area. One most famous cultural site in Indonesia is Borobudur temple, the biggest Buddhist temple in Indonesia. Borobudur is listed under the World Heritage List as one of World Heritage Sites (WHS).

Borobudur as one of World Heritage Sites (WHS) is a temple located in Central Java (Magelang District). The temple is one of the prime tourism attractions in Indonesia. It became the World Heritage Site in 1991, and there are other temples in the nearby Borobudur complex. Borobudur Temple is the main temple, other temples include: Mendut and Pawon temple, which are smaller. In tourism, objects with cultural significance such ceremonies are usually among key tourism attractions. A visit to heritage is commonly referred to as heritage tourism (Poria et al., 2006). Understanding that tourism is a powerful tool for development, WHS become resources to be employed to promote social and economic development (Rizzo and Mignosa, 2006). This further leads to the active image and brand building in order to attract numbers of local and international visitors.

In the situation where tourists are more educated, more demanding and have limited information to the destinations, ability to provide credible information and building emotional attachments could be one effective strategy for winning their satisfaction. Surviving in tourism industry is not an easy job. In the tourism sector, tourists are commonly interested in the unique destination, a famous destination, and they are lack experience and information to the appointed destination.

The current advance in technology has made unlimited access for information possible. Capability to provide credible information would be an asset in tourism industry. More importantly, the marketing department could enhance the provision of credible information by developing the emotional attachment to the destination. It is why that the role of marketing strategies to build place attachment and trust building by providing credible information is necessary to strengthen visitors' satisfaction.

Visitors need to be assured that the information is believable, promises are well delivered, and providers are committed to their promises. Such condition lead to the main research question How credible information and place attachment influence visitors' satisfaction. The objective of this study is to analyze the relationships among source credibility, place attachment and visitors' satisfaction. Considering the vital role of tourism for economic development, the potential of having WHS to create place attachment, the challenges of winning international competition in tourism industry as well as the limited study of consumer behavior at heritage sites, these give the reason on the significant in conducting this study.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. *The Effects of Source Credibility*

The concepts of source credibility emerged from brand signaling theory (Erdem & Swait, 1998). The increase in the service industries has made branding and credible information critical due to the risk that potentially occurs.

Ability to perform a well trusted communication will create trustworthiness to customers. Credibility is an important aspect of persuasive communication (Loda, 2011). Brand Credibility is customer believe on product or service status information. The level of believability depends on customers' perceptions whether the brand has the ability to deliver what has been promised (Erdem & Swait, 2004). It has been acknowledged that brand credibility consists of two main components: trustworthiness and competence (Erdem & Swait, 2004; Sweeney & Swait, 2008). Competence refers to ability to promote qualifications, expertness, intelligence, and authoritativeness (Loda, 2011), while trustworthiness refers to character, safety and honesty.

In the area of modern tourism industry, when credible sources are provided, visitors will benefit by having lower information-gathering and information-processing costs. Visitors will perceive the destination as having lower risk to visit. Destination source credibility is the belief that the destination management is willing and capable of delivering its promises related to a specific destination (Veasna et al., 2013). Source credibility in the tourism industry is critical since it is determining whether the destination is truthful and believable (Phau & Ong, 2007). Guido et al. (2011) argue that truthfulness from credible sources would enable to create a persuasive effect on customer opinions. The capacity to establish a persuasive effect has turned researchers' attention to examine the dimensions of source credibility to understand consumers' perception of brands (e.g., Guido et al., 2011; Sweeney & Swait, 2008).

Sweeney and Swait (2008) claimed that in terms of brand credibility in service industries, the degree of uncertainty is higher than other industries. Service industries include banks, telecommunication companies, and the Internet service fell under their commitments towards customers. Incapability to meet their commitments in one side and lacking face-to-face interactions with customers in other side,

indicate customer churning for these service industries. Therefore, Sweeney and Swait (2008) considered loyalty as an important consequences of brand credibility and they considered asymmetry of information as an important reason of churning customers in service industries. If the business could maintain perfect and accurate data and information, the business would enable to create a long term relationship with its customers and reduce the switching cost. Sweeney and Swait (2008) showed that loyalty-brand credibility effects on satisfaction, and brand credibility influences satisfaction directly.

Satisfaction is one of the objectives of marketing activity (Kandampully & Suhartanto, 2003). Customer satisfaction has been defined in the perspectives of cognitive aspect and affective aspect. The cognitive aspect involves valuation by customer, as defined by Lovelock & Wirtz (2007). Satisfaction in this case is defined as consumer responses to attitudes which cover judgments following an experience. The judgment is based on a comparison between expectations and actual performance. Customers with high cumulative satisfaction were more likely to keep their relationships with the relevant business providers.

Other researchers suggested that satisfaction is an emotional response or affective response (e.g. Westbrook & Oliver 1991; Gotlieb et al., 1994; Babin & Griffin, 1998). In the tourism context, satisfaction with destination refers to both judgment and emotional state reflected in a tourist's post experience to a destination (Su et al., 2011). Many variables have been searched to increase satisfaction and source credibility in the branding literature was identified as significant antecedent to satisfaction. In their study, Ghorban and Tahernejad (2012) have identified the significant of source credibility in positively impact on word of mouth via satisfaction. Thus, based on this rationale the following hypothesis is proposed:

*Hypothesis 1. Source credibility has a positive influence on visitors' satisfaction*

Place attachment has called the academic interest because understanding how people attach to a place provides opportunities to study human behavior (Dredge, 2010). Place attachment refers to the extent where individuals value a given place, which can be seen from the strength of association, the individual's emotional/symbolic, and functional feelings about the given place (Ramkisson et al., 2013).

In simple terms, place attachment describes the emotional ties that people have to a place (Smith, 2013). Research on tourism has suggested that a tourism destination will be chosen if the destination is attached to the tourist's self-image (Beerli et al., 2007; Glover, 2009). Tourists will be attached to a destination when the destination sources are seen as reliable and credible. As previously discussed, credible destination sources are associated with tourists' beliefs and attitudes toward the decision making processes (Ekinci et al., 2008). Rajagopal (2006) in his study found that destination source credibility plays an important role in building tourists' feelings and attitudes toward destinations. Thus, based on this rationale the following hypothesis is proposed:

*Hypothesis 2. Source credibility has a positive influence on place attachment.*

Place attachment helps marketers to understand human behavior. Previous studies have developed a framework investigating the relationships between place attachment and satisfaction (e.g., Prayag & Ryan, 2011; Yuksel et al., 2010). The empirical results found that the attachment to destination impacts satisfaction (Fleury-Bahi et al., 2008). Thus, it can be emphasized that tourist satisfaction with destinations is relatively dependent on the place attachment. Nevertheless, in the tourism context, there is a limited number of studies on the link between place attachment and tourists' satisfaction (Veasna et al., 2013).

Thomson et al. (2005) argue that customers who satisfy with a brand might have an emotional attachment to that brand. Using

these concepts, it can be interpreted that destination source credibility will result in destination satisfaction only if tourists have a strong attachment to the destination (Veasna et al., 2013). Hosany et al., (2006) also found similar finding that credible destination sources will be formed when tourists are satisfied and there is positive experience after the evaluations of destination which includes an emotional attachment to the destination. Thus, a credible destination source can influence a positive tourists' satisfaction if building place attachment is successful (Esch et al., 2006). Based on these rationale, the following hypotheses are proposed:

*Hypothesis 3. Place attachment has a direct influence on visitors' satisfaction.*

*Hypothesis 4. Place attachment mediates the relationship between source credibility and visitors' satisfaction.*

### 3. Research Methodology

#### 3.1. Measures

This study empirically tests the relationships between source credibility, place attachment, and satisfaction from the perspectives of tourists/visitors. By adopting measures from previous studies, this study develops questionnaires from Saumel et al. (2013) and Veasna et al. (2013). Five items measure source credibility. Nine items measure visitors' satisfaction, and five items measure place attachment. Likert scales (ranging from 1 to 5), with anchors ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree" were used for all questions. After pre-testing the measures, these items were slightly reviewed and modified to accommodate suggestions received during the pre-testing stage.

#### 3.2. Sample and Data

Data were collected from the tourist sites surrounding Borobudur. The survey includes visitors who were visiting nearby temples called Mendut and Pawon temple. The reason for choosing Borobudur and the surrounding area is because 1) Borobudur is one important icon for Indonesia tourism, 2) The status as the World Heritage Site (WHS) by UNESCO

should have effect on the level of attachment to the local and international visitors, 3) Borobudur has long been nationally and internationally promoted, thus credible information should be easily accessed, and 4) Borobudur is not only important for tourism but also essential for education and historical aspects, thus credible information is crucial. This study focuses on tourism aspect and marketing perspective, where if well managed, credible sources should positively influence visitors' attachment to the destination as well as satisfaction. The population is all visitors who visit Borobudur. Sample in this study is some visitors who can be accessed in the site. For this purpose, the sampling method applied is non probability purposive sampling.

### 3.3. Data Analysis

The conceptual framework as shown in figure 1 involves the existence of mediating variable. A simple multiple regression by SPSS cannot assessed model with mediating variable. SEM technique using PLS (Partial Least Squares) was chosen to analyze the proposed model due to the existence of mediating variable. Additionally, common in perceptual study where normal data is difficult to acquire, PLS is suitable to handle the problem. There is a tendency for the data to be negatively skewed in the customer satisfaction measurement and study involving perceptions (Anderson & Fornell, 2000). PLS can accommodate the weaknesses of this kind of data since PLS does not require normally distributed data. In order to assess the statistical significance, Smart PLS (Ringle et. Al., 2005) was used with bootstrap analysis using 200 sub-samples. The use of PLS has received support from literature in satisfaction studies (Westlund et al., 2001).

## 4. Result and Analysis

### 4.1. Descriptive Analysis

This study distributed 150 Questionnaires to visitors in the WHS complex Borobudur and the neighbouring temples Mendut and Pawon. Out of the total 132 valid data (respond rate 88%), 68.2 % respondents were male and 31.8% female.

According to the age group, the age characteristics are: 15-25 years old accounts 46.2%, 26-35 years old accounts 21.2%, 36-45 were 15.2% and over 45 years old were 17.4 %. The 15-25 years old group made 46.2% of the respondents. This implies that at the time when the questionnaires were collected, students made up most of the respondent. The 15-25 years old group is the group which consists of mostly students from either high school or tertiary study. Students come to Borobudur for the reason of academic and education activities. This means that credible information relevant to the need of education should be available either from online and offline (tour guide, brochures, book, and site's public relations).

Visitors were majority from domestic tourists either from Java and other parts of Indonesia and few numbers were overseas tourists. For non-students' respondents, the reasons for visiting Yogyakarta were mostly for cultural and heritage tourism, meaning that they want to fulfill and satisfy their curiosity from the world heritage remains. Many visited more than twice and they mostly admire the site as a man made miracle. The local visitors are very proud that Borobudur was built by their ancestors and agree to be one of important icon for Indonesia. There were varieties of perception when it comes to the questions on the perceptions of Borobudur as WHS. Different from the leisure tourism such as traveling for beach, amusement park, mountain sceneries, etc, visitors come to Borobudur expect credible information more than leisure tourists. Tourism management and authority at Borobudur should be able to acknowledge the needs and the wants of visitors who have specific information seeking reasons to come and enjoy Borobudur.

### 4.2. Measurement Model

The measurement model in PLS is the stage where all items used are being tested in terms of its validity and reliability. The measurement model in PLS follows several requirements covering convergent validity involving: (1) the individual loading of each item, (2) Internal Composite Reliability (ICR), and (3) Average Variance Extracted (AVE).

The discriminant validity is done by examining cross loading and AVE square root. After running the PLS, some items were found not to satisfy the validity and reliability examination. As seen in Figure 1, it was shown that two items have low item loadings namely (B1) and (B2). All these items were measures for destination satisfaction. Chin (1998) recommends that item loading less than 0.5 should be dropped as a measure. Similarly, when checking the cross loading table (table 1), PLS identified some problems.

The cross loadings show that each indicator should load higher than its corresponding latent variable. The discriminant validity is shown when the indicators relate higher to their corresponding construct than they are with other constructs. Table 1 (PLS first run) shows that B1 and B2 were very low and relate lower to satisfaction constructs than other items/indicators. Additionally, C5 was also found to load lower than B9 to place attachment construct. This suggests that item C5 should not be included for further analysis.

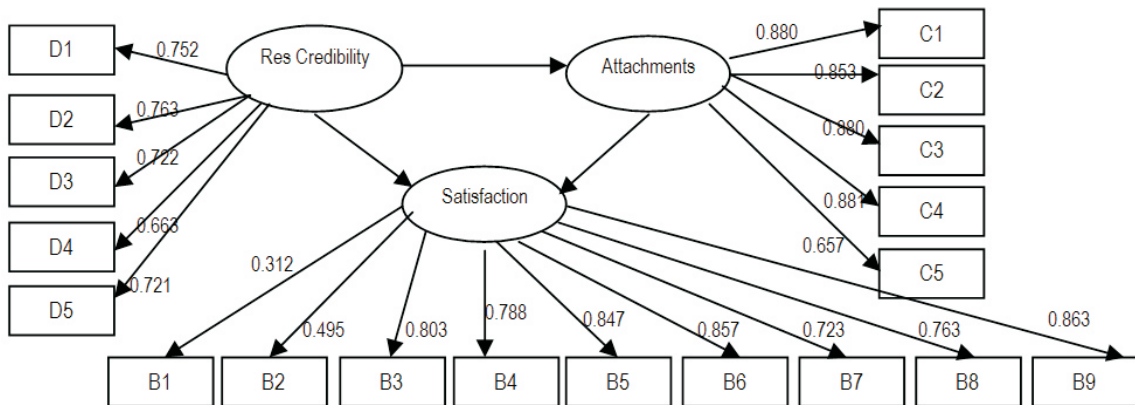


Figure 1. PLS Result for First Run

Table 1. Cross Loading

	PLS First Run			PLS Second Run			
	Place att	Satisfaction	Res Cred	Place att	Satisfaction	Res Cred	
B1	0.2272	<b>0.312</b>	0.1673	B3	0.4737	<b>0.79</b>	0.5098
B2	0.2862	<b>0.4955</b>	0.3216	B4	0.4516	<b>0.7928</b>	0.5008
B3	0.4918	<b>0.8029</b>	0.5104	B5	0.5205	<b>0.8505</b>	0.4746
B4	0.4736	<b>0.788</b>	0.5001	B6	0.5816	<b>0.8704</b>	0.5614
B5	0.5547	<b>0.8468</b>	0.4761	B7	0.3818	<b>0.7328</b>	0.483
B6	0.5967	<b>0.8574</b>	0.5615	B8	0.587	<b>0.7738</b>	0.4143
B7	0.3903	<b>0.7229</b>	0.4818	B9	0.651	<b>0.8651</b>	0.5557
B8	0.5724	<b>0.7627</b>	0.4144				
B9	0.6644	<b>0.8631</b>	0.5565				
C1	<b>0.8799</b>	0.5968	0.3999	C1	<b>0.8916</b>	0.6013	0.3993
C2	<b>0.853</b>	0.5359	0.4446	C2	<b>0.8856</b>	0.5348	0.4438
C3	<b>0.8798</b>	0.597	0.454	C3	<b>0.9022</b>	0.5992	0.4536
C4	<b>0.8807</b>	0.5602	0.3992	C4	<b>0.8721</b>	0.5702	0.3977
C5	<b>0.6567</b>	0.4815	0.3733				
D1	0.474	0.565	<b>0.7516</b>	D1	0.4471	0.552	<b>0.747</b>
D2	0.4467	0.5055	<b>0.7633</b>	D2	0.4312	0.5017	<b>0.7622</b>
D3	0.2116	0.4247	<b>0.7215</b>	D3	0.1955	0.433	<b>0.7245</b>
D4	0.2534	0.2488	<b>0.6626</b>	D4	0.2343	0.2423	<b>0.6607</b>
D5	0.3125	0.3945	<b>0.7207</b>	D5	0.3234	0.4028	<b>0.7272</b>

Source: Primary Data

After screening and dropping some problematic items, this study produced the following results. Assessment of convergent validity is measured by using the outer loadings, ICR, and AVE. The PLS first run resulted in dropping two items from destination satisfaction measure (B1 and B2). After dropping, Figure 2 shows all item were above the loading value of bigger than 0.5. Further, cross loading analysis required in dropping C5 (one item in destination attachment). After screening these three items, the validity and reliability of the measures show satisfactory results.

Table 2. AVE, ICR,  $R^2$ , and Cronbachs Alpha

	AVE	ICR	R Square	Cronbach's Alpha	Communality	Redundancy
Place						
Attach	<b>0.7884</b>	<b>0.9371</b>	0.2278	<b>0.9105</b>	0.7884	0.1796
Satisfaction	<b>0.6597</b>	<b>0.9311</b>	0.5441	<b>0.9133</b>	0.6597	0.2519
Res Cred	<b>0.5258</b>	<b>0.8469</b>	0	<b>0.7812</b>	0.5258	0

Source: Primary Data

The PLS second run as seen in Table 1 shows that there were no incidences of cross loadings. This means that all indicators relate higher to their corresponding construct than they are with other constructs. The last measurement model analysis is the AVE square roots. The result of AVE square root is shown in Table 3. The square root of the AVE, was demonstrated by comparing the square root of the AVE for each constructs with the correlations between the construct and other constructs in the model. The evidence of discriminant validity is shown when the square root of the AVE of each construct is larger than the correlations between the construct and any other constructs (Staples et al., 1999). The square root of AVE in this study have shown a satisfactory level where all larger than the correlations between the construct and any other constructs.

Table 3. AVE Square Root

	Place Attach	Satisfaction	Res Cred
Place			
Attachment	<b>0.8879</b>	0	0
Satisfaction	0.6497	<b>0.8122</b>	0
Res Credibility	0.4773	0.617	<b>0.7251</b>

Source: Primary Data

As seen in Figure 2, no more item loadings were found to have loading less than 0.5. The results of convergent validity testing by AVE, ICR, and Cronbach's Alpha are shown in table 2. AVE value for all three main variables were all higher than 0.5. AVE should score above the 0.5 score, as recommended by Fornell & Larcker (1981) and Chin (1998). Table 2 shows that all three variables have satisfied the requirement for valid ICR showing all values higher than 0.8 as suggested by Nunally (1978). ICR value ranged from 0.8469 to 0.9371. Cronbach's Alpha of all three variables used in the study were also satisfactory showing value higher than 0.7.

#### 4.3. Structural Model

The structural model in PLS was assessed by examining the path coefficients, t-statistics, and r-squared value (Chin, 1998). R-squared is used to indicate the strength of the predictive model. Figure 2 represents the results of the hypotheses (H1 to H4) and the corresponding *Beta coefficients*. All together, place attachment and source credibility show  $R^2$  54.4% of the variance in visitors' satisfaction. Further, resource credibility explains 22.8% variance of visitors' satisfaction. All the path coefficients in the inner model were positive and significant at 0.01 level (see Figure 2). Resource credibility relationship to place attachment shows  $\beta=0.477$ , meaning that the influence is medium (Figure 2). Further, the path coefficients linking resource credibility to satisfaction is significant positive with the value of  $\beta=0.397$ . While at last, the analysis has shown the path coefficient between place attachment and satisfaction is  $\beta=0.460$  (Figure 2). The positive significant findings from all the relationships proposed can be seen from Figure 2.

All the direct relationships have been proofed to be significant. These clarify hypotheses H1 to H3. In testing the mediation hypotheses, this study applies the approach suggested by Baron and Kenny (1986). Three requirements highlighted by Baron and Kenny (1986) to test the mediation effect: 1) the independent variable (source credibility) must affect the mediating variable; 2) the independent variable (source credibility) must affect the dependent variable (satisfaction); and 3) the mediating variable (place attachment) must affect the dependent variable (satisfaction).

This study found a partial mediation, in the situation where the path from independent variable to dependent variable is reduced in absolute size but it is still bigger than zero. The direct effect from source credibility to satisfaction is  $\beta = 0.397$  (bigger than zero). As described in table 4, relationship between source credibility and satisfaction increase from 0.397 to 0.617 as seen in total effect. This means that H4 is supported as partial mediation.

Table 4. Path Coefficients and Total Effect

Path Coeff	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Dev (STDEV)	Standard Error (STERR)	T Statistics ( O/STERR )
Plc Att -> Sat	0.46	0.4493	0.0912	0.0912	5.0441
Res Cred -> Plc Att	0.4773	0.4868	0.0993	0.0993	4.8066
Res Cred -> Sat	0.3974	0.4089	0.0898	0.0898	4.4273
<b>Total Effect</b> Res Cred -> Sat	0.617	0.6303	0.0758	0.0758	8.1374

Source: Primary Data

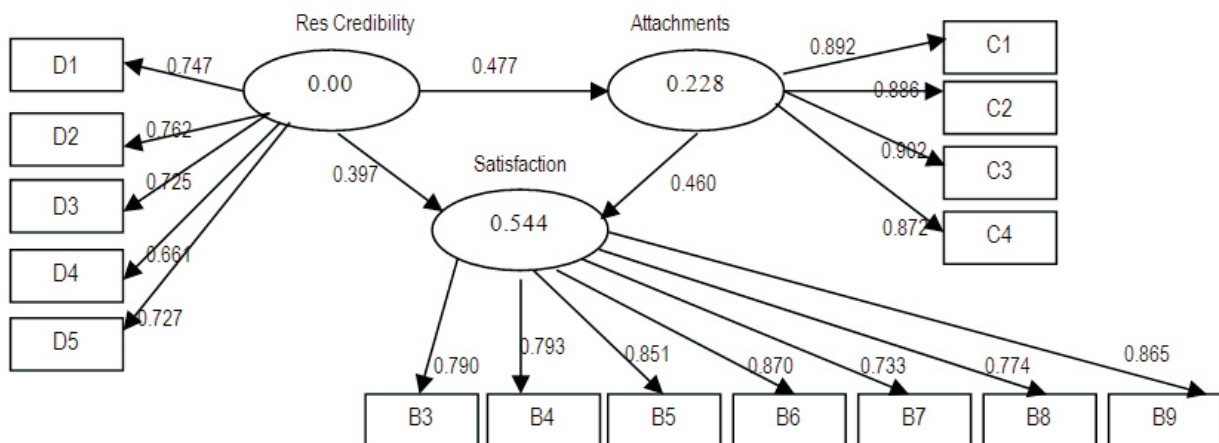


Figure 2. PLS Result for Second Run



## 5. Discussion and Implications

### 5.1. Discussions

Place attachment has been identified as important variable in understanding human behavior (Dredge, 2010). When the destination is seen as reliable and credible, tourists will be attached. As service industry, tourism depends highly on trust to reduce the risks since the nature of the offering is not tangible. Sweeney and Swait (2008) claimed that uncertainty in the services industry is higher than other industries. Source credibility in the tourism industry is critical since it is determining whether the destination is truthful and believable (Phau & Ong, 2007).

Ability to perform a credible communication will create trustworthiness to customers. The credible information helps visitors to reduce travelling costs while the destination will be perceived as having lower risk to visit. Credible sources would create a persuasive effect on customer opinions (Guido et al., 2011). This study found that the proposed hypothesis 1 is supported. This means that Source credibility is significant in influencing visitors' satisfaction. This study supported Ghorban and Tahernejad (2012) who identified the significance of source credibility in positively impact on satisfaction.

In the context of Borobudur as World Heritage Sites (WHS), the international recognition as WHS and the courage of the local government and tourism management in providing credible information is significantly perceived to influence visitors' satisfaction. This implies that the better visitors perceive that Borobudur management is believable, keeping its promises, committing what it claims, and having ability on delivering the promises, then, the higher the visitors' satisfaction. Visitors' satisfaction in this case were translated to positive perception about the proper destination to visit, feeling good about the visit, feeling enjoyable, having good experiences, feeling satisfy, pleased, stimulating, and happiness.

Considering that Borobudur is a historical and cultural tourism destination, it has unique visitors' characteristics. Since majority of visitors are those who have reasons to learn and satisfy the passion about history and culture, thus, good experiences, enjoyable visit, and overall satisfaction should be translated into providing credible information in terms of past, present, and future conditions of Borobudur. The challenges for having WHS status are that local tourism management and local government should be able to provide credible information to satisfy the expectation of both the local and the international communities.

Since technology is fast developing and people are becoming more educated, tourists are becoming more demanding. Government and tourism management should prepare and train staff capabilities, as professional, dependable, and believable officers to satisfy the market demand. The credible tour guides and front line tourism officers are highly effective in creating positive feelings and positive tourists' attitude when the officers are informative and trustable. Whereas, the informative services and consistently providing most current issues on destination website or online resource could also be an effective supporting strategy to increase visitors' satisfaction.

Additionally, marketing approaches should be practiced such as creating package tours in collaborating with local people for enable tourists in experiencing local way of life. Providing credible information is not only about capability to explain Borobudur history per see, but also the life and the local culture do have strongly connected to the history of Borobudur. Satisfying visitors in this case can also be done by involving visitors to local dance, local fashion, local culinary, local language, etc. Ability to professionally manage Borobudur as cultural and historical site which is different from common leisure sites should be consistently performed. This study found that the proposed hypothesis 2 is supported, where credible sources positively influenced place attachment.

This study thus supports Rajagopal (2006) study who also found that destination source credibility plays an important role in building tourists' feelings and attitudes in terms of attachment toward destinations. Furthermore this study also supports the influence of place attachment toward satisfaction as stated in hypothesis 3. This finding is in aligned with Fleury-Bahi et al. (2008) and Veasna et al. (2013) studies which empirically identified the place attachment impact on satisfaction. In the context of Borobudur as the WHS, the uniqueness and the wonder attached to the building site is not only creating pride for the local but also particularly the Buddhist population around the world will also highly regard it.

This heritage pride creates the strong feeling of attachment. It is not only the tangible wonder that makes the visitors being attached to Borobudur, but more importantly, the religious belief and the local culture are other reasons that this place is special, meaningful, and different from other destinations. The attachments are expressed by respondents' agreement that the site is meaningful, special, highly identifiable, impressing, and one among best place to visit. Being stated as one of the WHS means that Borobudur is world destination worth to visit. This should challenge the government and tourism management whether it is truly the top destination worth to visit. The promotion and the offerings should be credible so that attachment could be built then visitors' expectation could be satisfied. The cultural tourism requires that detail information on history, local culture, and traditional way of life be easily accessible and learned.

This means that credible sources in terms of cultural tourism such WHS should be emphasized on credible offerings on history and local culture, as the sources that would be better appreciated by this specific type of tourism. To even build attachments and satisfaction, the government and tourism management could expand the network in calling the study about heritage sites and

digging information that might still remained uncovered about the site. More importantly, with the increasing concern on preserving the environment, the commitment to preserve the temple and the environment around should be taken as priority. The local community is the best partner to preserve the temple and the culture.

This study proposed the indirect relationship between credible sources and visitors' satisfaction via place attachment. The proposed hypothesis is empirically supported (H4). Similar findings have been identified by Veasna et al. (2013) and Hosany et al. (2006). Their study argued that destination source credibility will result in destination satisfaction only if tourists have a strong attachment to the destination. The credible destination sources will build emotional attachment to the destination and tourists will be satisfied by having positive experience after the evaluations of the destination. As stated by Esch et al. (2006), credible sources may influence a positive destination satisfaction if building destination attachment is successful.

In the context of Borobudur, the blend of the marketing program, the government investment to preserve, the long history, and the wonder attached to the temple have all made to succeed place attachment and visitors satisfaction. The order of the logic regarding the proposed indirect relationships as stated in Hypothesis 4 is sensible. Borobudur as WHS has strong point in raising emotional attachment. If the government were only providing credible sources and not actively and proactively promoting or taking creative marketing approaches to raise attachments, satisfaction may be achieved but may not be as high as when supported by proactive marketing approaches. This means that the role of active marketing strategies to raise place attachment is vital to increase visitors' satisfaction. The benefit of having status of WHS would be useless if government and local tourism management fail to promote their valuable assets and credible sources.

In the context of winning competition in the tourism sector, it is worth to visit the economics concept on competitive and comparative advantage. We cannot be competitive if we only rely on our comparative advantage. Comparative advantage is the given resources available to a destination (Omersell, 2005), and competitive advantage is the destination's ability to effectively manage the competitive resources (human talents, infrastructures, policies, etc) over the long-term. Further, Omersell (2005) claims that a destination with better resources may possibly be less competitive than a destination with fewer resources. Overall, it is the human resources that should be built to win the tourism market to maintain the existence of Borobudur as the world top destination. The cultural and heritage richness would remain an unknown history if we as the current predecessors do not preserve, do not maintain, do not promote, and do not highly respects our ancestors' valuable gifts.

Overall, this study have provided the analysis on how credible information and place attachment influence visitors' satisfaction in the context of Borobudur as WHS. The objective of this study where to analyze the relationships among source credibility, place attachment, and visitors' satisfaction have been evidenced by the findings of the structural relationships and explanations to the all four proposed hypotheses in the context of Borobudur as WHS. The partial mediation where place attachment mediate the relationship between source credibility and satisfaction means that both source credibility and place attachment are important antecedent to satisfaction. They both are in complement to increase satisfaction. Place attachment as mediating variable does not cause source credibility to be losing its effect on satisfaction.

### 5.2. Implications

This study offers practical and theoretical contributions. In practice, due to increase in technology and more demanding customers, therefore, government, society around the sites, and tourism management should manage

the credible sources proactively by effective marketing approaches. Being credible means that the sources should be regularly up dated, accessible, and believable. The society could be the front line in providing accurate information to visitors. On line media is another strategic tool should be well managed to satisfy customers and build attachments. The site could offer comparative advantage but the human resource should be the competitive advantage. It is the human resource that enable in providing the credible sources. Visitors need evidences that what they experiencing is truly translating what they previously expect. Current tourists are no longer depending on information from government or tourism agencies. They also rely on previous tourists' experiences. This means that information is uncontrollable. Ability to proof what the destination promises is a must. Theoretically, this study enriches the marketing literature in tourism study, that empirical study in Borobudur area has supported the role of credible resources and place attachment in positively influencing visitors' satisfaction. This theoretical contribution can enrich the empirical findings for the tourism and marketing literature as the case in World Heritage Site.

## 6. Conclusions

With the increase in technology and transportation, more and more tourists from different background and language are travelling around the world. Tourists have unlimited access for information, thus, ability to provide credible sources would be an asset. The objective of this study is to empirically test the relationships among source credibility, place attachment, and visitors' satisfaction. This study was conducted in Borobudur, Central Java, Indonesia. Borobudur as one of World Heritage Sites (WHS) offers unique attachments to visitors. The efforts by the government to promote credible resource and preserve the site, the pride of the nation, and the courage to build competitive tourism have made study in credible resources, place attachment, and visitors' satisfaction necessary to be conducted.

It is important to be acknowledged that we cannot be competitive if we only rely on our natural assets or heritage assets. The challenges are the ability to built better resources (human resources, infrastructures, strategies, and policies) to better compete. Findings from the study support all the proposed hypotheses. This means that the relationships between credible resources, place attachment, and visitors' satisfaction were empirically supported either directly and indirectly. It is expected that this study could enrich the academic finding and also be useful for tourism policy and development strategy. Nonetheless, this study has limitation in that it did not include a significant proportion on the foreign tourists as respondents. We cannot deny that as a WHS, Borobudur attracts international visitors and thus all positive economic benefits should be accounted as the consequence. The fact that majority of visitors are local, whether individual tourists or in group such as study tours, makes this study assumes that all local respondents have similar access to information accessibility as foreign tourists. Thus the judgment of local tourists on source credibility and place attachments is assumed to be similar to those of foreign tourists. In doing future research, it is suggested that foreign tourists to be assessed as respondents.

## References

- Anderson, E.W., & Fornell, C. (2000). Foundations of the American customer satisfaction index. *Total Quality Management*, 11(7), 869-882.
- Babin, B.J., & Griffin, M. (1998). The nature of satisfaction: an updated examination and analysis. *Journal of Business Research*, 41(2), 127-136.
- Baron, R.M., & Kenny, D.A. (1986). The moderator mediator variable distinction in social psychological-research-conceptual, strategic and statistical considerations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 51(6), 1173-1182.
- Beerli, A., Meneses, G. D., & Gil, S.M. (2007). Self-congruity and destination choice. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 34(3), 571-587.
- Chin, W.W. (1998). The Partial Least Square Approach to Structural Equation Modeling. In Marcoulides GA (Ed), *Modern methods for business research*: 295-336. New Jersey, Mahwah, London, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Dredge, D. (2010). Place change and tourism development conflict: Evaluating public interest. *Tourism Management*, 31(1), 104-112.
- Ekinci, Y., Dawes, P.L., & Massey, G.R. (2008). An extended model of the antecedents and consequences consumer satisfaction and consequences consumer satisfaction for hospitality services. *European Journal of Marketing*, 42(1/2), 35-68.
- Erdem, T., & Swait, J. (1998). Brand equity as a signaling phenomenon. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 7(2), 131-157.
- Erdem, T., & Swait, J. (2004). Brand credibility, brand consideration, and choice. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 31(1), 191-198.
- Esch, F.R., Langner, T., Schmitt, B.H., & Geus, P. (2006). Are brands forever? How brand knowledge and relationships affect current and future purchases. *Journal of Product and Brand Management*, 15(2), 98-105.
- Fleury-Bahi, G., Félonneau, M.L., & Marchand, D. (2008). Processes of place identification and residential satisfaction. *Environment and Behavior* 40(5), 669-682.
- Fornell, C. & Larcker, D. (1981). Evaluating Structural Equation Models with Unobservable Variables and Measurement Error. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 19, 440-452.
- Ghorban, Z.S., & Tahernejad, H.A. (2012). Study on effect of brand credibility on word of mouth: with reference to internet service providers in Malaysia. *International Journal of Marketing Studies*, 4(1), 26-37.
- Glover, P. (2009). Celebrity endorsement in tourism advertising: effects on destination image. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 16, 16-23.
- Gotlieb, J., Grewal, D., & Brown, S. (1994). Consumer satisfaction and perceived quality: complementary or divergent constructs? *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 19/20(2), 55-82.

- Guido, G., Pino, G., & Frangipane, D. (2011). The role of credibility and perceived image of supermarket stores as valuable providers of over-the-counter drugs. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 27(3-4), 207-224.
- Hosany, S., Ekinici, Y., & Uysal, M. (2006). Destination image and destination personality: an application of branding theories to tourism places. *Journal of Business Research*, 59(5), 638-642.
- Kandampully, J., & Suhartanto, D. (2003). The role of customer satisfaction and image in gaining customer loyalty in the hotel industry. *Journal of Hospitality & Leisure Marketing*, 10(1/2), 3-25.
- Loda, M.D. (2011). Comparing web sites: an experiment in online tourism marketing. *International Journal of Business and Social Science*, 2(22).
- Lovelock, C., & Wirtz, J. (2007). *Services marketing: People, technology, strategy* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). New Jersey, NY: Prentice Hall.
- Nunnally, J.C. (1978). *Psychometric Theory*, 2nd edn, McGraw-Hill, NY.
- Omerzel, D.G. (2005), Competitiveness of Slovenia as a tourist destination, *Managing the Process of Globalisation in New and Upcoming EU Members*, Proceedings of the 6th International Conference of the Faculty of Management Koper, Congress Centre Bernardin, Slovenia, 24–26 November 2005.
- Phau, I. & Ong, D. (2007). An investigation of the effects of environmental claims in promotional messages for clothing brands. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 25(7), 772-788.
- Poria, Y., Reichel, A., & Biran, A. (2006). Heritage Site Management: Motivations and Expectations. *Annals of Tourism Research* 33(1), 162-178.
- Prayag, G., & Ryan, C. (2011). Antecedents of tourists' loyalty to Mauritius: the role and influence of destination image, place attachment, involvement, and satisfaction. *Journal of Travel Research*, 10(5), 51-15.
- Rajagopal, A. (2006). Brand excellence: measuring the impact of advertising and brand personality on buying decisions. *Measuring Business Excellence*, 10(3), 56-65.
- Ramkissoon, H., Smith, L.D.G., & Weiler, B. (2013). Testing the dimensionality of place attachment and its relationships with place satisfaction and pro-environmental behaviors: a structural equation modeling approach. *Tourism Management*, 36, 552-566.
- Rizzo, I., & Mignosa, A. (2006). policy decisions and cultural heritage impact. In McLoughlin, J., Kaminski, J., and Sodagar, B. (eds) *Heritage Impacts 2005*. Budapest: Archaeolingua.
- Ringle, C.M., Wende, S., & Will, A. (2005). *Smart-PLS*, <http://www.smartpls.de/forum/>.
- Saumell, R.P., Forgas-Coll1, S., Sánchez-García, J., & Planagumà, L. (2013). Tourist behavior intentions and the moderator effect of knowledge of UNESCO World Heritage Sites: The case of La Sagrada Família. *Journal of Travel Research*, 52(3), 364-376.
- Smith, N. (2013). Sense of place impacts for rural residents in the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta, Natalie Smith, Masters thesis in Environmental Management degree in Duke University.
- Staples, D.S., Hulland, J.S., & Higgins, C.A. (1999). A self-efficacy theory explanation for the management of remote workers in virtual organisations. *Organisation Science*, 10(6), 758-776.
- Sweeney, J., & Swait, J. (2008). The effects of brand credibility on customer loyalty. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 15(3), 179-193.
- Veasna, S., Wu, W., & Huang, C. (2013). The impact of destination source credibility on destination satisfaction: The mediating effects of destination attachment and destination image. *Tourism Management*, 36, 511-526.
- Su, H.J., Cheng, K.F., & Huang, H.H. (2011). Empirical study of destination loyalty and its antecedent: the perspective of place attachment. *The Service Industries Journal*, 31(16), 2721-2739.

- Thomson, M., MacInnis, D.J., & Park, C.W. (2005). The ties that bind: measuring the strength of consumers' emotional attachments to brands. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 15(1), 77-91.
- Westbrook, R.A., & Oliver, R.L. (1991). The dimensionality of consumption emotion patterns and consumer satisfaction. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 18(1), 84-91
- Westlund, A.H., Cassel, C.M., Eklof, J, & Hackl, P. (2001). Structural analysis and measurement of customer perceptions, assuming measurement and specification errors. *Total Quality Management*, 12(7/8), 873-881.
- Yuksel, A., Yuksel, F., & Bilim, Y. (2010). Destination attachment: effects on customer satisfaction and cognitive, affective and conative loyalty. *Tourism Management*, 31(2), 274-284.

## Appendix

Kuesioner: "The Role of Source Credibility and Place Attachment in Enhancing Visitors' Satisfaction"

No.	Items	Source
1	Borobudur is one of the best place for what I like to do on holidays.	Place Attachments (Veasna et al. 2013)
2	I am very attached to this holiday destination.	
3	Holidaying in Borobudur means a lot to me.	
4	I identify strongly with Borobudur.	
5	Borobudur is a very special destination to me.	
6	Information claims from Borobudur management are believable.	Source Credibility (Veasna et al. 2013)
7	Over time, my experiences with Borobudur management led me to expect it to keep its promises.	
8	Borobudur management is committed to delivering on its claims.	
9	Borobudur management has the ability to deliver what it promises.	
10	Borobudur management delivers (or would deliver) what it promises.	Destination Satisfaction (Veasna et al. 2013; Saumel et al. 2013)
11	I am sure it was the right thing to be a tourist in Borobudur.	
12	I feel good about my decision to visit Borobudur.	
13	I have truly enjoyed Borobudur.	
14	Visiting Borobudur has been a good experience.	
15	I am satisfied with my decision to visit Borobudur.	
16	The visit left me pleased	
18	The visit was stimulating	
19	I'm happy about my decision to choose the visit to Borobudur.	