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Effect of the Quality of Tourism Objects and Brand Image of Tourism Aspects on the Tourism City's Image. The Case of Banda Aceh, Indonesia

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Abstract:

This study examines effects of the quality of tourism objects and the brand image of tourism aspects on the image of Banda Aceh as a tourism city. The study based on the field research, which was done in early of 2016 in Banda Aceh municipality, as the capital of Aceh Province in Indonesia. The number of samples in this study was 400 foreign tourists that obtained by using the Slovin formula, and to all the foreign tourists submitted the questionnaires, but only 173 questionnaires were returned (the response rate of 43.25 percent). To analyze the data, the study adopts a path analysis. The study documented that, either partially or simultaneously, the quality of tourism objects and the brand image of tourism aspects positively and significantly affected the image of Banda Aceh as a tourism city. Additionally, the study also documented that the quality of tourism objects positively and significantly influenced the brand image of tourism aspects. The findings imply that in order to create a positive image of Banda Aceh as a tourism city, the quality of tourism objects including the tsunami related-sites, historical tourism objects, natural and cultural tourism object, facilities, etc must be built first and then followed by establishing acceptable brand image of tourism aspects such as logos, city landscape or tourism atmospheres, name of tourism objects, etc. The findings of the study further signify that the quality of tourism objects in Banda Aceh has played significant roles in building the brand image of tourism aspects.

Keywords: quality of tourism objects; brand image of tourism aspect; tourism city, Banda Aceh.

JEL Classification: M31; Z32.

Introduction

Indonesia has a great potential resource to develop tourism industry sector because Indonesia has many coastal areas, unique natures, various types of traditional ceremonies and songs that travellers might enjoy, experience or take part in the welcoming traditional dances for new visitors to the country. The number of tourists visited Indonesia was, respectively, 8.04 million in 2012, and 8.80 million in 2013, 9.44 million in 2014, 10.40 million in 2015 and 11.52 million, 2016 (Indonesian Statistic Agency 2017).

Of 34 provinces in Indonesia, Aceh is the only province known as 'the Veranda of Mecca'. Since the 18th century until the end of 19th century, Aceh has functioned as the hajj harbour as well as the centre of Islamic knowledge and culture in the *Nusantara* and Malay Archipelago. Aceh also the first region embraced Islam in the archipelago in the 7th century. Based on this, Islam has become the identity of Aceh, especially Banda Aceh. From 1990s to 2004, the Culture and Tourism Office of Banda Aceh municipality has attempted to build the image of Banda Aceh as a tourism city by using the term "*Banda Aceh is the Western Gate of Indonesia*". Unfortunately, the local government has not fully succeeded to realize Banda Aceh as the Western Gate of Indonesia. On average, the number of tourism who visited Banda Aceh in the last decade before tsunami 2004 hit Aceh has been less than 250 international tourists (Statistic Agency of Aceh 2003).

Moreover, after the tsunami, Aceh Province and Banda Aceh in particular, become well-known city to all over the world. During the last five years, more than 10.000 tourists have visited Banda Aceh annually (Statistic Agency of Aceh 2014). To date, some tourists who visited Banda Aceh have perceived Banda Aceh as the “tsunami city” (Hafasnuddin 2010). Thus, Banda Aceh has been labelled as tourism destination with many iconic tsunami-related sites. Usually, tourists who visited Banda Aceh would not return back to their countries before visiting tsunami-related sites (Nazaruddin and Sulaiman 2013).

The studies on tourism have been extensively conducted both in the developed countries and in emerging Asian countries. For example, in the developed countries, Antonioli and Baggio (2004) studied a new business model of tourism in Italy. Au (2010) researched the adoption of web 2.0 by tourism businessmen in New South Wales, Australia. Komppula (2005) conducted the study of pursuing customer values in tourism in Finland.

Next, Milano *et al.* (2011) in Italy studied the effects of online social media on tourism activity. Meanwhile, in emerging Asian countries such as Chang (1997) studied the heritage as a tourism commodity: traversing the tourist-local divide in Singapore.

In Hong Kong, Law *et al.* (2004) explored the impact of the internet on travel agencies. Next, in China, Bai *et al.* (2008) studied the impact of website quality on customers' satisfaction and purchase intention. Zhang and Zhao (2009) researched the city branding and the Olympic effects: a case study of Beijing.

Another researcher, Pestek and Nikolic (2011) analysed the role of traditional foods to promoting the image of tourist destination: the example of the city of Mostar, Herzegovina, and Young (2012) studied the city branding and Urban tourism: a case study of Seoul and Taipei, Ukaj (2014) examined a tourism destination in Kosovo, Olufemi *et al.* (2015) researched strategic positioning and performance in tourism sectors (Nigeria), and Girma and Adissu (2016) studied the effect of tourism objects on destination branding in Ethiopia. However, similar studies have been lacking in Indonesia. Subadra and Nadra (2012) conducted research the impact of tourism development on economy, culture and social sectors in Jatiluwih-Tabanan (Bali). Pleanggra and Yusuf (2012) analysed the effect of tourism objects and tourist arrivals on the national economy.

In Aceh, only four studies have been conducted to investigate the tourism related issues. Darwis (1998), for example, researched the behaviour of international tourists in Aceh, while Hafasnuddin (2010) studied the prospects of Aceh's Province as a tourism destination. On the other hand, Reza (2012) and Nazaruddin and Sulaiman (2013), respectively, explored the influences of perceived value and trust on tourists and descriptively introduced Banda Aceh as tourism city for foreigners. Based on these reviewed studies, and to the best of our knowledge, we found no study has comprehensively and empirically explored the importance of tourism objects' quality and brand image of tourism towards promoting Banda Aceh as tourism city. Thus, this study tries to fill this existing gap by investigating specifically the effects of the quality of tourism objects and the brand image of tourism aspects on the image of Banda Aceh as a tourism city. The findings of study could shed some lights on this specific tourism issues so that it might be used as references by the relevant authorities and policy makers in order to promote Banda Aceh becoming the prominent tourism city in the region.

1. Banda Aceh as Tourism City. A Brief Overview

Since late 1980s, the government of Aceh via the Culture and Tourism Office of Banda Aceh municipality has aspired to promote Banda Aceh become a tourism city in the region by using the term “*Banda Aceh is the Western Gate of Indonesia*”. This government effort has not been fully successful until the most devastated tsunami 2004 hit Aceh that caused more than 165.000 death tolls. On average, the number of international tourist who have visited Banda Aceh have increased tremendously from only 250 international tourists during the pre-tsunami period to more than 15.000 tourists in the post-tsunami period (Statistic Agency of Aceh 2003 and 2014). In 2004, international tourists who visited Banda Aceh was very few, only 288 tourists. One year after tsunami (2005), the number of visitors to Banda Aceh increased to 4,287, and has steadily increased to 10,267 in 2010, 13,448 in 2011, 13,099 in 2012, 15,469 in 2013, 50,721 in 2014, and further increased to 54,588 in 2015. The international tourist arrivals rose from 4.287 in 2005 to 54,588 in 2015, representing an increase of 18,954.17% percent or representing almost a nineteen thousand-fold increase during the period (Statistic Agency of Banda Aceh 2016). In the view of percentage, the increase of international tourists travelling to Banda Aceh increased dramatically. This could be due to the perception that Banda Aceh -after tsunami- is a secure destination and has some historical tsunami related-sites. However, comparing to the total tourists visiting Indonesia, only 0.17 percent of them come to Banda Aceh.

After tsunami, Banda Aceh has emerged becoming a tourism popular destination with many iconic tourism attractions, and those of which can be classified into four categories. *First*, tsunami related-sites (Aceh tsunami museum, tsunami educational park, Baiturahim Mosque in Ulee Lheue Beach, a fishing boat at top of ruined house,

etc), *Second*, historical and cultural tourism objects such as Baiturrahman Grand Mosque in the down town of Banda Aceh, Gunongan, Pinto Khop, etc. *Third*, facilities such as hotels, restaurants, etc. Moreover, Banda Aceh also has been offering a number of attractions to tourists in terms of beautiful beaches such as Lhok Nga Beach, Lampu'uk Beach, Babah Dua Beach and Gurutee Mountain. The last tourism objects are categorised as natural objects.

After the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, a new niche of tourism, *i.e.*, "tsunami tourism", was introduced in Aceh. However, there is still no clear definition of the term, but it can be defined generally as a tourism, which consists largely of visits to tsunami-related-sites. Nazaruddin and Sulaiman (2013) has for the first time proposed and promoted "tsunami tourism" when they spoke at the symposium on Prefecture organized by the National Museum of Ethnology in Osaka, Japan in 2012.

In terms of the tourism objects located in Banda Aceh, Reza (2012) categorized them as relatively famous and the tourists generally perceived Banda Aceh is a good place for tourists to visit. Among other tsunami tourism sites that have been frequently visited by the tourists in Banda Aceh was the Baiturrahman Grand Mosque. Darwis (1998, 62) found that 53 percent of international tourists perceived the Grand Mosque as an interested mosque and they have positive attitude towards it. He further documented that 86 percent of the tourists satisfied with the accommodation available, 89 percent of them satisfied with the foods available in Banda Aceh. 45.83 percent of international tourists who visited the city also satisfied with the transportation facilities (Hafasnuddin 2010). Based on the above descriptions, Banda Aceh has a very promising future to become a tourism city with a good and reputable tourism image.

2. Theoretical Background

2.1. Brand Image

Brand image consists of two words, brand and image. According to American Marketing Association (AMA) brand is the form of the name, term, sign, symbol, or design or a mixture of them, yearns for identifying the goods or services of one producer or a group of producers and serves to differentiate the company from others (cited in Kotler 2009, 418). The distinctive brand is useful to describe the brand characteristics and leaves a deep impression to users. A deep impression, according to Aaker (1991) could arise from six main aspects, namely: attribute, benefit, value, culture, personality and user. *First*, in terms of a brand attribute, the attribute serves to create an impression that is deep in the mind of someone who has seen or used the branded products/service. *Second*, while the benefit of a brand will contribute to leave an impression on what benefit can be obtained by someone when he uses the brands whether the functional benefit or emotional benefit. *Third*, the brand also contains a specific value that serves to communicate about the impression of quality of branded goods or services produced by a particular manufacturer (whether super quality, medium or low quality). *Fourth*, the brand may also express a certain culture of the product so that users feel good to the brand due in accordance with the culture and the lifestyle of its users. *Fifth*, personality: each brand is a projection of a certain personality of the brand itself. Sometimes a brand illustrates the simplicity or luxury. *Lastly or sixth*, the brand can draw social class status, personality, lifestyle, or other characteristics of the users.

With respect to the image, the scholars define image from different perception. It is because that the image is subjective enough. For examples, Hirschman *et al.* (1978) looks at the image it is tantamount to perception, whereas Boulding (1996) argues that the image is greatly dependent on individual prejudice. Other scholars, namely Kotler (2009, 328) argues that the image is a public response toward the company or toward its products. However, from the standpoint of tourism, the image can be defined as the perceptions of tourism objects or aspects reflected in the associations held in tourist memory, and cover a substantial amount of factors, as far as tourists are concerned. So, I believe that factors that constitute the image might have originated from tourists' awareness of tourism objects such as physical dimensions, name of tourism objects, aesthetics of tourism objects and so forth, and non-physical aspects such as the attitude of local people, the service quality of employees in hotel or other tourism destination places.

In the case of the image of the city, for example Chiu *et al.* (2016) categorized the tourism image of tourism objects into two types of images, namely the cognitive and effective image. Kavartzis (2004, 2008), based on the results of his research concluded that the image of the city consists of six main aspects of the answers of the questions, namely:

- what the city surely is;
- what the city atmosphere is;
- what the city expression is;
- what the city is distinguished to be;

- to whom the city tries to find to give services;
- what can be promised to potential visitors and what is expected by the visitors of the city.

On the basis of six of these answers he suggests that there are 3 main communication message templates that can be designed for imaging of a city. *First*, the image of a city should be able to communicate about the physical condition of the city, meaning that through the specifically-physical condition, the visitors can infer how the actual condition of the city is. *Second*, what he called “the propaganda tools of communication” that is posed by the city adopted in accordance with the intended market of potential visitors. While the third is with respect to the city dwellers about how the local residents of the city deliver something or how habit they convey something through the media.

Furthermore, Morgan *et al.* (2005) found that the image of a city should be formed based on multi-level communications or build a benefit pyramid, which consists of various levels of benefits owned by a city, whether the benefits are tangible or intangible. Tangible benefits portrayed through the development of the city from one period to period hereinafter which can significantly improve the reputation of the city while the intangible benefits could arise from habits or cultures of its local people of the city. The image of the tourism area, according to Keksel *et al.* (2016), can be developed through new strategies that include the brand creation of a country, region, city, and city positioning. In short, building the city’s image is simply related to the efforts how to make the city is well-perceived by the visitors.

2.2. Tourism Object

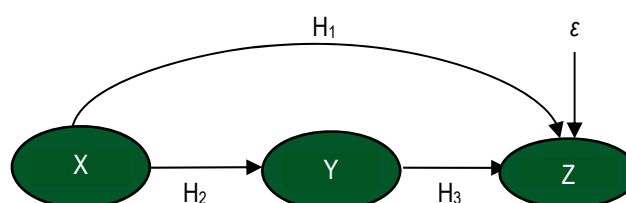
Tourism object is a combination of tangible and intangible dimensions, and it refers to the special object such as, attractions, restaurants and souvenirs (Bernio and Bricker 2001), which consists of three distinctive aspects: the tourism experience, the tourism destination place, and tourism object itself (O’Fallon 1994). Another researcher, Middleton and Clarke (2001) argues that there are five main aspects in the overall tourism object: which are discussed separately below: destination magnetisms (nature, culture and physique), destination facilities and services (hotels, eating places, local transportations, leisure activities, other tourism facilities), accessibility of tourism place (infrastructure, equipment, operational factor, local regulation, icon of the promoted object, and cost to the consumer). Next, Gunn (1988) indicates the tourism object as a comprehensive consumptive experience that results from an evaluation after tourists use multiple of tourism service (tourism events, the price of goods and services, local transportations, local accommodations, and etc) during their visit. Other economic and social conditions are also essential factors shaping tourist experiences and contribute to the nature of the tourism object. Murphy *et al.* (2000) correlates this type of tourism object to a supply and demand analysis and portrays how various aspects of the tourism objects interact with visitors during their trip.

However, developing the components view from the standpoint of the traveller, as far as the traveller is concerned, the tourism object covers the entire experience from the time he leaves his country to the moment he returns to it. Thus, the tourism object is to be considered as a combination of three main parts such as attractions, facilities at the destination place and accessibility of the tourism object or tourist destination. In other words, the tourism object is not as relaxing on a sunny beach, but rather an amalgam of many aspects or a complete parcel (Medlik and Middleton 1973). The tourists satisfactions (the macro-level of tourism object) include all that the tourists see, use and experience as part of their come upon. The tourism place, for example, is the place as the point of destination of certain component of the tourist experience. Therefore, it is concluded that tourism object is any kind of object, whether it is tangible product or intangible service, which is expected by the tourists in the place they visit

3. Conceptual Model and Proposition Development

Referring to the above review of the relevant literatures, the theoretical foundations for the relationship among the investigated variables in this study are summarized and depicted Figure 1. The brand image of tourism aspects is portrayed as mediating variable of Banda Aceh as a tourism city. The model examined in this study is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Conceptual model



where: X is the quality of tourism objects;

Y is the brand image of tourism aspects;

Z is the image of Banda Aceh as a tourism city

Researchers in the service area have identified five dimensions on which consumers evaluated service feature. These aspects are tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. Tangibles refer to the exterior of physical amenities (Zeithaml *et al.* 1990, 26), such as performance, feature, reliability, durability, serviceability, aesthetics, conformance to specification and perceived quality (Mowen 2002, 513), while the other ones refer to customer service. According to Zeithaml and Bitner (2003, 4), customer service is the service given by provider in support of a provider's main product, and most often consists of answering enquiries, handling orders, managing billing problems, conducting complaints, and perhaps setting up maintenance or refurbish.

There have been abundant researches relevant to services delivery, focused a quality measurement and instrument improvement but a few researches on service delivery on tourism. Experts in marketing have tried to measure service delivery since the 1980s by measuring up to comparing expected quality and perceived quality (Ali and Majeda 2012). Many other studies have been carried out by researchers, and the findings of which proved that the image of company is affected by many factors such as delivery quality, price, brand image, and product quality (Kim and Robert 2003)

Now, tourism experts emphasize the value of individual experience and then try to promote touching images of the exciting experience of the customer in their advertising (Mossberg 2001). Cho and Fesenmaier (2001) argued that, the most essential challenge in journey and tourism marketing in the future will be the creation of distinctive image of tourism object. According to Stamboulis and Skayannis (2003, 39-40), experience has always existed in the tourism object, but it has been considered as an experiential context (services that make customer access to the experience possible) rather than experiential content (experience created by the interaction of tourists with various elements of the tourism object). The kind of satisfaction or experience is related to the creation of any kind of attribute of the tourism object that the tourist desires to experience. The distinctive myth, for example, is an unforgettable experience to the tourists beforehand, and becomes a main reason for their choice of travelling to the tourism place. During the stay in the destination place, the travellers look forward to live the distinctive myth and once they return their country the distinctive myth have to remain alive.

The tourism businesses should aim to develop tourism object where it is probable for the tourist to experience the accepted value. An attractive tourism object and successful service delivered will effect on the destination's image. For example, Awaritefe (2004) aimed to explore the attractiveness of tourism object by supporting best quality services, superior facilities/amenities, and accessibility in building the expected image of destination. While Pestek and Nikolic (2011) attempted to reveal correlation between food and destinations' image, the result revealed that significant positive relationship was found between food and the image of a tourism destination. Additionally, The Tourism Task Force of Australia (2003) asserted that infrastructure is an essential component of the traveller equation. It is a necessary to finish the transport system first (a component of the overall tourism destination place) because it is responsible for connecting to the tourism-destination regions within the tourism destination place. More ever, it should be effortless to get to tourism object and to search out in the tourism destination places (Prideaux 2000).

The theory of city's image explained that the unique tourism image is a central identity of tourism city (Hafasnuddin 2010). The City of Mostar, for example, has a distinctive mix of tourism aspects that can be mixed for the development of a novel tourism object, which has a form of module consisting of events that initially belong to diverse tourism types: a religious practice, a fascinating culture and a habit or a hinterland village, etc. Such a tourism object is "aesthetic cultural goods" that form an appropriate basis for building a distinguishing image of the City of Mostar as a desired visitor city (Pestek and Nikolic 2011).

Next, the earlier attempt of Beijing branding can be traced back of encouragement of the city as a tourist preference since China initiated openness and restructured policies in the 1980s. Later, from 2006 – 2020 the authority transformed Beijing city into a foremost-class metropolis and a good-looking destination place of tourism was proposed as a core objective of the Beijing. To follow up Beijing branding, huge investment in upgrading of tourism aspects such as building of high-class hotels, creation of new tourism scenes, and international publicity of the city's scenic spots etc were budgeted. The result showed that Beijing lucratively attracted greater than ever number of visitors from all around the world (Zhang and Zhao 2009).

Unfortunately, in the case of Seoul, various people think of it as a war-torn city reflection, as it was subsequent to the Korean War. To help make better Seoul's image in targeted segmentations, Seoul has launched a sequences of storytelling advertisements that employ exceedingly recognizable figures like singer George

Winston. Specifically, in Asia, the polls revealed that the city of Seoul has been a favourite tourist destination (Young 2012).

Additionally, Gunn (1988) denoted the tourism object as a multifaceted consumptive experience that results from a process where tourists make use of multiple of tourism services during the route of their vacation. The other researcher, Smith (1994) acknowledged the role of tourism object was to create an unforgettable experience. He argued that transportation, water and power supply are also observable and shaping attributes that can improved the city image. Next, Seetanah *et al.* (2011) posited that tourists' overall experience builds up their image of a tourism object after their visitation and also these infrastructures (room, transportation, etc) as well as destination environment play a vital role in building their impression.

Some time, the tourist image starts before the tourist decides to go to a certain tourism object (Hafasnuddin 2010). Although tourists mostly gather and apply destination information for purposeful reasons (tourism object knowledge, avoiding insecurity, value, efficiency) or to plan and take journeys, the touristic information should also request to the prominent needs in order to capture the desires of potential visitors. In the tourist's information search process the needs to be novel, hedonic, and artistic and or expected information choices have a vital role to build superior image (Fesenmaier 1998). For example, Hafasnuddin (2010) studied the case of Sabang Island, in Aceh Province, Indonesia as a tourist destination and found that the brand image of Sabang Island is a significant determinant in explaining tourist coming. Sabang Island, in Aceh Province, Indonesia, has been acknowledged by holiday-makers from around Indonesia as tourism destination. Sabang offers a number of tourism objects to tourists in terms of beautiful beaches. However, in terms of a wide range of hotels, Sabang Island is not comfortable yet, and not available as tourist destination.

A city necessitates implementing the precise strategies in order to brand itself successfully. The most appropriate city branding depends really on the identification of distinguishing characteristics owned by the city in question. Characteristics of a city are both well-designed and service qualities, which include landscape of the city, services provided by the government agencies and habits of the city residents (Zhang and Zhao 2009).

Because of a good image, for examples, tourists know the destination place through many signs or cues that famously kept in their mind. Based on that famous image, the tourists will have a great motivation to make a trip to a certain tourism place or a certain tourism object. Many studies have been conducted by researchers, and the results of which showed that the product and brand image are affected by many factors such as delivery quality, price, product quality (Kim and Robert 2003), hopeful attitude (Al-Kwafi 2015), native cooking, inns, and well-known handiwork (Kaur *et al.* 2016). Hence, two hypotheses can be formulated as follow:

- H₁: The quality of tourism objects and the brand image of tourism aspects, either simultaneously or partially, affect the image of Banda Aceh as a tourism city;
- H₂: The quality of tourism objects influences the brand image of tourism aspects

4. Research Method

4.1. Sample

This research was done in Banda Aceh municipality as the capital of Aceh Province in Indonesia. Samples are taken by using the Slovin formula, that is $n = N / (1 + N(e^2))$. Where n is the number of samples, N is the number of population, and e is the level of precision. In the 2015, 54,588 tourists visited Banda Aceh (Statistic Agency of Banda Aceh 2016). By using the 0.95 level of confidence, 400 international tourists were selected as the sample of the study. 400 questionnaires were distributed to all samples, and then after waiting for five months only 173 questionnaires were returned (the response rate of 43.25 percent). Out of the sample, 12 of them were not fully completed. Therefore, only 161 questionnaires were available for further analysis. According to Hair *et al.* (2003, 605), it is generally accepted that the minimum sample size to ensure appropriate use of estimation is 100 to 150. As we increase the sample size above this value, the estimation method increases in its sensitivity to detect differences among the data. Although there is no correct sample size, recommendations are for a size ranging from 100 to 200. Thus, 161 samples investigated in this study fulfil the minimum sample size to provide a robust finding.

4.2. Measures

The questionnaires contain a set of measures for independent, dependent and mediating variables. *First*, the qualities of tourism objects are measured via six-item and such items are interesting of tourism objects (Seetanah *et al.* 2011, Ali and Majeda 2012), price of tourism objects (Gunn 1988, Komppula 2005), value of tourism objects (Komppula 2005), uniqueness of tourism objects (Pestek and Nikolic 2011), condition of tourism objects (Seetanah *et al.* 2011, Ali and Majeda 2012), and friendliness of employees who serve at the tourism objects (Ali and Majeda 2012). *Second*, the brand image of tourism aspects are measured via-five items which consists of city's brand name

(Jiang 2005), city's logo (Evans 2003), the atmospheres of a city (Evans 2003), the name of tourism aspects (Jiang 2005), and the brand name of tourism objects (Hafasnuddin 2010). Finally, the image of Banda Aceh as a tourism city accessed via-five items too which consists of qualified hotels (Seetanah *et al.* 2011, Ali and Majeda 2012), qualified local transportations (Gunn 1988, Ali and Majeda 2012), diversified souvenirs (Berno and Bricker 2001, Ali and Majeda 2012), kind of foods (Pestek and Nikolic 2011), and friendly population of the city (Komppula 2005).

The samples or respondents were asked to which degree they agreed with the statements, using a five-point Likert scale (ranging from 1 to 5). 1= strongly disagree, and 5 strongly agree. The data was gathered by distributing questionnaires to all samples and then analyzed by using the path analysis.

5. Results and Discussion

5.1. Measurement Model

The coefficient of Pearson correlation is used to indicate the validity of each indicator. The results showed that all items or indicators that used in this research are valid at the significant level of 1 percent. The Cronbach Alpha coefficients of all variables range from 0.726 to 0.880. Based on the results of validity and reliability tests, we can conclude that all items and variables used in this research are valid and reliable. Next, on the basis of the statistical test for the goodness of fit measures, the proposed model are found to fit the data adequately ($\chi^2 = 87.4$, $d.f = 99$, and $p \geq 0.18$). Other indicators of fit indices are *Root Mean Square Error of Approximation* (RMSEA = 0.041), *Normed Fit Index* (NFI = 0.96), and *Comparative Fit Index* (CFI = 0.96). Based on all of these fit indices, we can conclude that the hypothesized model is a reasonable explanation of observed covariance for the studied variables.

5.2. Direct Effect

To test the hypotheses of the research, two models are used: non-mediated and mediated models. Both models are tested using special case of the structural equation model, path analysis. The results of the first hypothesis test showed that, either partially or simultaneously, the quality of tourism objects and the brand image of tourism aspects positively and significantly affected the image of Banda Aceh as a tourism city. The proposed model explains 71.7 percent of the variance in the image of Banda Aceh as a tourism city construct. In the examination of the predictors of the image of Banda Aceh as a tourism city, both constructs (the quality of tourism objects and the brand image of tourism aspects) are found to have a significant direct effect on the image of Banda Aceh as a tourism city. It means that to build the brand image of Banda Aceh as a tourism city, the quality of tourism objects and the brand image of tourism aspects must be build first. This finding is consistent with the research conducted by Yong (2000), Ukaj (2014), Girma and Adissu (2016) and Kaur *et al.* (2016). According to them, a comprehensive orientation to the city (tourism objects, good information, good image, local food, legendary handicraft etc) should be determined in order to make the city occupy an irreplaceable location in the minds of tourists.

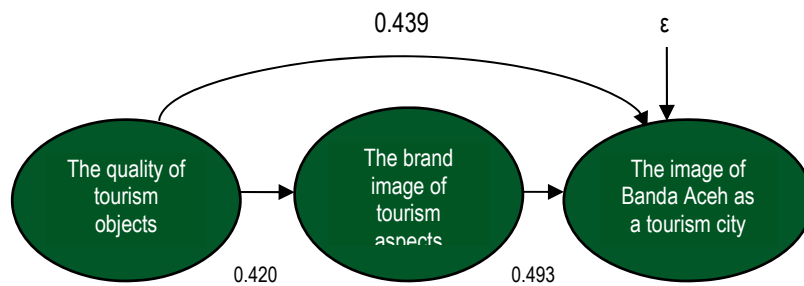
In the terms of a partial effect, the quality of tourism objects showed a significant direct effect on the image of Banda Aceh as a tourism city (0.420; $p < 0.01$). This finding is consistent with the study conducted by Ali *et al.* (2012) with Pestek and Aleksandra (2011) that found taste and flavour of the food influenced the image of Monstar as a tourism city, and also consistent with the previous research done in Jerash city, Jordan. The finding showed that the quality of service has significant effect on Jerash city as the tourism destination (Ali *et al.* 2012).

Next, the brand image of tourism aspects has the strongest direct effect (0.493) on the image of Banda Aceh as a tourism city (see Table 1). Not surprisingly, the brand image of tourism aspects has the strongest direct effect (0.493; $p < 0.01$) on the image of Banda Aceh as a tourism city compared to the quality of tourism products (0.439; $p < 0.01$). It means that the brand image of tourism aspects is the most crucial factor affecting the brand image of Banda Aceh as a tourism city. In other words, the brand image of tourism aspects that is kept in the tourists' mind or the prior attitude of the tourists is strongly important to shape the image of Banda Aceh as a tourism city.

Additionally, the study also documented that the quality of tourism objects significantly influenced the brand image of tourism aspects. The implication of this finding is that the quality of tourism objects, which is located in Banda Aceh, has significant role in building the brand image of tourism aspects. This finding is consistent with previous studies that have found the quality of tourism objects influenced Beijing as the first-class metropolis and attractive destination of tourism (Zhang and Zhao 2009), and also affected the Seoul city, where the polls have revealed that the city of Seoul to be a favoured tourist destination (Young 2012).

Figure 2 below shows all path coefficients.

Figure 2. Results of path analysis



5.3. Indirect Effect

When the indirect effects are taken into account, the second model (mediated model) supported the crucial role of mediating constructs (the brand image of tourism aspects) in predicting the image of Banda Aceh as a tourism city. According to Baron and Kenny (1986), if independent variable is found to be related to dependent variable and mediating variable, the mediating variable can be expected to mediate the effect of independent variable on dependent variable. The study also found that the quality of tourism objects and the brand name of tourism aspects are correlated fairly. Thus, when the quality of tourism is considered as an mediating variable, the total effect of the brand image of tourism aspects on the image of Banda Aceh as a tourism city is found to be the strongest (0.835). In this respect, the quality of tourism objects is functioned as a necessary sufficient condition which is truly needed by consumers or tourists (Knox *et al.* 2001). It means that the tangible aspects and service system of local transportations, hotels, restaurants, Baiturahman Grand Mosque, Aceh tsunami museum, the tsunami educational park, etc must be in good shaped or are favourable. Therefore, the authority of Banda Aceh should train the providers of tourism objects on how to build them and serve the tourists professionally.

To build the city's image of Banda Aceh as a tourism city, the Culture and Tourism Office of Banda Aceh municipality must initiate well-planned systems and regulations in order to improve the quality of tourism objects in Banda Aceh and the brand name of tourism aspects such as the term "Banda Aceh Visit Year 2015", the logo and the cityscape or atmosphere of Banda Aceh as a tourism city. The term "*Banda Aceh Visit Year 2015*", for example, designed by an authorized institution can form a good image toward Banda Aceh as a tourism city. In the respects of the cityscape or the atmosphere of Banda Aceh as a tourism city, in the visit year of 2015, many events were initiated and organized by the officials. Peunayong Chinese town festival, Aceh's coffee taste festivals, business meeting summit, fun bike and other festivals were the examples of those events. So, if the Culture and Tourism Office of Banda Aceh municipality would like to build the image of Banda Aceh as a tourism city, the authority has to improve the quality of tourism objects and the brand image of tourism aspects in the city, both physical and non physical (service quality). A summary of the direct and indirect-standardized coefficients among those variables is reported in Table 1.

Table 1. Findings of the direct and indirect effects

No.	Direct and indirect effects	Direct effect	Indirect effect	Total effect
1.	$X \rightarrow Y$	0.420	-	0.420
2.	$X \rightarrow Z$ The effect of X on Z when Y as the mediating variable $\rho_{ZiXi} = \rho_{ZiXi} + (\rho_{ZiYi})(r_{XiYi})$ $= 0.439 + (0.493)(0.778)$ $= 0.439 + 0.384 = 0.823$	0.439	-	0.439
3.	$Y \rightarrow Z$ The effect of Y on Z when X as the mediating variable $\rho_{ZiYi} = \rho_{ZiYi} + (\rho_{ZiXi})(r_{XiYi})$ $= 0.493 + (0.439)(0.778)$ $= 0.493 + 0.342 = 0.835$	0.493	-	0.493
		0.493	0.342	0.835

6. Managerial Implications

There are many significant managerial implications can be derived from the study's results. *First of all*, the research has proven that the quality of tourism objects and the brand image of tourism aspects are found to be a primary factor in influencing the image of Banda Aceh as a tourism city. This can be explained by the fact that the tourism

objects that are located in Banda Aceh such as the tsunami related-sites (Aceh tsunami museum, tsunami educational park, Baiturahim Grand Mosque in Ulee Lhee Beach, A fishing boat at top of ruined house etc), historical and cultural tourism objects (Baiturrahman Grand Mosque in the down town of Banda Aceh, Gunongan, Pinto Khop, Saman Dance and etc), natural tourism objects (Lhok Nga Beach, Babah Dua Beach etc), and facilities (hotels, restaurants, local transportation etc) must be in good shape and the employees should serve tourists professionally.

Secondly, this research has also documented that the image of tourism aspects has the greatest influence on the image of Banda Aceh as a tourism city. Based on this finding, the relevant authority should build the brand image of tourism aspects by creating and organizing many events. For example, in the visit year of 2015, many events were launched and organized by the officials. Peunayong Chinese town festival, Aceh's coffee taste festival, business meeting summit, fun bike and other festivals were the examples of those events. So, for the next few years it is better to launch more events in order to improve Banda Aceh's image as a tourism city.

Finally, after tsunami 2004, in spite of Banda Aceh has many kinds of tourism objects, but Banda Aceh's image as a tourism city still remains marginalized, the mean score of it is not high (3,81). It is caused by the relatively low of means score (3.71) of the quality of tourism objects, and relatively low mean score of the brand image of tourism aspects (3.53). Moreover, Banda Aceh has no international reputable hotels, the space of parking area at the tsunami educational park is too crowded, the entrance road is very narrow, the souvenirs sold in the city are not diversified with the mean score is 3.61. In terms of souvenir items, this finding is quite different from the situation of tourism in Singapore. Furthermore, for example, one of the most popular souvenir items among visitors visiting Singapore is T-shirt. The front of this T-shirt reads "Singapore is a fine city" (Chang 1997). He added, what the tourism enterprises had not anticipated is how popular the souvenir will also be with tourist. Therefore, in the view of a tourism destination city, the Culture and Tourism Office of Banda Aceh municipality and the tourism enterprises have to allocate more funding to enhance the quality of tourism objects, improve tourism facilities, by inviting the businessmen to invest their money in hotels, produce many kinds of souvenir items and so forth.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the findings and the above descriptions, it can be concluded and suggested some of the following recommendations:

1. The largest direct-path coefficient appears in this research is the path coefficient between variables of the brand image of tourism aspects and the brand image of Banda Aceh as a tourism city. It means that if the Culture and Tourism Office of Banda Aceh municipality would like to have a better brand image of Banda Aceh as a tourism city, the authorized institution must improve the brand image of tourism aspects by establishing international qualified hotels, providing well equipped restaurants, organizing good events and improving other tourism objects.
2. The direct influence of the quality of tourism objects on the brand image of Banda Aceh as a tourism city is found to be positively significant. It means that the Culture and Tourism Office of Banda Aceh municipality and tourism enterprises should have better and well-planned systems and regulations in order to improve the quality of tourism objects, such as the tsunami related-sites (Aceh tsunami museum, tsunami educational park, etc), historical and cultural tourism objects (Baiturrahman Grand Mosque in the down town of Banda Aceh, traditional Dance of Saman, etc), natural tourism objects (Lhok Nga Beach, Babah Dua Beach, etc), and facilities (hotels, restaurants, local transportation, etc).
3. When indirect effects are taken into account, the second model (mediated model) supports the crucial role of mediator constructs (the brand image of tourism aspects) in predicting the image of Banda Aceh as a tourism city. The quality of tourism objects and the brand name of tourism aspects are found to be correlated fairly. Thus, when the quality of tourism objects considered as a mediating variable, the total effect of the brand image of tourism aspects on the image of Banda Aceh as a tourism city become increase. In this respect, the quality of tourism products is functioned as a necessary sufficient condition which is truly needed by tourists. This implies that the tangible aspects and service system of local transportations, hotels, restaurants, Baiturahman Grand Mosque, Aceh tsunami museum, the tsunami educational park, etc must be in good shape and condition.
4. To build the image of Banda Aceh as a tourism city, the Culture and Tourism Office of Banda Aceh municipality and the tourism enterprises must make well-planned systems and regulations in order to improve the quality of tourism objects in Banda Aceh and the brand name of tourism aspects such as the term "Banda Aceh Visit Year 2015", the logo and the cityscape or atmosphere of Banda Aceh as a tourism city.

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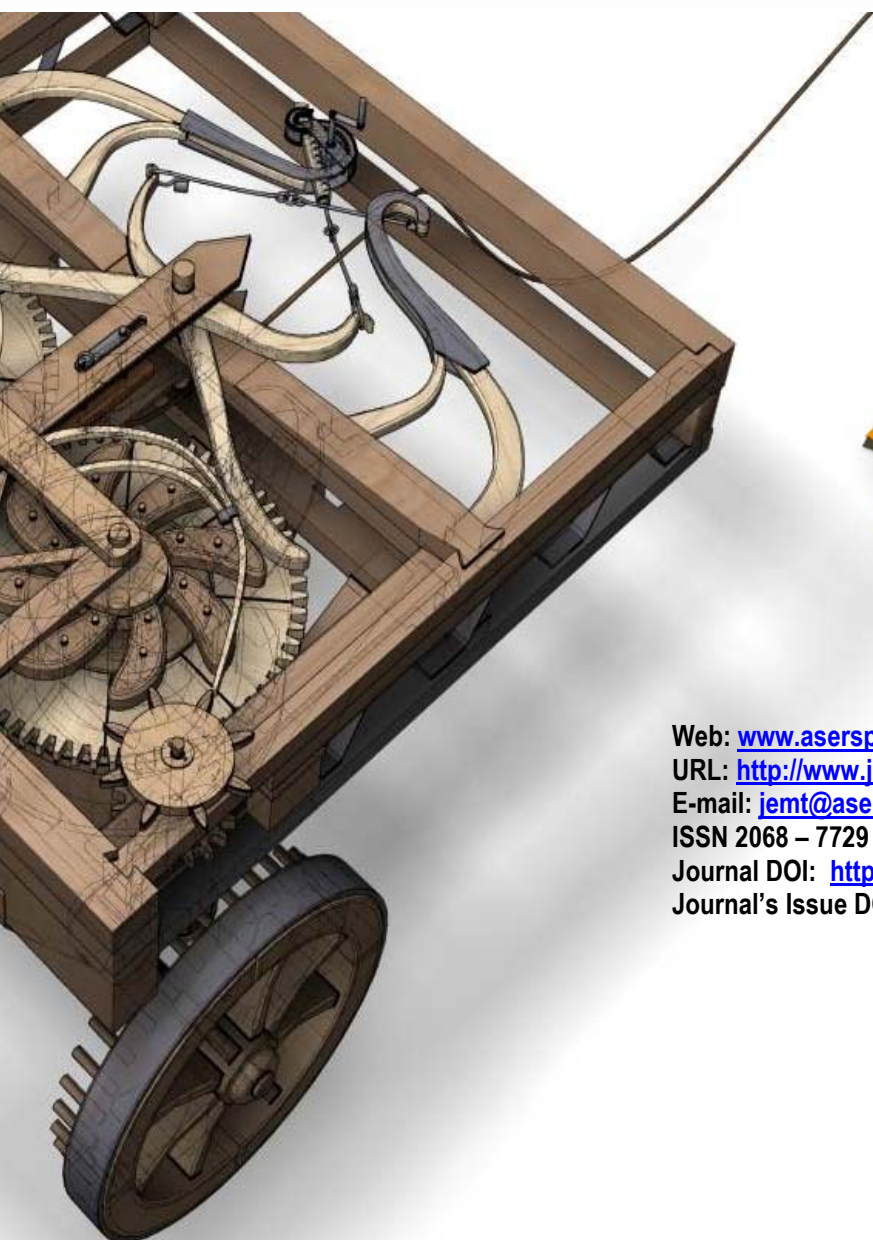
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