

# The Influence of Self-City Brand Connection, City Brand Experience, and City Brand Ambassadors on Intentions to Visit Tourism in the Special Region of Yogyakarta

Ardhia Dewi Nur Rahma

Magister Manajemen Faculty of Business and Economics UAJY

Sheellyana Junaedi

Magister Manajemen Faculty of Business and Economics UAJY

— *Review of* —  
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 Economics**  
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## ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the influence of self-city brand connection, city brand experience, city brand satisfaction, and city brand ambassadorship behavior intention on intentions to visit tourism in the Special Region of Yogyakarta. This study used purposive sampling with 257 valid questionnaires. Respondents were selected based on determined criteria; residents who lived or had lived in the Special Region of Yogyakarta for 2-5 years or more than 10 years. The data analysis method used in this research is Partial Least Square (SmartPLS 3.3.3). The results of the first hypothesis test show that self-city brand connection has a positive and significant effect on city brand experience. Second, self-city brand connection has a positive and significant effect on city brand satisfaction. Third, self-city brand connection has a positive and significant effect on city brand ambassadorship behavior intention. Fourth, city brand experience has a positive and significant effect on city brand satisfaction. Fifth, city brand experience has a positive and significant effect on city brand ambassadorship behavior intention. Sixth, city brand satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on city brand ambassadorship behavior intention. Seventh, city brand experience has succeeded in mediating the effect of self-city brand connection to city brand ambassadorship behavior intention. Eighth, city brand satisfaction has succeeded in mediating the effect of self-city brand connection to city brand ambassadorship behavior intention. Finally, city brand satisfaction has succeeded in mediating the effect of city brand experience on city brand ambassadorship behavior intention.

**Keywords:** Self-city brand connection; city brand experience; city brand satisfaction; city brand ambassadorship behavior intention.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is an archipelagic country that has a lot of tourism potential. Every city makes marketing efforts to increase visitor arrivals while distinguishing itself from other cities and destinations (Ashton, 2014; McManus & Connell, 2014). In this context, city branding has become an emerging phenomenon in academia and an important practice for city authorities worldwide (Green et al., 2016; Kavaratzis & Hatch, 2013; Manyiwa et al., 2018; Sahin & Baloglu, 2014). Through city branding, a city seeks to promote tangible and intangible attributes that aim to formulate the city's image (Gilboa et al., 2015; Nallathiga, 2011).

Branding is a concept designed to develop a product. Meanwhile, city branding is a city marketing strategy to strengthen relationships and build a good city image with visitors (Zhou & Wang, 2014). The city branding strategy can be said as one of the strategic actions that must be managed by the government because it is to promote a place or country to the international level (Zhou & Wang, 2014). According to (Chan et al., 2021), strengthening the city's brand

and identity by highlighting its tourism potential will encourage the city's image as a tourism city. Previous studies by (Sahin & Baloglu, 2014) elaborate that in the global market, the competition between cities as a tourist destination has started to focus in unique attitude and brand image, memorable experiences, and also branding development through word of mouth. By forming a good city image, it will have an impact on increasing tourists.

In establishing a city branding, it takes the role of residents as brand ambassadors for the city. In previous studies, it was found that the residents have three main roles. First, residents are the subject of city branding. This is because the policy regarding the city is taken by the decisions of the residents. Second, residents can be a key element of city branding. This is because when tourists visit a city, they not only consider the external attributes of the city, but also the lives of its residents in evaluating the value of their visit. Ultimately, residents can become brand ambassadors for their cities (Braun et al., 2013). A brand ambassador is a person who represents and advertises a company, supports its offering, and acts as an embodiment of the company's identity through words and actions (Jelena, 2021). City brand ambassadorship behavior intention is the intention of the residents as brand ambassadors for how they promote or recommend their city to others.

Special Region of Yogyakarta is one of the cities in Indonesia that has tourism potential. In addition to its tourism potential, this city is also known as a city of culture. Until now, Yogyakarta still adheres to the order of life of the Javanese people, especially in their daily lives. The people of Yogyakarta itself are famous for the hospitality of its residents. This is one of the reasons why Yogyakarta is still becoming a tourist destination (Jogja, 2020). Yogyakarta is the second largest tourist destination in Indonesia after Bali. Yogyakarta has also received the ITA (Indonesian Tourism Award) in 2009 (Kompas.com, 2010). Administratively, Special Region of Yogyakarta is divided into four regencies and one city, namely Sleman Regency, Bantul Regency, Kulon Progo Regency, Gunung Kidul Regency, and Yogyakarta City. Each district and city in Yogyakarta have its uniqueness and branding.

Along with global developments, the concept of city branding is changing rapidly and the challenges are getting faster. As explained earlier, there are many studies on city brand assets, personality, and image that adapt from the existing brand research concepts. In the field of marketing, the consumer experience has emerged as the most important issue for a company, and in the face of intense competition, experience has replaced product quality (Klaus & Maklan, 2013). Although the brand experience itself has received attention in the field of marketing and related to brands, it is a new concept in sectors such as travel and tourist destinations (Barnes et al., 2014). The concept of brand experience in marketing has been extended to experiences related to cities and tourist destinations.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS**

### **2.1. Effect of Self-City Brand Connection on City Brand Experience, City Brand Satisfaction, and City Brand Ambassadorship Behavior Intention**

Consumers build relationships with brands when they experience products and services. Strong brands provide value to consumers and through this process consumers can build an emotional bond with the brand. In city branding, city residents are not only passive recipients, but also active partners and co-producers (Hospers, 2010). Along with the strengthening of the role of residents in city branding, this study focuses on the brand relationship between residents and the city as the main variable that affects the city brand experience.

Previous studies have suggested self-brand connection as an important driver of emotional

experience with brands (Ferraro et al., 2011). Furthermore, in place branding, attitudes towards place brands, perceived quality, and brand uniqueness have positive effects on brand relationships with residents, and city brand relationships influence their advocacy of the place (Kemp et al., 2012).

Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed.

**Hypothesis 1 (H1): Self-city brand connection will positively influence city brand experience**

**Hypothesis 2 (H2): Self-city brand connection will positively influence city brand satisfaction**

**Hypothesis 3 (H3): Self-city brand connection will positively influence city brand ambassadorship behavior intention**

## **2.2. Effect of City Brand Experience on City Brand Satisfaction and City Brand Ambassadorship Behavior Intention**

Satisfaction has been treated as a central research topic in many disciplines. However, research on satisfaction is very limited in city branding research (Zenker & Rütter, 2014). Previous studies on urban residents' satisfaction have shown that satisfaction can be conceptualized as a positive response to the emotional and cognitive aspects of the place they live in (Zenker & Beckmann, 2013).

This study also predicts that city brand experience will encourage city residents to participate in activities related to their city. Recently, city branding has been carried out based on the active participation of residents; branding activities, which are the field of experts, evolve towards the value of participation, sharing, and providing fun values (Koo, 2016). The study of urban sustainability by (Hawkins & Wang, 2012; Portney & Berry, 2010) argues that sustainability can be realized through residents participation and collaboration in cities with participatory concepts and governance. Similarly, satisfaction and participation of urban residents is important for sustainability in urban branding to face intense competition between cities due to free movement of capital and markets (Koo, 2016; Shirvani Dastgerdi & De Luca, 2019). Residents' participation in city branding leads to the success of city branding by increasing ownership and sense of belonging to the city. As a result, successful urban branding promises the well-being of residents and the sustainability of the city (Shirvani Dastgerdi & De Luca, 2019).

Residents' involvement in city branding can be found in their role as brand ambassadors. Brand ambassadors generally refer to people who are passionate about an organization or brand and are involved in activities that give consumers meaning about the brand (Ambroise et al., 2014). Research identifying the role of place brand ambassadors shows that they have a variety of information and experiences about where they live and communicate information to others through their network or means. Place brand ambassadors can also act as endorsements to attract other people to visit their city.

Positive attitudes and perceptions of high city quality have a positive effect on resident satisfaction, which is shown to have a positive effect on intentions to act as brand ambassadors.

Therefore, the researcher formulates the hypothesis as follows.

**Hypothesis 4 (H4): City brand experience will positively influence city brand satisfaction**

**Hypothesis 5 (H5): City brand experience will positively influence city brand**

## **ambassadorship behavior intention**

### **Hypothesis 6 (H6): City brand satisfaction will positively influence city brand ambassadorship behavior intention**

#### **2.3. The Role of City Brand Experience as a Mediation Variable Between Self-City Brand Connection and City Brand Ambassadorship Behavior Intention**

Research on city brand experience as a mediating variable has not been done much. More research is needed to make the mediation analysis clear and perfect. Experience is the core concept of tourism (Song et al., 2015). Tourists who visit tourist destinations, they strive to create valuable memories, evoke positive emotions, touch hearts and inspire minds by seeking unforgettable experiences. Brand experience has attracted attention in the marketing field regarding brands, it is considered a new concept in fields such as place branding (Barnes et al., 2014).

Self-brand experience is considered as an individual's assumption about a brand (Aguirre-Rodriguez et al., 2012). In a city context, self-city brand connection means the connection of each individual to a brand. Meanwhile, for city brand ambassadorship behavior intention is the intention and behavior of residents as city branding for how they introduce their city to the general public.

The role of city brand experience as a mediating variable means that the higher the experience a person gets, the more they feel that the city is a part of themselves which will eventually make them directly become brand ambassadors for their city. Based on the description above, the hypothesis is as follows:

### **Hypothesis 7 (H7): The role of city brand experience as a mediating variable between self-city brand connection and city brand ambassadorship behavior intention**

#### **2.4. The Role of City Brand Satisfaction as a Mediation Variable Between Self-City Brand Connection and City Brand Ambassadorship Behavior Intention**

City brand satisfaction is a person's satisfaction with a city or place. (Song et al., 2019) believes that the core content of brand satisfaction is the emotional evaluation or consumer pleasure level of a particular brand in mind. Previous research has stated that self-brand connection includes the extent to which certain brands are included in the self-concept (Dwivedi, 2014). In the context of destinations, tourists who visit tourist destinations, they tend to feel that the tour is in accordance with themselves and what they need. For city brand ambassadorship behavior intention means that residents in a city have a responsibility to maintain the city's image so that their city becomes a city that is of interest to tourists.

The role of city brand satisfaction is very important in relation as a mediating variable between self-city brand connection to city brand ambassadorship behavior intention. The higher satisfaction felt by tourists when visiting a city or tourist destination, the more they form a self-city brand connection for tourists and they can eventually become city brand ambassadors for their city. Based on the description above, the hypothesis is as follows:

### **Hypothesis 8 (H8): The role of city brand satisfaction as a mediating variable between self-city brand connection and city brand ambassadorship behavior intention**

## 2.5. The Role of City Brand Satisfaction as a Mediation Variable Between City Brand Experience and City Brand Ambassadorship Behavior Intention

Satisfaction is the pleasure experienced, felt, wanted, expected or needed by tourists for products, services and places (Rahman et al., 2020). Previous research has stated that brand experience is the subjective internal consumer responses (sensations, feelings, and cognitions) and behavioral responses evoked by brand-related stimuli that are part of brand design and identity, packaging, communication, and the environment (Brakus et al., 2009). Satisfaction and experience are closely related to the comfort and pleasure that is generated when tourists visit tourist destinations.

The role of city brand satisfaction is very important as a mediating variable between city brand experience and city brand ambassadorship behavior intention. The higher the satisfaction felt by tourists when visiting tourist destinations, the more it forms a city brand experience for tourists and they can eventually become city brand ambassadors for that city. Based on the description above, the hypothesis is as follows:

**Hypothesis 9 (H9): The role of city brand satisfaction as mediating variable between city brand experience and city brand ambassadorship behavior intention.**

## 3. METHODOLOGY

This research is quantitative. The research populations are respondents from the Special Region of Yogyakarta who have lived in this city for more than 10 years and respondents who have lived long enough in the Special Region of Yogyakarta for about 2-5 years. The measurement scale in this study uses a Likert scale using a measurement scale of 5 (strongly agree), 4 (agree), 3 (neutral), 2 (disagree), and 1 (strongly disagree). The total sample was 257 respondents. The data collection process takes place between October until December 2021. The analysis technique uses SEM (Structural Equation Model) analysis with the help of PLS (Partial Least Square) software.



**Figure 1. Research model**

Source: (Yu & Kim, 2020: 4)

## 4. ANALYSIS RESULT

### 4.1. Descriptive Data Analysis

The distribution of questionnaires was conducted from November to December 2021. The

results of the descriptive analysis of the respondents were obtained: gender (female: 167, male: 90), age (16-25 years: 45,2%; 25-34 years: 17,2%; 35-44 years: 14%; 45-54 years: 6,3%, and 55-62 years: 17,6%), monthly income ( $\leq$ Rp. 2.500.000: 44%;  $\leq$ Rp. 1.000.000: 23,7%; Rp. 1.000.001 – Rp. 1.500.000: 14%; Rp. 1.500.001- Rp. 2.000.000: 11,3%; Rp. 2.000.001 – Rp/ 2.500.000: 7%), the average amount of time that respondents had lived in the Special Region of Yogyakarta (2 – 5 years: 52,5% and  $>10$  years: 47,5%), sources of information to find out tourist destinations in the Special Region of Yogyakarta (travel application: 15,6%; social networking sites: 79%; recommendation of friends or family: 61,5%; online articles: 23%, and others: 12,5%), and the last is most visited tourist destination in the Special Region of Yogyakarta (beach area: 67,7%; hills: 35%; café: 41,2%; shopping centre: 40,1%; historical places such as palace, museum, and temple: 47,5%, and others: 7,4%).

**Table 1: Descriptive characteristics of respondents**

Characteristics	Descriptions	Number of Respondents	%
Gender	Male	90	<b>35</b>
	Female	167	<b>65</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>257</b>	100
Age	16 – 24	116	<b>45.2</b>
	25 – 34	44	<b>17.2</b>
	35 – 44	36	<b>14</b>
	45 – 54	16	<b>6.3</b>
	55 – 62	45	<b>17.6</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>257</b>	100
Monthly Income	$\leq$ Rp. 1.000.000*	61	<b>23.7</b>
	Rp. 1.000.001 – Rp. 1.500.000*	36	<b>14</b>
	Rp. 1.500.001 – Rp. 2.000.001	29	<b>11.3</b>
	Rp. 2.000.001 – Rp. 2.500.000*	18	<b>7</b>
	$\geq$ Rp. 2.500.000*	113	<b>44</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>257</b>	100	
The average amount of time that respondents had lived in Yogyakarta	2-5 Tahun	135	<b>52.5</b>
	$>10$ Tahun	122	<b>47.5</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>257</b>	100
Sources of information to find out tourist destinations in the Special Region of Yogyakarta  (Allowed to choose more than one answer)	Travel Application (traveloka)*	40	<b>15.6</b>
	Social Networking Sites	203	<b>79</b>
	Recommendation of Friends or Family	158	<b>61.5</b>
	Online Articles* Other	59	<b>23</b>
	...*	32	<b>12.5</b>
Most visited tourist destinations in Yogyakarta  (Allowed to choose more than one answer)	Beach Area*	<b>174</b>	<b>67.7</b>
	Hills*	<b>90</b>	<b>35</b>
	Café*	<b>106</b>	<b>41.2</b>
	Shopping Centre*	<b>103</b>	<b>40.1</b>
	Historical Places (Palace, Museum, Temple) *	<b>122</b>	<b>47.5</b>
	Other ...*	<b>19</b>	<b>7.4</b>

## 4.2. The Goodness of Fit Outer Model

### 4.2.1. Convergent validity test evaluation

**Table 2: Outer Loading value (Loading Factors)**

Constructs	Indicator	Loading Factor
<i>Self-City BrandConnection</i> (SCBC)	SCBC1	<b>0,784</b>
	SCBC2	<b>0,857</b>
	SCBC3	<b>0,834</b>
	SCBC4	<b>0,821</b>
	SCBC5	<b>0,835</b>
	SCBC6	<b>0,828</b>
	SCBC7	<b>0,860</b>
	SCBC8	<b>0,790</b>
	SCBC9	<b>0,811</b>
<i>City Brand Experience</i> (CBE)	CBE1	<b>0,600</b>
	CBE2	<b>0,655</b>
	CBE6	<b>0,572</b>
	CBE7	<b>0,681</b>
	CBE8	<b>0,654</b>
	CBE9	<b>0,665</b>
	CBE10	<b>0,667</b>
	CBE12	<b>0,723</b>
<i>City Brand Satisfaction</i> (CBS)	CBS1	<b>0,794</b>
	CBS2	<b>0,787</b>
	CBS3	<b>0,707</b>
	CBS4	<b>0,816</b>
	CBS5	<b>0,857</b>
	CBS6	<b>0,819</b>
	CBS7	<b>0,785</b>
	CBS8	<b>0,846</b>
	CBS9	<b>0,691</b>
	CBS10	<b>0,759</b>
	<b>CBABII</b>	<b>0,801</b>

<i>City Brand Ambassadorship Behavior Intention (CBABI)</i>	<b>CBABI2</b>	<b>0,822</b>
	CBABI3	<b>0,678</b>
	<b>CBABI4</b>	<b>0,730</b>

Measurement of the outer model (Table 2) informs that all indicators of the research variable are significant and have a value greater than 0,6.

**Table 3: AVE (Average Variance Extracted)**

Construct	AVE
SCBC	<b>0,681</b>
CBE	<b>0,433</b>
CBS	<b>0,621</b>
CBABI	<b>0,578</b>

Based on the evaluation process (Table 3) informs that three variables which are SCBC, CBS, and CBABI have a value greater than 0,5, for the CBE variable it can be included as a marginal category.

#### 4.2.2. Discriminant validity test evaluation

**Table 4: Cross Loadings**

Construct	SCBC	CBE	CBS	CBAB I
SCBC1	<b>0,784</b>	0,599	0,633	<b>0,436</b>
SCBC2	<b>0,857</b>	0,562	0,561	<b>0,463</b>
SCBC3	<b>0,834</b>	0,593	0,558	<b>0,414</b>
SCBC4	<b>0,821</b>	0,497	0,506	<b>0,415</b>
SCBC5	<b>0,835</b>	0,548	0,539	<b>0,422</b>
SCBC6	<b>0,828</b>	0,533	0,562	<b>0,538</b>
SCBC7	<b>0,860</b>	0,563	0,574	<b>0,493</b>
SCBC8	<b>0,790</b>	0,490	0,506	<b>0,502</b>
SCBC9	<b>0,811</b>	0,614	0,637	<b>0,476</b>
CBE1	0,314	<b>0,600</b>	0,314	<b>0,340</b>
CBE2	0,447	<b>0,655</b>	0,447	<b>0,364</b>
CBE6	0,295	<b>0,572</b>	0,295	<b>0,341</b>
CBE7	0,372	<b>0,681</b>	0,372	<b>0,390</b>
CBE8	0,436	<b>0,654</b>	0,436	<b>0,410</b>
CBE9	0,434	<b>0,665</b>	0,434	<b>0,428</b>
CBE10	0,459	<b>0,667</b>	0,459	<b>0,439</b>
CBE12	0,593	<b>0,723</b>	0,593	<b>0,486</b>
CBE13	<b>0,563</b>	<b>0,692</b>	<b>0,563</b>	<b>0,464</b>



CBS1	<b>0,580</b>	<b>0,579</b>	0,794	<b>0,456</b>
CBS2	0,562	0,539	<b>0,787</b>	<b>0,398</b>
CBS3	0,474	0,442	<b>0,707</b>	<b>0,357</b>
CBS4	0,547	0,486	<b>0,816</b>	<b>0,436</b>
CBS5	0,527	0,561	<b>0,857</b>	<b>0,462</b>
CBS6	0,522	0,534	<b>0,819</b>	<b>0,447</b>
CBS7	0,505	0,531	<b>0,785</b>	<b>0,427</b>
CBS8	0,569	0,570	<b>0,846</b>	<b>0,439</b>
CBS9	0,458	0,497	<b>0,691</b>	<b>0,429</b>
CBS10	0,634	0,588	<b>0,759</b>	<b>0,509</b>
CBABI1	0,364	0,508	0,451	0,801
CBABI2	0,437	0,556	0,559	0,822
CBABI3	0,442	0,381	0,357	0,678
CBABI4	<b>0,479</b>	<b>0,432</b>	<b>0,292</b>	0,730

Based on the evaluation process (Tabel 4) informs that three variables which are SCBC, CBS, and CBABI have a value greater than 0,7, for the CBE variable it can be included as a marginal category.

**Table 5: Fornell-Larcker Criterion**

Construct	CBABI	CBE	CBS	SCBC
CBABI	<b>0,760</b>			
CBE	0,624	<b>0,658</b>		
CBS	0,557	0,680	<b>0,788</b>	
SCBC	<b>0,561</b>	<b>0,676</b>	<b>0,687</b>	0,825

Based on the evaluation process (Table 5) informs that all values of the square root AVE appear to be greater than the correlation value between latent constructs. the square root value of AVE for the CBE variable is included in the marginal category.

#### 4.2.3. Reliability test evaluation

**Tabel 6: Dillon Goldstein's Value**

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability
SCBC	0,941	<b>0,950</b>
CBE	0,836	<b>0,873</b>
CBS	0,931	<b>0,942</b>
CBABI	<b>0,756</b>	<b>0,845</b>

Based on the evaluation process in Table 6, it can be seen that the entire value of Cronbach's alpha ( $\geq 0.60$ ) and the value of composite reliability ( $\geq 0.70$ ) have successfully fulfilled the reliability test requirements. Therefore, it can be concluded that the overall latent construct in this study is reliable.

### 4.3. The Goodness of Fit Inner Model

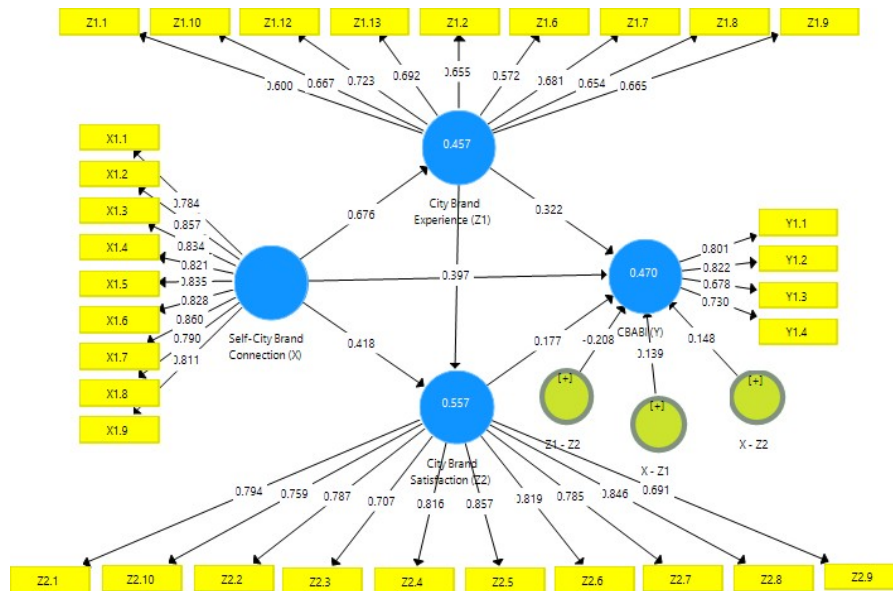


Figure 2. Structural model pls algorithm

In Figure 2 it can be seen that the r-square value is contained in three latent (endogenous) constructs, including; city brand experience, city brand satisfaction, and city brand ambassadorship behavior intention. Further discussion will be explained in the evaluation of Table 7.

Table 7: R-Squares & Q-Squares value

Construct	R-Square ( $R^2$ )	Q-Square ( $Q^2$ )
CBABI	0,470	<b>0,257</b>
CBE	0,457	<b>0,189</b>
CBS	<b>0,557</b>	<b>0,338</b>

Based on Table 7 above, it can be seen that the city brand ambassadorship behavior intention variable has an  $R^2$  value of 0.470 (47%). Thus, the city brand ambassadorship behavior intention variable was successfully explained with an accuracy of 47% (moderate), while the rest (53%) was explained by other variables outside the model. Then, the city brand experience variable has an  $R^2$  value of 0.457 (45%). Thus, the brand experience variable was successfully explained with an accuracy of 45% (moderate), while the rest (55%) was explained by other variables outside the model. Last, the city brand satisfaction variable has an  $R^2$  value of 0.557 (55%). Thus, the city brand satisfaction variable was successfully explained with an accuracy of 55% (moderate), while the rest (45%) was explained by other variables outside the research model.

In addition to evaluating the value of  $R^2$  as a predictive accuracy criterion, this study also examines the value of  $Q^2$  as a criterion for predictive relevance. In Table 7. it can be seen that the value of  $Q^2$  on the city brand ambassadorship behavior intention variable (0.257; moderate), the city brand experience variable (0.189; weak), and the city brand satisfaction variable (0.338; moderate) has exceeded 0. This proves that the model contained in the study has good predictive relevance.

#### 4.4. Hypothesis Testing

##### 4.4.1. Direct Effect Hypothesis Test

**Table 8: Direct effect hypothesis test**

	Path Coefficient	T Statistics	P Values	Description
SCBC → CBE	0,676	17,036	0,000	Significant
SCBC → CBS	0,418	6,581	0,000	Significant
SCBC → CBABI	0,221	2,839	0,005	Significant
CBE → CBS	0,397	7,004	0,000	Significant
CBE → CBABI	0,322	4,997	0,000	Significant
CBS → CBABI	<b>0,177</b>	<b>2,111</b>	<b>0,036</b>	Significant

Note: >1,96\*\* >1,65\* Significant and <0,05\*\*<0,1\* Significant

Based on the results of the analysis table 8 shows that H1, H2, H3, H4, H5, and H6 are significant.

##### 4.4.2. Indirect Effect Hypothesis Test

**Table 9: Indirect Effect Hypothesis Test**

	Path Coefficient	T Statistics	P Values	Description
SCBC → CBE → CBABI	0,218	4,792	0,000	Significant
SCBC → CBS → CBABI	0,074	2,079	0,038	Significant
CBE → CBS → CBABI	<b>0,070</b>	<b>1,836</b>	<b>0,067</b>	Significant

Note: >1,96\*\* >1,65\* Significant and <0,05\*\*<0,1\* Significant

Based on the results of the analysis table 9 shows that H7, H8, and H9 are significant.

##### 4.4.3. Mediation Analysis

**Table 10: Mediation Analysis**

Hypothesis	Direct Effect Hypothesis Result				
	Path Coefficient	T Statistics	P Values	Description	
<b>H7</b>	SCBC → CBE	0,676	17,036	0,000	<b>mplimentary</b>
	CBE → CBABI	0,322	4,997	0,000	
	SCBC → CBABI	0,221	2,839	0,005	<b>Mediation</b> (Zhao et al., 2010)
	SCBC → CBS	0,418	6,581	0,000	<b>mplimentary</b>

<b>H8</b>	CBS → CBABI	0,177	2,111	0,036	<b>Mediation</b> (Zhao et al., 2010)
	SCBC → CBABI	0,221	2,839	0,005	
<b>H9</b>	CBE → CBS	0,397	7,004	0,000	<b>complimentary</b> <b>Mediation</b> (Zhao et al., 2010)
	CBS → CBABI	0,177	4,997	0,036	
	CBE → CBABI	0,322	1,836	0,067	

## 5. DISCUSSION

This study examined the effect of city brand experience, city brand satisfaction, and city brand ambassadors on intentions to visit tourism in the Special Region of Yogyakarta. The first hypothesis shows that self-city brand connection has a positive and significant effect on city brand experience. Self-brand connection itself is considered as an assumption from each individual about a particular brand (Aguirre-Rodriguez et al., 2012). In the context of city branding, residents who live in a city will include themselves in that city. This means that residents have a strong connection to the city so they feel part of the city. This is in line with the previous research conducted by (Dwivedi, 2014) who said that self-brand connection includes the extent to which a particular brand is incorporated into the self-concept. Brand experience is the subjective internal consumer responses (sensations, feelings, and cognitions) and behavioral responses evoked by brand-related stimuli that are part of brand design and identity, packaging, communication, and the environment (Brakus et al., 2009). In the context of city branding, the experience gained by residents and someone who has memories of a city will feel strong emotions towards the city. Residents will feel comfortable when they are in the city. The Special Region of Yogyakarta is known as a city with various tourist destinations. When visiting the city of Yogyakarta, tourists feel the experience they get when they are in Yogyakarta. This experience is certainly obtained when tourists visit several destinations in Yogyakarta, which then the experience of these visits provides memories and special impressions for tourists.

The second hypothesis shows that self-city brand connection has a positive and significant effect on city brand satisfaction. Satisfaction is the pleasure experienced, felt, wanted, and expected or needed by tourists for products, services, and places (Rahman et al., 2020). In the context of a city, satisfaction with a city is based on the experience felt when visiting the city. Previous studies have suggested self-brand connection as an important driver of emotional experiences with brands (Kemp et al., 2012). Previous research conducted by (Song et al., 2019) explained that the core content of brand satisfaction is the consumer's emotional evaluation or level of pleasure of a particular brand in mind. When someone likes a brand, they will feel satisfied if they have that brand. In the context of the city of Yogyakarta, residents who have lived or have lived in Yogyakarta for a long time will tend to feel comfortable and like this city, because of the satisfaction, they get when visiting or living in Yogyakarta.

The third hypothesis shows that self-city brand connection has a positive and significant effect on city brand ambassadorship behavior intention. Self-brand connection implies a strong brand association, which can fulfill individuals' psychosocial needs, strengthen their identity and enhance their relationships with others (Kemp et al., 2014). In the context of the city of Yogyakarta, tourists or residents who like this city tend to feel a strong relationship with the city of Yogyakarta. This is based on the condition of Yogyakarta which gives its meaning for them. City brand ambassadorship behavioral intention is the intention or behavior of the community as brand ambassadors for how they promote or recommend their city to others. In establishing city branding, citizen participation is important as co-creator (Braun et al., 2013; (Compte-Pujol et al., 2018) because they are the main agents that produce the authenticity of the city and embody the identity of the place (Hereźniak & Florek, 2018) who live and also

communicate with outsiders. Yogyakarta is known as a city with residents who are friendly to tourists. This certainly creates a positive image of Yogyakarta. Therefore, in this case, the residents of Yogyakarta can be called brand ambassadors for their city because they have given an image of their city which is a friendly city.

The fourth hypothesis shows that city brand experience has a positive and significant effect on city brand satisfaction. Satisfaction is a psychological state that is felt by perceptions about a destination and can predict the intention of returning tourists (Su & Huang, 2018). (Barnes et al., 2014) examine the effect of tourist brand experiences on satisfaction and loyalty to tourist destinations. Implemented brand experience as presented by (Mostafa & Kasamani, 2021). The results of this study indicate that brand experience at tourist attractions has a positive effect on satisfaction and loyalty. The unique and interesting experience that is brought about in a city makes a person get his satisfaction with the city. The city of Yogyakarta is known as a city of culture, a city of students, a historic city, a city rich in culture, and natural potential, etc. This branding from the city of Yogyakarta is what makes many people visit Yogyakarta. Tourists have a special experience when visiting the city of Yogyakarta. Based on this experience, satisfaction arises from them, so they may return to Yogyakarta for a trip or stay in Yogyakarta. This is in line with previous research conducted by (Yu & Kim, 2020) which stated that the experience of a city affects one's satisfaction with the city.

The fifth hypothesis shows that city brand experience has a positive and significant effect on city brand ambassadorship behavior intention. City brand experience can encourage city dwellers to participate in activities related to their city. Previous research explained that city branding was carried out based on population participation; branding activities, which are the field of experts, evolve towards the value of participation, sharing, and providing fun values (Koo, 2016). Residents give a positive image of the city and also want to introduce their city to the general public. Residents will contribute to forming a positive image of the city and also branding for their city. As in the city of Yogyakarta, residents who become ambassadors for their city are responsible for promoting their city to the general public. Residents are also responsible for maintaining the image of a city that has been formed in Yogyakarta, such as Yogyakarta as a friendly city. The results of this study are in line with research conducted by (Yu & Kim, 2020) which states that the experience of a city affects the intentions or behavior of residents as brand ambassadors in that city.

The sixth hypothesis shows that city brand satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on city brand ambassadorship behavior intention. The satisfaction felt when living in a city apart from the destinations presented, the population is also the most important factor. One's satisfaction when visiting a place is supported by the circumstances of the local population.

Yogyakarta has a city branding with the friendliness of its residents. Tourists who visit Yogyakarta feel satisfaction not only from the destinations in Yogyakarta that they visit but the residents who also play a role in creating this satisfaction. For example, residents who are friendly to tourists, provide the information needed, and also provide good service to tourists. Brand ambassadors refer to people who are passionate about an organization or brand and are also involved in activities that give consumers meaning about the brand (Ambroise et al., 2014). In the context of a city, in this case, residents become brand ambassadors who have the responsibility to maintain the image of the city and also promote their city to the general public or tourists. Residents also play a key role in realizing branding in their city. The results of this study are in line with previous research conducted by (Taecharungroj, 2016) which states that a positive attitude towards the perception of high city quality has a positive effect on residents' satisfaction which is proven to have a positive effect on the intention to act as a brand ambassador.

The seventh hypothesis shows that city brand experience has a positive and significant effect on its role as a mediating variable between self-city brand connection to city brand

ambassadorship behavior intention. The findings of this study confirm the mediating effect of a complementary city brand experience. The results of this study show that self-city brand connection has a direct or indirect effect on city brand ambassadorship behavior intention in residents who live or have visited the Special Region of Yogyakarta through the city brand experience variable. The findings in this study show that the results of the indirect influence test are greater than the results of the direct influence test, thus it can be concluded that the effect of self-city brand connection will be higher on city brand ambassadorship behavior intention if city brand experience mediates between the two.

The eighth hypothesis shows that city brand satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on its role as a mediating variable between self-city brand connection to city brand ambassadorship behavior intention. The findings of this study confirm the complementary effect of city brand satisfaction mediating. The results of this study show that self-city brand connection has a direct or indirect effect on city brand ambassadorship behavior intention in residents who live or have visited the Special Region of Yogyakarta through the city brand satisfaction variable. The findings in this study show that the results of the indirect influence test are greater than the results of the direct influence test, thus it can be concluded that the effect of self-city brand connection will be higher on city brand ambassadorship behavior intention if city brand satisfaction mediates between the two.

The ninth hypothesis shows that city brand satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on its role as mediating variable between city brand experience to city brand ambassadorship behavior intention. The findings of this study confirm the complementary effect of city brand satisfaction mediating. The results of this study show that city brand experience has a direct or indirect effect on city brand ambassadorship behavior intention in residents who live or have visited the Special Region of Yogyakarta through the city brand satisfaction variable. Satisfaction is obtained from experience when visiting a place. Yogyakarta is a city that attracts tourists. The satisfaction of tourists visiting Yogyakarta makes them finally make a return visit because of the experience and impression they get. The findings in this study show that the results of the indirect influence test are greater than the results of the direct influence test, thus it can be concluded that the influence of city brand experience will be higher on city brand ambassadorship behavior intention if city brand satisfaction mediates between the two.

## 6. CONCLUSION AND MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

The results of this study indicate that a high connection to a brand successfully leads to experience and satisfaction with the brand. In addition, residents as city brand ambassadors play a key role in shaping the branding of their city. Informing a city with branding and also a positive image in the community or tourists, the role of residents is needed in it. Creating a city with a positive image is not easy; it requires cooperation between residents and the local government. Based on this, the managerial implications are as follows:

1. From the findings in this study, it was found that the experience of a brand can give a distinct impression on that person. So, they will incorporate their self-concept into the brand. In the context of the city, a person's experience of the city is obtained when they visit a city or destination in that city. Experience can also be obtained from those who have lived in the city for a long time. Therefore, they realize that the city has an impact on their lives such as comfort, positive impression, and interest in the city. This is what finally makes them incorporate the city into their self-concept. For local governments, it is important to form a city that is comfortable and gives a distinct impression to tourists. Governments can create strategies for shaping their city's branding. For example, by looking at current market opportunities. Nowadays, social media has become one of the applications that people use to express themselves and promote something. So, local governments can provide facilities such as *instagramable* tourist attractions, create new attractive destinations, and the government can

also work with investors to create interesting places.

2. Residents play a key role in shaping their cities. In this case, a positive city image cannot be separated from the role of residents in keeping their city special in the eyes of the general public or tourists. So that residents are expected to provide friendly service when tourists come to their city.

3. Residents and local governments can work together to form a branding that makes their city more recognizable and unique. The image of the city is also formed from the cooperation between residents and the local government. A friendly, comfortable, and livable city is a positive image obtained from the city. So, to maintain this image, residents are expected to provide friendly service to tourists when visiting their city. The government also plays a role in providing supporting facilities and infrastructure so that tourists visiting their cities feel comfortable.

## 7. LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

First, there are not many previous studies that discuss city branding, especially self-city brand connections and city brand ambassadors. So that, there are some difficulties for researchers when explaining these variables. Second, there is no previous research that explains the role of mediation, for example, city brand experience which acts as a mediating variable between self-city brand connection to city brand ambassadorship behavior intention H7, as well as H8, and H9. Future research is expected to develop hypothesis 7, 8, and 9 regarding the mediating role. So that the research conducted on these variables becomes clearer.

The results of this study suggest that city brand marketers should strengthen their activities to improve brand experience and citizen satisfaction to participate with city brand ambassadors.

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