



The Effect of *Brand Salience* and *Brand Perception* on *Brand Evangelism* of Gili Trawangan Lombok Tourism with *Brand Happiness* as a Mediating Variable

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Abstract

This study aims to determine the effect of brand salience and brand perception on brand evangelism for Gili Trwangan Lombok tourism with brand happiness as a mediating variable, the type of research used is associative research with a quantitative approach using purposive sampling techniques. The number of respondents used in this study were 140 respondents. The analysis method used in this research is Structural Equation Modelling - Partial Last Square (SEM-PLS). The results of this study indicate that brand salience has a positive and significant effect on brand happiness, while brand salience on brand evangelism has a positive but insignificant effect. Brand perception has a positive and significant effect on brand happiness, brand perception has a positive and significant effect on brand evangelism. Directly brand happiness has a positive and insignificant effect on brand evangelism. Indirectly, brand happiness has not been able to mediate the effect of brand salience and brand perception on brand evangelism.

Keywords: *Brand Salience; Brand Perception; Brand Happiness and Brand Evangelism*

Introduction

Creating a positive brand is not an easy thing for a company to do to achieve *brand evangelism*. It requires a comprehensive strategy that involves not only superior product or service quality, but also effective communication and ongoing engagement with consumers. Hence, achieving *brand evangelist* status is not an end goal, but rather an ongoing journey that requires constant attention to the customer experience and the values espoused by the brand.

Brand evangelism, conceptualised as a combination of adoption and advocacy behaviours, is operationalised in three supportive behaviours, (Becerra & Badrinarayanan, 2013) identifying that a strong attachment between a consumer and a brand has an impact on consumer behaviour, including the purchase of brand products, giving praise or endorsement of the brand, and even engaging in comments in favour of or against competing brands.

The factors of *brand evangelism* include a number of key elements that form a strong foundation in forming a deep relationship between consumers and a brand. For instance, *brand happiness* stimulates

brand evangelism. When consumers are happy and satisfied with their experience of a brand, they are more likely to become loyal adherents or even attract others to the brand. The trust and loyalty instilled through *brand happiness* creates an emotional bond between the brand and the consumer. Consumers who are happy with a brand's products or services will willingly share their positive experiences with others, either in person or through social media. They become more prone to recommend the brand to their friends, family, and peers.

(Doss & Carstens, 2014) investigated the dimensions of *brand evangelism*, and in their suggestions here, stated that the characteristics associated with *brand evangelism* include brand *salience*. *Brand salience* refers to the level of visibility or recall of a brand in the minds of consumers. In other words, *brand salience* highlights the extent to which consumers can remember or recognise a brand. According to (Hariyadi et al., 2020) *brand salience* is also related to the memory that consumers have when referring to a brand. The level of brand visibility in the minds of consumers, creating awareness of a brand. *Brand evangelism* factors can be identified through several research components including brand *perception* researched by (Mansoor & Paul, 2022).

Brand perception, on the other hand, relates to the image or perception that consumers have of the brand. Brand perception refers to the way people see, understand, and respond to a brand. It includes various aspects, such as brand image, values associated with the brand, product or service quality associated with the brand, and associated user experience. According to (Berger et al., 2007) if consumers associate a brand with positive values, good quality, or satisfying experiences, this will be their motivation to become loyal brand adherents. Consumers who have a positive perception of a brand are more inclined to share their experiences positively with others.

Indonesian tourism has succeeded in captivating the attention of many local and foreign tourists around the world. Tourism according to (Wirawan et al., 1: 2022) is a movement or journey from a certain location which then returns to its point of origin, making it a form of rotating travel that has value. Tourism basically involves people travelling away from home to interact with new people and places (Rinuastuti et al., 2019) Indonesia has extraordinary natural tourism potential, one of which is Lombok Island, located in West Nusa Tenggara, Lombok is recognised as one of the best natural destinations in the world for 2023 by the travel site TripAdvisor through the Traveler's Choice Award. (CNN Indonesia)

A famous natural tourist destination on Lombok Island is Gili Trawangan, which is located in Gili Indah Village, Pemenang District, North Lombok Regency. The charm of this island is famous for its natural beauty, calm and relaxed atmosphere, where motorised vehicles are prohibited and the main transport uses bicycles or cidomo (horse-drawn carriages). The natural beauty of Gili Trawangan makes it a popular tourist destination among local and international travellers.

The development of tourism in an area can attract investment for local residents, create jobs, develop existing businesses, and ultimately improve community welfare (Rinuastuti et al., 2019). The people and businesses of Gili Trawangan must ensure that every tourist visit leaves a memorable impression, inspiring them to return again and recommend the island to others. Community involvement and empowerment in tourism is also one way to improve the ability of the people who have been considered relatively weak (Suryani et al., 2021). Gili Trawangan is not only a once-in-a-lifetime holiday destination, but also a destination that invites to return again, as well as to be shared with the closest people as an unforgettable holiday recommendation.

Brand evangelism for Gili Trawangan tourism in Lombok can create a powerful natural promotional wave through exceptional traveller experiences. By providing superior service, quality facilities, and a variety of exciting activities, Gili Trawangan can leave a lasting impression on every visitor. Satisfied travellers will voluntarily share their experience through social media, positive reviews, and personal recommendations to friends and family. Inviting well-known influencers to experience and promote the beauty and uniqueness of Gili Trawangan will extend the reach of promotion. Active online

communities and special events can also increase traveller loyalty and engagement. Thus, *brand evangelism* plays an important role in strengthening Gili Trawangan's image as a top tourist destination, attracting more visitors through the power of word-of-mouth recommendations and authentic testimonials.

Researchers in the field of marketing who examine the effect of *brand salience* on brand *evangelism* through brand *happiness* are still minimal. (Doss, 2010) proposes attributes that lead to *brand evangelism* in which include brand *salience* (brand salience) based on the results of testing brand *salience* leads to *brand evangelism*, however, the results of this study are inconsistent with research conducted by (Carolina, 2021) showing the results that the *brand salience* variable has no significant effect on *brand evangelism*.

To the best of the author's knowledge, the research conducted by Mansoor & Paul is the first attempt to understand the relationship between *brand perception* and brand *evangelism* through brand *happiness*. The study (Mansoor & Paul, 2022) shows that *brand perception* affects brand *evangelism* through brand happiness. However, the researcher suggests further investigation as the literature lacks evidence on how happiness created by brands produces positive outcomes such as brand *evangelism*. (Kumar et al., 2021) explored happiness in the context of consumer-brand encounters so marketers and psychologists are interested in the construct of brand happiness and suggest *brand happiness* warrants further investigation. In addition, the literature lacks evidence showing how happiness found in brands can generate positive impacts such as brand *evangelism*, indicating the need for further research in this context.

There is a research gap that can be explored regarding the effect of *brand salience* and brand *perception* on brand *evangelism* with brand *happiness* as a mediating variable. Although there have been studies that connect *brand perception*, brand *evangelism*, and other mediating variables, there have not been many studies that specifically explore the relationship between *brand salience*, *brand perception*, brand *evangelism*, and *brand happiness* simultaneously. So it needs to be further analysed about the effect of brand *salience* and brand *perception* can affect brand *evangelism* with *brand happiness* as a mediating variable in Gili Trawangan Lombok tourism, which in turn can help business actors in developing more effective marketing strategies.

Literature Review

The Influence of Brand Salience on Brand Happiness

Brand salience developed by Keller 2009 refers to the extent to which consumers recognise and remember brands across a range of purchasing situations. *Brand salience* is also related to the memory that consumers have when referring to a brand. (Hariyadi et al., 2020). Opinion (Lahardi, 2019) says *brand salience* is the strength of the destination's presence in the minds of consumers when the given travel context can be considered.

Consumer engagement in brand experiences, such as interactions with products or services, can increase *brand happiness*. High *brand salience* can create opportunities for positive experiences, which in turn, can increase the level of consumer happiness. Happiness in the context of marketing was first proposed by (Schuchert-Guler et al., 2001), specifically consumer happiness. This study indicates an emotional state, the experience of happiness.

H1: The higher the *brand salience*, the higher the *brand happiness* at Gili Trawangan Lombok Tourism.

The Influence of Brand Perception on Brand Happiness

(Guliyev, 2023) argues, brand analysis is carried out as a link of mental associations, and the main role in brand perception is to form emotional bonds with travellers' views. Brand perception reflects the way consumers see and value a brand, when consumers have a positive perception of a brand, including product quality, traveller service, and brand values, this creates the foundation for a positive experience that not only increases satisfaction levels but also triggers positive feelings that lead to happiness. (Mogilner et al., 2012)'s view of the experience of happiness describes emotional states with different levels of intensity, combining pleasant feelings with varying degrees of arousal.

H2 : The better the *brand perception*, the higher the *brand happiness* at Gili Trawangan TourismLombok.

Effect of Brand Salience on Brand Evangelism

According to (Qureshi et al. 2019), *brand salience* is the awareness and visibility of a brand in the minds of consumers which can be the basis for strong brand advocacy. In this context, *brand evangelism* can be defined as a traveller's extensive level of engagement and support for the brand, where they become passionate advocates. When a brand appears consistently and prominently in consumers' minds, it can trigger a sense of trust, brand recognition, and emotional connection. *Brand salience* can provide a solid foundation for *brand evangelism*. Brand evangelists according to (Doss & Carstens, 2014) are consumers who voluntarily convey positive information, ideas, and feelings about a brand.

The results of research (Doss, 2010) propose attributes that lead to *brand evangelism* in which include brand *salience* (brand *salience*) based on the test results in his research state that *brand salience* leads to brand *evangelism*,

In this study, the authors developed a hypothesis to explore the influence of brand salience on *brand evangelism*. The better the salience of a brand, the better the level of evangelism towards the brand. So that the hypothesis can be formulated as follows:

H3: The higher the *brand salience*, the higher the *brand evangelism* on Gili Trawangan TourismLombok.

The Influence of Brand Perception on Brand Evangelism

Brand perception reflects the thoughts or feelings that consumers have towards a brand (Riama, 2021). When consumers perceive a brand as something more than just a product or service, and as a symbol of the values they value, it can trigger a deeper sense of enthusiasm and engagement. symbolises the values they cherish, this can trigger a deeper sense of enthusiasm and engagement. *Brand evangelism* often occurs when consumers feel that a brand has had a positive impact on their lives, and they want to share that positive experience with others.

Although there are no studies that directly address the effect of *brand perception* on brand *evangelism*, Mansoor & Paul is the first attempt to understand the relationship of brand *perception* to brand *evangelism* through brand *happiness*. The study (Mansoor & Paul, 2022) showed that brand *perception* has an effect on brand *evangelism* through brand *happiness*, and the study still lacked evidence on how brand *perception* impacts brand evangelism, suggesting further development. This suggests that *brand perception* may influence *brand evangelism* directly or indirectly.

H4: The better the *brand perception*, the higher the *brand evangelism* on Gili Trawangan Lombok Tourism.

The Influence of Brand Happiness on Brand Evangelism

The formation of *brand happiness* is supported by the statement (Schnebelen & Bruhn, 2017) said that brand happiness is a valid and reliable construct with joy, passion, pride, and serenity as correlated factors. When consumers feel very happy with a brand, it triggers strong emotional engagement. This engagement is not only related to the transaction, but also to how the brand fulfils consumers' emotional needs and values, encouraging them to share positive experiences. This is known as *brand evangelism*, where consumers become passionate advocates, promoting and supporting the brand voluntarily.

(Kumar et al., 2021) explored happiness in the context of consumer-brand encounters so marketers and psychologists are interested in the construct of brand happiness and suggest *brand happiness* warrants further investigation. This indicates that *brand happiness* may influence *brand evangelism* directly or as a mediator or intermediary.

H5: The higher the *brand happiness*, the higher the *brand evangelism* on Gili Trawangan Lombok Tourism.

The Influence of Brand Salience On Brand Evangelism Through Brand Happiness

When a brand has strong brand *salience*, consumers tend to remember and identify with the brand more easily. This can trigger a sense of trust, brand recognition, and emotional connection, all of which are important factors in encouraging consumers to become passionate advocates for the brand. Consumers feeling happy with the brand and responding positively to it (*brand evangelism*), can improve their perception of the brand, creating a more positive brand image overall.

According to a study conducted by (Doss, 2010) stated that there are certain factors that influence *brand evangelism*, and one of them is *brand salience*. The results showed that there is a relationship between *brand salience* and *brand evangelism*. Although no researcher has discussed the *brand happiness* variable as a mediation between *brand salience* and *brand evangelism*, the study of (Mansoor & Paul, 2022) shows *brand happiness* to be a mediating variable for *brand evangelism*. Therefore, researchers are interested in testing the relationship between these variables.

H6: The higher the *brand salience*, the higher the *brand evangelism* through *brand happiness*.

The Influence of Brand Perception On Brand Evangelism Through Brand Happiness

The relationship between *brand perception* and *brand evangelism* through *brand happiness* is a process whereby a positive perception of the brand increases consumers' happiness with the brand, which in turn increases their likelihood of becoming *brand evangelists*, i.e. promoting the brand to others voluntarily and enthusiastically.

Previous research conducted by (Mansoor & Paul, 2022) showed that *brand happiness* successfully mediates *brand perception* on *brand evangelism*. But researchers recommend further research because the current literature does not yet provide sufficient evidence of the relationship between happiness generated by brands and positive outcomes such as *brand evangelism*.

H7: The better the brand perception, the happier with the brand, and the more likely to become *brand evangelism*.

Methods

The type of research used in this research is associative research with a quantitative approach. The number of samples used in this study were 140 respondents.

This research uses structural equation modeling (SEM) analysis with the SmartPLS application. Measurement model testing or outer model testing is carried out to validate the research model through construct validity and reliability tests. While testing the structural model or inner model is carried out to predict the causal relationship between variables. Structural model testing is done through the bootstrapping process and parameter T-Statistics. The structural model is evaluated by looking at the percentage of variance explained by the latent construct R-Square value and the structural path coefficient.

Results

Model Measurement (Outer Model)

Validity TEST

The validity test refers to the criteria cited (Ghozali, 2015) that an AVE value of at least 0.5 indicates good *convergent validity*. This means that the average latent variable can explain more than half of the variation in its indicators. If the outer value is less than 0.5, then the construct should be removed from the analysis.

Table 4.1 Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

Variables	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	Testing criteria	Description
<i>Brand evangelism</i>	0.651	> 0,5	Meets <i>convergent validity</i>
<i>Brand happiness</i>	0.657		Meets <i>convergent validity</i>
<i>Brand perception</i>	0.625		Meets <i>convergent validity</i>
<i>Brand salience</i>	0.561		Meets <i>convergent validity</i>

Source: Primary data processed, 2024

Based on table 4.6, the results of the analysis of the table data show that each question variable in this study has a *standardised loading factor* value of more than 0.50. This indicates that all of these question variables have a strong enough correlation with the latent construct being measured, fulfilling the *convergent validity* criteria. This ensures that the data collected is reliable and relevant for further analysis.

Reliability Test

The reliability test (*Composite reliability*) shows the extent to which a measuring instrument can be trusted. If a measuring instrument is used twice to measure the same phenomenon and produces relatively consistent results, then the tool is considered reliable. Data with a composite reliability of more than 0.7 is considered to have a high level of reliability. (Ghozali, 2015).

Table 4. 2 Composite Reliability Value

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Testing criteria	Description
<i>Brand evangelism</i>	0.892	0.918	> 0,70	Reliable
<i>Brand happiness</i>	0.895	0.920		Reliable
<i>Brand perception</i>	0.848	0.892		Reliable
<i>Brand salience</i>	0.843	0.884		Reliable

Source: Primary data processed, 2024

Based on the data table 4.7 above, it shows that each question variable in this study has a reliability value (such as *composite reliability* or *Cronbach's alpha*) of more than 0.7. This shows that all question variables are consistent and reliable in measuring the intended concept. Reliability values above 0.7 are considered high, which means that the measurement instruments used provide stable and replicable results.

Discriminant Validity

Table 4.3 Discriminant Validity Value

	<i>Brand evangelism</i> (Y)	<i>Brand happiness</i> (Z)	<i>Brand perception</i> (X2)	<i>Brand salience</i> (X1)
<i>Brand evangelism</i> (Y)	0.807			
<i>Brand happiness</i> (Z)	0.656	0.810		
<i>Brand perception</i> (X2)	0.807	0.764	0.791	
<i>Brand salience</i> (X1)	0.681	0.716	0.752	0.749

Source: Primary data processed, 2024

Based on table 4.8 above, the results of the *discriminant validity* analysis show that the square value of the correlation between a construct and itself is greater than the correlation value between the construct and other constructs in the model. (Ghozali, 2015). This means that each construct can be clearly distinguished from other constructs.

Structural Model Test (Inner Model)

The structural model (*inner model*) is part of the structural modelling model that connects latent constructs to one another based on causal relationships or hypotheses that have been formulated. *Inner model* can be measured by calculating *R-square*, t-test and significance of parameter coefficients.

R-Square Value (R^2)

The R^2 value illustrates how well the independent variable explains the dependent variable. In the PLS model, the Q^2 value can be seen through R^2 . The R^2 value is a measure used in structural modelling, especially in the context of *Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling* (PLS-SEM), to assess the predictive quality of the model. If $Q^2 > 0$ then the model has *predictive relevance*. Meanwhile, if $Q^2 < 0$ then the model lacks *predictive relevance*. The following are the *R-Square* results in the table below:

Table 4. 4 R-Square Value

	R Square	R Square Adjusted
<i>Brand evangelism</i>	0.665	0.657
<i>Brand happiness</i>	0.630	0.624

Source: Primary data processed, 2024

The R-Square result on the *brand evangelism* variable is 0.665 and the result on the *brand happiness* variable is 0.630. This value is large, in this case it shows that *brand happiness*, *brand salience* and *brand perception* in explaining the *brand evangelism* variable is 66.5% but, *brand salience* on *brand evangelism* and *brand happiness* on *brand evangelism* are not significant. while the remaining 33.5% is influenced by other factors. And the ability of *brand salience* and *brand perception* to explain the *brand happiness* variable is 63% and the remaining 37% is influenced by other factors not included in this study. Based on the R-Square classification according to Ghazali, (2015) it can be grouped, namely strong (0.7), medium (0.5) and weak (0.2) so it can be concluded that the *brand evangelism* and *brand happiness* variables are in the medium category.

Hypothesis Test

Hypothesis testing aims to determine whether the hypothesis is accepted or rejected based on the significance value between constructs, t-statistics, and *p-values*. In this context, hypothesis testing is carried out using SmartPLS (*Partial Least Square*) software. These values can be verified through *bootstrap* results. The rules used in this study are t-statistic > 1.96 and *p-value* significance level of 0.05.

Table 4. 5 Hypothesis test values

Relationship between Variables	Original Sample (O)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values	Description
X1 -> Z	0.327	0.127	2.575	0.010	Significant
X2 -> Z	0.518	0.115	4.486	0.000	Significant
X1 -> Y	0.158	0.137	1.154	0.249	Not significant
X2 -> Y	0.656	0.107	6.155	0.000	Significant
Z -> Y	0.042	0.138	0.304	0.762	Not significant
X1->Z->Y	0.022	0.070	0.308	0.758	Not significant
X2->Z->Y	0.014	0.052	0.261	0.794	Not significant

Source: Primary data processed, 2024

Based on the results of data analysis, there are 3 (three) direct effects between variables that have a positive and significant effect, while 2 (two) direct effects between variables have a positive and insignificant effect. As for the indirect effect between variables, both have a positive and insignificant effect.

Discussion

The Effect of Brand Salience (X1) on Brand Happiness (Z)

This study aims to examine the influence of *brand salience* variables on *brand happiness*. The results of PLS analysis show that the path coefficient is 0.327 with a p-value of 0.010 which is smaller than 0.05, which means that there is a significant positive relationship between these two variables. This means that the higher the *brand salience*, the higher the *brand happiness* felt by tourists. The results of the study mean that the first hypothesis (H1) which states that there is a positive influence of *brand salience* (X1) on *brand happiness* (Z) on Gili Trawangan Lombok tourism is accepted.

This research revealed that respondents felt that high *brand salience*, or the ease of recognising and remembering the brand, was very important in increasing their happiness associated with the Gili Trawangan Lombok tourism brand. High *brand salience* provides a sense of trust and familiarity, which makes them feel comfortable and safe in choosing this tourist destination. In addition, brands that frequently appear in their memories tend to be associated with high quality and previous positive experiences, thus increasing their sense of satisfaction and happiness when visiting. This sense of brand recognition also triggers positive emotional responses such as excitement and enthusiasm, as they feel confident that they will have a satisfying travel experience. Thus, high *brand salience* contributes significantly in creating *brand happiness* for Gili Trawangan Lombok tourists.

This finding answers the formulation of the hypothesis developed by the researcher, the relationship between these variables also answers the lack of research on the effect of *brand salience* on *brand happiness*. From the researcher's knowledge, this construct has never been tested, the researcher sees supporting indications, namely by Mansoor & Paul, 2021 who tested *brand happiness* as a mediating variable with positive results.

This research supports the importance of *brand salience* in creating a pleasant and satisfying tourism experience. Strong *brand salience* allows tourists to more easily remember and recognise Gili Trawangan as an attractive tourist destination, thus increasing their happiness during their visit. Therefore, marketing strategies that emphasise *brand salience* can be a key factor in increasing tourists' *brand happiness* in Gili Trawangan Lombok.

The Effect of Brand Perception (X2) on Brand Happiness (Z)

This study aims to examine the influence of *brand perception* variables on *brand happiness*. The results of the PLS analysis show that the path coefficient of 0.518 indicates a strong positive relationship between these two variables, with a p-value of 0.00 which is smaller than 0.05. The results of the study mean that the third hypothesis (H3) which states that there is a positive influence of *brand perception* (X2) on *brand happiness* (Z) on Gili Trawangan Lombok tourism is accepted. This indicates that good brand perception significantly increases tourists' happiness with Gili Trawangan tourist destinations.

Respondents' responses regarding the question items get a fairly high category, respondents may feel that positive brand perception plays an important role in increasing their happiness associated with Gili Trawangan Lombok tourism. A good brand perception reflects the quality, reputation and positive image offered by the tourist destination. When respondents have a positive view of the brand, they tend to feel more confident and satisfied with their choice, which contributes to feelings of happiness during the tourism experience. A favourable brand perception can also include expectations being met or exceeded, satisfactory service, and the positive impression left by the destination. All of these create a pleasant and satisfying experience for respondents, making them feel happier. Therefore, a positive and significant brand perception of Gili Trawangan Lombok tourism directly contributes to increased *brand happiness* among tourists.

A positive *brand perception* reflects how tourists perceive the quality, reputation, and image of the destination, which in turn contributes greatly to their satisfaction and happiness during their visit. Therefore, *brand perception* needs to be strengthened through effective marketing strategies and consistent messaging is crucial. This can include promotions that emphasise the uniqueness and excellence of Gili Trawangan, improving the quality of services, and providing memorable experiences for tourists. Thus, this tourist destination can create higher *brand happiness*, which in turn can encourage recommendations from visitors. This finding is in line with the results of research from (Mansoor & Paul, 2021) which states that there is a relationship between *brand perception* and *brand happiness*.

The Effect of Brand Salience (X1) on Brand Evangelism (Y)

This study aims to examine the influence of *brand salience* variables on *brand evangelism*. The results of PLS analysis show that the path coefficient of 0.158 indicates a positive relationship, but the p-value of 0.249 which is greater than 0.05 indicates that the effect is not significant. The results showed that the second hypothesis (H2) which states that there is a positive influence of *brand salience* (X1) on *brand evangelism* (Y) on Gili Trawangan Lombok tourism is rejected.

The results of this study reveal respondents' responses that although *brand salience*, or the ease of recognising and remembering the brand, has a positive influence on *brand evangelism*, the influence is not significant in the context of Gili Trawangan Lombok tourism. They may need other, stronger factors to encourage them to become *brand evangelists*, such as exceptional travel experiences, outstanding customer service, or significant added value of the destination. While *brand salience* helps in increasing brand awareness and providing a sense of familiarity, it alone is not enough to make them actively promote and recommend the brand to others.

Brand salience does not directly affect the willingness of tourists to become *brand evangelists* who actively promote Gili Trawangan to others. The characteristics of the respondents in this study are mostly workers. As workers, they have limited time and energy to actively promote these tourist destinations. Although they recognise and remember Gili Trawangan well, the demands of work and other responsibilities make them less likely to be involved in promotional activities or actively share tourist experiences. The results of this study contradict research conducted by Doss, (2010) which says there is an indication of *brand salience* to *brand evangelism*. However, this research is similar to the results of research conducted by Carolina, (2021) with the results that *brand salience* has no effect on *brand evangelism*. Therefore, a more comprehensive approach is needed that includes various aspects of the tourist experience to maximise *brand evangelism* in Gili Trawangan Lombok.

The Effect of Brand Perception (X2) on Brand Evangelism (Y)

The results showed that the fourth hypothesis (H4) which states that there is a positive influence of *brand perception* (X2) on *brand evangelism* (Y) on Gili Trawangan Lombok tourism is accepted. The path coefficient of 0.656 indicates a very strong positive relationship between these two variables, with a p-value of 0.00 which is smaller than 0.05. This indicates that positive brand perception significantly influences brand evangelism (Y) on Gili Trawangan Lombok tourism. This indicates that positive brand perception significantly increases the tendency of tourists to become *brand evangelists* who actively promote Gili Trawangan to others.

Respondents felt that positive brand perceptions strongly influenced their desire to become brand evangelists for Gili Trawangan Lombok tourism. When they have a good perception of the brand, which includes a strong image, good reputation, and satisfying experiences, they are more likely to actively recommend the destination to others. These positive perceptions provide confidence that the brand is reliable and worth promoting. In addition, the positive experiences gained from this brand make them feel compelled to share their stories and recommendations to their friends, family and social networks.

When travellers have a strong and positive perception of Gili Trawangan, they are more likely to recommend it to their friends, family and social networks. This can be through various means, including sharing the experience on social media, leaving positive reviews, and inviting others to visit the destination.

Therefore, it is important for destination managers to continue strengthening *brand perception* through consistent and strategic efforts, such as effective marketing campaigns, improving service quality, and providing exceptional tourism experiences. Thus, Gili Trawangan will not only attract more tourists, but will also create a community of *brand evangelists* who can help promote this destination naturally and sustainably. The results of this study answer the suggestions of (Mainolfi, 2020) which calls for the importance of consumer evaluation of the product of a brand, and adds evidence that *brand perception* can influence *brand evangelism*.

The Effect of Brand Happiness (Z) on Brand Evangelism (Y)

The results showed that the fifth hypothesis (H5) which states that there is a positive influence of *brand happiness (Z)* on *brand evangelism (Y)* on Gili Trawangan Lombok tourism was rejected. The path coefficient of 0.042 indicates a positive relationship between these two variables, with a p-value of 0.762 which is greater than 0.05. This indicates that the effect of *brand happiness* on *brand evangelism* is not significant.

Respondents felt that while the *happiness* they felt towards the brand had a positive influence on their desire to become *brand evangelists*, the influence was not significant in the context of Gili Trawangan Lombok tourism. Happiness alone may not be enough to encourage them to actively recommend the brand to others. Although happiness increases positive feelings towards the brand, respondents may need stronger or more personalised reasons to influence them to become active brand ambassadors. Thus, despite the positive influence, perceived happiness from the brand is not significant enough to noticeably increase *brand evangelism* among Gili Trawangan Lombok tourists.

Whilst travellers were happy with their experience in Gili Trawangan, it did not automatically lead them to actively promote the destination to others. Other factors may be more instrumental in driving *brand evangelism*. Therefore, while it is important to create *brand happiness*, destination managers also need to consider other strategies that more directly influence *brand evangelism*. These could include efforts to increase traveller interaction and engagement, provide exceptional experiences, and encourage reviews and recommendations through loyalty programmes or other incentives. With a more comprehensive approach, Gili Trawangan can increase the number of *brand evangelists* who actively promote the destination.

The results of this finding are not in line with the advice indicated by (Kumar et al., 2021) and proves that *brand happiness has no effect on brand evangelism*. This research is also not in line with the results of research conducted by Scheneblen & Bruhn (2017) which states that *brand happiness* has an influence on *brand evangelism*.

The influence of Brand Salience (X1) on Brand Evangelism (Y) through Brand Happiness (Z)

The results showed that the sixth hypothesis (H6) which states that there is a positive influence of *brand salience (X1)* on *brand evangelism (Y)* through *brand happiness (Z)* on Gili Trawangan Lombok tourism was rejected. The path coefficient of 0.014 indicates a positive relationship between these variables, with a p-value of 0.794 which is greater than 0.05. This indicates that the effect of *brand salience* on *brand evangelism* through *brand happiness* is not significant.

The respondents felt that while *brand salience*, or the ease of recognising and remembering the brand, had a positive influence on *brand evangelism* through *brand happiness*, the influence was not significant in the context of Gili Trawangan Lombok tourism. They may feel that simply recognising and

remembering the brand is not enough to make them actively recommend the brand to others. Although *brand salience* may increase their happiness towards the brand, this happiness alone is not strong enough to encourage them to become brand evangelists.

It is possible that respondents need other stronger factors or more profound and meaningful experiences to make them actively promote the brand. While they may feel happy and satisfied with a recognisable brand, this happiness needs to be supported by other elements such as unique experiences, exceptional service, or significant added value to truly encourage them to become brand ambassadors. Therefore, while there is a positive influence, *brand salience* through *brand happiness* is not significant enough to increase *brand evangelism* among Gili Trawangan Lombok tourists.

Thus, efforts to promote Gili Trawangan as a top tourist destination should include enhancing memorable tourism experiences, high service quality, and creating a strong emotional connection between travellers and the brand. This more intense approach can help in building a loyal base of travellers who are willing to promote this destination voluntarily and effectively. These findings can complement the research limitations among the variables used as suggested by previous researchers (Kumar et al., 2021). However, this study cannot answer the hypothesis formulated, in other words, this study is not in line with research conducted by Mansoor & Paul (2021) with the results that the *brand happiness* variable can mediate other variables that affect *brand evangelism* even though there is no *brand salience* variable as an independent variable.

The Effect of Brand Perception (X2) on Brand Evangelism (Y) through Brand Happiness (Z)

The results showed that the seventh hypothesis (H7) which states that there is a positive influence of *brand perception* (X2) on *brand evangelism* (Y) through *brand happiness* (Z) on Gili Trawangan Lombok tourism is rejected. The path coefficient of 0.022 indicates a very weak positive relationship between these variables, with a p-value of 0.758 which is greater than 0.05. This indicates that the effect of *brand perception* on *brand evangelism* through *brand happiness* is not significant.

Travellers may feel that although positive brand perception has a positive influence on *brand evangelism* through *brand happiness*, the influence is not significant in the context of Gili Trawangan Lombok tourism. They may feel that having a good perception of the brand does increase their happiness, but this happiness alone is not strong enough to encourage them to actively recommend the brand to others.

For respondents, it takes more than just a positive and happy perception of the brand to encourage them to become brand evangelists. They may need a particularly exceptional experience, service that exceeds expectations, or additional benefits that they find particularly valuable to truly motivate them to spread positive information about the brand. While positive perceptions of the brand can increase satisfaction and happiness, these elements must be supported by more immersive and memorable experiences to truly encourage them to become active brand ambassadors. Thus, although there is a positive influence, brand perception through happiness towards the brand is not significant enough to increase brand *evangelism* among Gili Trawangan Lombok tourists.

The results of these findings can overcome research limitations regarding the relationship between the variables formulated, as suggested by previous researchers, (Kumar et al., 2021). However, this study did not succeed in proving the proposed hypothesis. The results of this study are also not in line with the findings of Mansoor & Paul (2021) with the results that *brand happiness* can mediate the effect of *brand perception* on *brand evangelism*.

The number of respondents in this study was only 140, much less than the previous study (Kumar et al., 2021) which involved 346 respondents. With a smaller sample, the results of this study may be less representative and have higher variability, so the effect of brand perception on brand *evangelism* does not

appear as strong as in previous studies. This difference in the number of respondents may lead to less consistent and less reliable results in describing the overall behaviour of tourists.

Conclusion

Based on the analysis and discussion in the previous chapter, in this chapter the following conclusions can be drawn;

1. *Brand salience has a positive and significant effect on brand happiness for Gili Trawangan Lombok tourism. This means that the higher the brand salience felt by tourists, the higher brand happiness will also be. This shows that increasing brand salience directly contributes to increasing consumer happiness with the brand.*
2. *Brand perception has a positive and significant effect on brand evangelism for Gili Trawangan Lombok tourism. This means that the better the tourists' perception of a brand, the higher the level of brand evangelism carried out by tourists. Consumers with positive perceptions tend to recommend brands to others, share positive experiences, and voluntarily promote brands.*
3. *Brand perception has a positive and significant effect on brand happiness. This means that the better the tourists' perception of a brand, the higher the level of brand happiness felt. This shows that a positive perception of a brand contributes directly to increasing brand happiness in the eyes of Gili Trawangan Lombok tourist consumers.*
4. *Brand salience has a positive and insignificant effect on brand evangelism for Gili Trawangan Lombok tourism. This means that the higher the tourist brand salience, the higher the brand evangelism will be. This shows that even though the brand salience felt by tourists is high, it has not been able to increase the brand evangelism of Gili Trawangan tourism.*
5. *Brand happiness has a positive and insignificant effect on brand evangelism, which means that the higher the tourist brand happiness, the higher the brand evangelism. This shows that even though the brand happiness felt by tourists is high, this influence is not large enough to encourage brand evangelism activities.*
6. *Brand happiness has a positive and insignificant effect in mediating brand salience on brand evangelism. It can be interpreted that in this study brand happiness cannot provide an indirect effect between the relationship between brand salience and brand evangelism. This states that although there are indications that increasing brand salience can increase brand happiness which in turn can encourage brand evangelism, this influence is not strong enough to produce a meaningful impact.*
7. *Brand happiness has a positive and insignificant effect in mediating brand perception on brand evangelism. This means that although an increase in brand perception can increase consumer happiness with the brand, and this happiness tends to encourage consumers to become brand evangelists, but in this study brand happiness is not strong enough or consistent in providing an indirect influence on the brand perception of Gili Trawangan Lombok tourism.*

Advice

Based on the results of research on the influence of brand salience on brand evangelism through brand happiness on Gili Trawangan Lombok tourism, some research suggestions that can be proposed are as follows:

1. Based on tourists' responses to the *brand salience* variable, the average tourist response is in a fairly high category. In this study, *brand salience* is not strong enough to influence *brand evangelism*. Therefore, by better understanding these elements, more effective marketing strategies can be designed to maintain and improve the *brand salience* of Gili Trawangan Lombok.
2. Respondents' responses regarding *brand perception* were highest in assessing all aspects of the tourist attraction. So that researchers suggest that tourism industry businesses in Gili Trawangan Lombok should strive to improve and maintain the quality of all aspects to satisfy visitors.
3. Based on the findings that Gili Trawangan has a fairly high *brand happiness* with an average score of 7.77. With a deeper understanding of the factors that support *brand happiness*, strategies for improving service quality and promotion can be developed to further increase visitor satisfaction and happiness at Gili Trawangan Lombok.
4. In the aspect of *brand evangelism*, the lowest response was given to efforts to attract other tourists to visit Gili Trawangan Lombok. This can serve as a reference to improve the most effective communication channels for tourists in spreading their recommendations, such as social media, blogs, or word of mouth. Understanding these factors will help destination managers design more efficient marketing strategies that can increase natural promotion by satisfied travellers, as well as maintain high levels of *brand evangelism*.

Theoretical Implications

The results of this study can extend the theory of the influence of *brand salience* and *brand perception* on *brand evangelism* with *brand happiness* as a mediating variable. Although *brand happiness* as a mediating variable does not provide a significant effect in the relationship between *brand salience* and *brand evangelism*, as well as between *brand perception* and *brand evangelism*, these results provide important insights into the complex dynamics between *brand perception*, *brand happiness*, and *brand advocacy*.

Managerial Implications

Based on the results of this study, it is recommended that managerial parties in Gili Trawangan Lombok Tourism support the sustainability of tourism in the destination.

- a. For Gili Trawangan tourism practitioners, especially business actors, should make the positive perception of visitors to their brand a priority point while always trying to continue to increase.

brand meaning can continue to be built by keeping the goods and services produced always in the best quality and condition, thereby minimising failures that lead to disappointment. This is expected to be one aspect that makes tourists continue to be willing to *evangelise* the products (goods / services) of Gili Trawangan Lombok tourism.

- b. For the local government of North Lombok Regency, it is recommended that they pay more attention to the completeness and existence of public facilities such as clean and well-maintained public toilets in various strategic locations such as beaches, crowd centres, and tourist attractions, because not all tourists visiting Gili Trawangan stay overnight. Other facilities such as street lighting in public areas and main routes need to be added to increase security at night. In addition, the government needs to provide a cultural and arts space or centre that can be used for local performances, exhibitions, and cultural activities.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

- a. The sample used in this study is limited, for further research it is recommended not only to use a sample of tourists outside the island of Lombok. But it is expected to research using a sample of tourists who live in Lombok as well. In addition, it is recommended to use a larger and more diverse sample that can provide more representative results and better generalisation.
- b. This research only focuses on one subject, namely Gili Trawangan, although there are still Gili Air and Gili Meno. Future researchers interested in researching the same topic are advised to choose more varied research subjects to other tourist destinations to see if similar findings apply in different locations.

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