"She is sophisticated, he is exciting": Applying Aaker's **brand personality** on **archaeological tourism destinations**

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Abstract | The motivations to visit archaeological tourism destinations vary, ranging from history enthusiast, leisure lover, adventurer to conservationist. However, not all archaeological sites are able to capture the tourists' attention since there are many other famous archaeological sites competing against one another. Thus, developing a strong and unique brand identity for a destination is significantly important in order to be distinctive from other destinations. Hence, this present study aims to examine the dimensions of brand personality of archaeological sites in Malaysia and to evaluate its prediction on tourists' revisit intention. This study employs exploratory factor analysis and multiple linear regression to analyze the data collected from Bujang Valley (305) and Lenggong Valley World Heritage Site (300). Findings indicate that tourists ascribe different personality dimensions to these archaeological sites. The brand personality of Bujang Valley is translated to sophistication, sincerity, contemporary, ruggedness, and excitement, while the brand personality of Lenggong Valley World Heritage Site is translated to excitement, contemporary, sophistication, ruggedness, and sincerity. The results from this present study further enriches the tourism literature and provides noteworthy solutions for destination marketing organizations in utilizing brand personality to build a unique identity for these archaeological sites in Malaysia.

Keywords | Brand personality, Archaeological tourism, Bujang Valley, Lenggong Valley World Heritage Site, Revisit intention

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1. Introduction

Archaeological tourism is the practice of visiting an archaeological site to experience a place and learn about its stories and people of the past (Hoffman et al., 2002, p. 30). Archaeological tourism has made some significant social and economical impact to a country besides uncovering the evidence of the past societies by providing value resources that modern community use in defining their identities through the exploration of their heritage and for educational purposes (Díaz-Andreu, 2013; Pacifico & Vogel, 2012). Furthermore, archaeological tourism also serves as a crucial income generator for countries like Cambodia and Jordan.

In Malaysia, Bujang Valley (hereafter BV), Lenggong Valley World Heritage site (hereafter LVWHS), Niah National Park (hereafter NNP), and Bukit Tengkorak (hereafter BT) are among the four famous archaeological sites that attract both domestic and international tourists (Chia, 2017). These archaeological sites in Malaysia, however, received less than 10% of the foreign tourists' visitations in the past (Bujang Valley Musuem, 2020; Lenggong Gallery, 2020). Although archaeological tourism is considerably a small part of the tourism industry in Malaysia as compared to other type of tourisms such as medical tourism or ecotourism, it is not without its competitors. Hence, effective marketing strategies are needed to attract more international tourists (Ramazanova et al., 2019). A strategic branding effort to differentiate BV from LVWHS at this burgeoning stage is therefore essential and this can be done by crafting a brand personality on destination to distinguish it from other similar sites in the Southeast Asia region (i.e. Sangiran and Borobudur Temple World Heritage Site in Indonesia, Angkor Wat World Heritage Site in Cambodia and Ayutthaya Historical Park in Thailand). This branding effort is important to promote their uniqueness and consequently to be more competent in attracting tourists to the sites.

The concept of brand personality is still at its rudimentary stage with just over a decade in the tourism marketing literature. Nevertheless, it has been hastily employed at different types of tourism destinations in the tourism and travel literatures. Substantial past studies have applied Aaker's brand personality at different types of tourism destinations due to its viable metaphor for building the destination brands and crafting a unique identity for tourism destinations (Baloglu et al., 2014; Pereira et al., 2015). Ekinci and Hosany (2006), for example, were among the pioneers in exploring the concept of brand personality on destination. Since then, many other scholars have applied this concept at different contexts and settings, ranging from nation branding (Matzler et al., 2016); leisure destination (Bekk et al., 2016); city branding (Ahmad et al., 2013; Apostolopoulou & Papadimitriou, 2015; Kaplan et al., 2010); wellness destination (Lin, 2013), to archaeological destination (Chen & Phou, 2013; Pong & Noor, 2015).

It is essential for a destination to have its own unique and distinctive characteristics to attract tourists. Therefore, a destination with an inimitable characteristic is able to increase its brand equity, enhance its image, associate its preference and encourage (re)visit. Kaplan et al. (2010) and Murphy et al. (2007) argued that brand personality can be used to develop distinct characteristics of tourist destinations and eventually contribute towards the tourists' perception on the identity of the site (Mishra, 2010) and further influence them in the evaluation of the destination's image (Kim et al., 2017).

Past studies also revealed that tourists would show more attachment to brands that are more congruent with their personalities (Orth et al., 2010; Usakli & Baloglu, 2011). Nevertheless, the efforts in promoting archaeological sites are often hampered by the tourists' sense of disconnection towards the historical objects from the past. Hence, the action to anthropomorphize objects or to imbue objects with human personalities will

result in the object becoming "alive" in tourists' minds and eventually will change their limited discernment on archaeological sites. With the application of personality on archaeological sites, it is able to act as a viable metaphor that creates a better image and leads to a gradual development of a unique identity for the destination (Chen & Phou, 2013).

To date, limited studies have been conducted to examine the brand personality dimension of an archaeological site. To fill in the gap, the present study aims to employ personalities with humanlike characteristics to the two archaeological sites in Malaysia, namely BV and LVWHS to build a unique identity for the both archaeological sites and to develop an emotional connection between the tourists and these archaeological sites. The sense of connection could help in cultivating the sense of belongingness among the tourists and society through the symbolic benefits derived from intangible offerings (e.g. the emotional connection to the monuments and artifacts) so that they are able to relate to the destination. Therefore, the researchers of the present study intend to look at the applicability of Aaker's brand personality in branding the archaeological sites in Malaysia. In addition, this study also intends to investigate the effect of brand personality dimensions on the tourists' revisit intention.

2. Literature Review

Brand Personality

Psychologists defined the concept of personality as the systematic description of traits, where the traits are relatively enduring styles of thinking, feeling, and acting (Geuens et al., 2009). The concept of personality is usually attributable to humans; but it can also be used for non-human beings. Guthrie (1997) indicated such attribution as "anthropomorphism", the transmission of human characteristic to non-human things and events. In addition, Fournier (1998) further explained the concept of anthropomorphism by suggesting that consumers need to anthropomorphize objects, for instance, to see non-living objects as human-like in order to facilitate interactions with the non-material world. Consequently, human can establish and develop relationship with non-living object easily and make the non-living object more "alive".

In 1985, Plummer mentioned that brands can be described in three different classes of characteristics, which comprise of their physical attributes; functional characteristics or the consequences of using a brand; and characterization. The third characteristic tends to serve as a symbolic or self-expressive function where the idea of a product or a brand can be used to express the extension of them. Although brands are inanimate objects, consumers often associate human characteristics to these objects and they proclaimed that these products, like humans, have personalities, and these personalities of brands could make or break the products in the marketplace (Aaker, 1997).

By adopting the personality definition from the field of psychology, marketing scholars started to apply the concept of personality to brands. The concept of brand personality has been used in various disciplines, for instance, consumer behaviour (Khandai et al., 2015); communication (Kim et al., 2010); tourism (Peco-Torres et al., 2020; Mariutti & Giraldi, 2019; Yang et al., 2020); hospitality (Neto & Ferreira, 2017; Neto et al. 2020, Li et al. 2020); and politics (Smith, 2009). Scholars claimed that brands have their own personalities, which essentially help consumers to differentiate one brand from another and concurrently make them feel congruent with themselves. Much of the works in the area of brand personality were measured by using human personality scale. Aaker (1997) defined brand personality as a set of human characteristics associated with a brand.

On the other hand, Sweeney and Brandon (2006) described brand personality as a set of human traits that correspond to the interpersonal domain of human personality and it is relevant to describe the brand as a relationshp partner. While Aaker's definition is widely accepted in marketing studies, its definition appearing in the literature exhibit substantial conceptual disagreement about the meaning of brand personality and they seem to use human descriptors effectively to portray certain brands (Azoulay & Kapferer, 2003).

Past research found that the brand personality dimensions could be used as the factors to attract and engage with tourists. Different destinations possess different personalities that help potential tourists to differentiate them from one another. This could help to communicate the identity of the destination to tourists via marketing communication effort. In a study conducted by Dickinger and Lalicic (2015), the findings revealed that excitement, sophistication and competence were the most represented brand personality dimensions on social media. In another study conducted by Souiden et al. (2017), brand personality dimensions were found to be a crucial antecedent to tourists' attitude. Their results concluded that Dubai was perceived as a sentimental and competent city by Canadian tourists. Recently, Yang et al. (2020) have investigated the effect of brand personality dimension on self-congruity and the results were found to be consistent with the past studies conducted by Usakli and Baloglu (2011) and Huang et al. (2017). These past studies further substantiates the fact that more than half of the dimensions serve as a strong antecedent to self-congruity.

The role of brand personality and its effect on revisit intention

In the tourism context, brand personality dimensions were also found to be significantly influencing tourists' attitude (Unurlu, 2020), brand equity (Salehzadeh et al., 2016); tourists' destination brand attachment (Huang et al., 2017), tourists' satisfaction (Chen & Phou, 2013; Hultman et al., 2015), destination image (Kim et al., 2018; Papadimitriou et al., 2015) and behavioural intentions such as word of mouth and revisit intention (Chi et al., 2018). These past studies found that the impact of brand personality is consistent across different cultures and contexts. The effect of brand personality was found to be consistent on various endogenous variables, and hence make it a crucial antecedent in a relationship.

Baker and Crompton (2000) defined revisit intention as the likelihood of a tourists to re-experience an activity at the facility or destination. Extensive review of past studies confirmed that the role of brand personality is undisputable in the tourism marketing literature. Past researches have shown that brand personality was significantly influencing tourists' behavioral intention (Chi et al., 2018; Yang, 2020). Lin (2013) conducted a research on the determinants of revisit intention to a hot spring destination in Taiwan. The research found that destination personality was positively influencing the tourists' revisit intention. In addition, Baloglu et al. (2014) further proposed that destination personality is one of the main constructs that affects the tourists' revisit intention. Their research divided the tourists into two groups (i.e. first-time visitors and repeat visitors). The results indicated that destination personality has stronger prediction on revisit intention among the first-time visitors. In another study conducted by Apostolopoulou and Papadimitriou (2015), the research findings echoed the past studies with the indication that destination personality strongly predicts the tourists' revisit intention to mid-sized urban destinations. Therefore, the following hypotheses are formulated:

Hypothesis 1: Brand personality dimensions are significantly affecting tourists' revisit intention.

1 a. Sincerity is positively influencing tou-

rists' revisit intention.

1 b. Excitement is positively influencing tourists' revisit intention.

1 c. Sophistication is positively influencing tourists' revisit intention.

1 d. Contemporary is positively influencing tourists' revisit intention.

1 e. Ruggedness is positively influencing tourists' revisit intention.

3. Methodology

Data Collection

The aims of this present study were to explore brand personality dimensions of archaeological destinations, namely BV and LVWHS and to examine the influence of Aaker's brand personality dimension on tourists' revisit intention. The data collection was conducted at BV and LVWHS respectively during the mid-year and year-end holidays because there were more tourists at these archaeological sites. Purposive sampling method was used to select the respondents at both archeological sites. One of the important criteria of selection was that the respondent must be a tourist at these archaeological sites. Survey questionnaire was employed in data collection. A total of 650 questionnaires were collected at both archaeological sites. However, only 605 questionnaires were used for analysis due to incomplete and non-response questionnaires. From the 605 questionnaires, 305 responses were collected from BV while the remaining 300 responses were collected from LVWHS. Factor analysis was used to identify the underlying brand personality dimensions of the two archaeological sites and multiple linear regression was used to find out the best predictor of the brand personality dimensions on tourists'

revisit intention to both archaeological sites.

Measurement

Brand Personality Scale with 42 items developed by Aaker (1997) was used to measure the dimension of brand personality of BV and LVWHS. However, not all the items in the scale were used because Murphy et al. (2007) concluded in their past study that not all five-dimensional personality model were applicable to tourism destinations. Therefore, to avoid the respondents' fatigue risk, this research has adopted the 18 items employed in Chen and Phou's (2013) study on archaeological site. The measure of revisit intention were adopted from Baker and Crompton (2000). Respondents were asked to rate the items using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree.

Social Demographic of the Respondents

The number of male respondents were 344 (56.86%) and it was slighly higher than female respondents, which consisted of 261 (43.14%) in the present study. A majority of the respondents were single (60.66%) and 39.34% of them were married. More than half of the respondents were Malay 334 (55.2%). Students made up the highest number, reported at 160 (26.64%) while respondents who work in public and private sector shared the same percentage 142 (23.47%). Out of the 605 respondents, a majority of them were Malaysians citizens (96.53%) and there were only 21 (3.47%) of them who were from overseas. The percentage is similar to the overall number of tourists to the archaeological sites. Greater number came from the low income group with personal income ranges between less than RM1,000 to RM3,000, reported at 330 (53.06%).

4. Results

Brand Personality of BV

Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was first used to examine the factor structure. According to Costello and Osborne (2005), EFA is widely utilized and broadly applied in social sciences research to check the dimension. The brand personality dimensions were analyzed using a principle component analysis with Varimax rotation to identify the underlying dimensions. All the 18 items were subjected to factor analysis. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sample adequacy (.778) and the bartlett's test of sphericity (0.000) indicated that the data was acceptable to conduct EFA. Five factors were extracted which explained 68.54% of the variance with factor loading greater than .50 (Hair et al., 2019) for BV brand personality dimensions. All 18 items were applicable to BV. However, some items were loaded on another dimensions as shown in App 1.

Brand Personality of LVWHS

The same procedure was applied to the data collected from LVWHS. Principle component analysis using Varimax rotation procedure was performed. Five factors were extracted which explained 63.74% of the variance with factor loading greater than .50 (Hair et al., 2019). The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sample adequacy (.789) and the bartlett's test of sphericity (0.000) indicated that the data was acceptable to conduct EFA. In this analysis, all items were loaded on the five dimensions except for Upper class, and hence, this dimension was excluded from the factor as shown in App 2.

The contribution of Brand Personality dimensions on Revisit Intention

As for model 1, by applying the enter method, a significant model emerged (F= 39.951, p < .05) with the value of adjusted R square .390 and the five factors of brand personality dimensions which explained 39 per cent of the variance in the level of tourists' revisit intention to BV. For the assessment of statistical significant of the result, the significant value was p < .000 and this showed that the model has reached the statistical significant. Sincerity led the highest beta value coefficients (β = .365, p < .001) among the five factors in brand personality dimensions. Sincerity was the strongest and unique contribution that explained the tourist's revisit intention to BV, followed by ruggedness (β = .271, p < .001); and excitement (β = .150, p < .01).

As for model 2, by applying the enter method, a significant model emerged (F= 20.601, p< .05) with the value of adjusted R square .253 and the five factors of brand personality dimensions explained 25.3 per cent of the variance in the level of tourists' revisit intention to LVWHS. For the assessment of statistical significant of the result, the significant value was p < .000 and this showed that the model has reached the statistical significant. Sophistication led the highest beta value coefficients (β = .304, p < .001) among the five factors in brand personality dimensions. Sophistication was the strongest and unique contribution that explained the tourists' revisit intention to LVWHS, followed by sincerity (β= .151, p < .05); excitement (β = .136, p < .05); and ruggedness (β= .125, p < .05). Table 1 presented the summary of hypothesis results.

Table 1 | Summary of Hypothesis Results

	Archaeological Site	
	BV	LVWHS
H1a: Sincerity → Revisit Intention	Supported	Supported
H1b: Excitement → Revisit Intention	Supported	Supported
H1c: Sophistication → Revisit Intention	Not Supported	Supported
H1d: Contemporary → Revisit Intention	Not Supported	Not Supported
H1e: Ruggedness → Revisit Intention	Supported	Supported

5. Discussion and Conclusion

The concept of brand personality is increasingly getting attention from academics recently due to its notable role in building brand identity and its impact on different endogenous contructs. The exploratory factor analysis shown that not all the personality items were loaded according to what was found in the Aaker's (1997) brand personality scale and Chen & Phou's (2013) revised scale for archaeological site. The findings of this study shown that characteristics such as family-oriented and unique were labeled as contemporary dimension because a destination was expected to keep abreast with the modern world. In other words, a destination should include more family-friendly features to cater to tourists of different ages and to follow the modern travel characteristics that exhibit creativity and originality.

Next, the findings in the current study indicated that brand personality can be applied to archaeological sites to differentiate and highlight their distinctive characteristics. Sophistication represented the brand personality of BV. The sophistication dimension was represented by glamorous, upper class, good looking, charming and contemporary. On the other hand, excitement dimension represented LVWHS (i.e. up-to-date, contemporary, imaginative, trendy). As such, these brand personality dimensions could be used as the destination image in promoting these archaeological sites.

Interestingly, although the tourists associated sophistication to BV, sophistication and contemporary did not contribute directly to the tourists'

revisit intention. Conversely, only contemporary was found not to be significantly influencing the tourists' revisit intention to LVWHS. As compared to BV, LVWHS was designated with the World Heritage Site Brand since 2012 where tourists found the site to be glamorous and charming. In spite of that, contemporary did not seem to influence the tourists' revisit intention at both sites. This might due to the lack of facilities at these archaeological sites. The site would be an ideal place for a family vacation but due to the lack of facilities (e.g. edutainment activities that suitable for kids or proper restroom for children and elderly visitors) at these sites, it discourages the tourists' revisit intention. In addition, destination marketers should explain the unique history of the archaeological site through the contemporary features by incorporating the latest technology (i.e. augmented reality).

Having said that, the destination marketers could focus on the dimensions that influence the tourists' revisit intention such as sincerity, excitement, and ruggedness for both archaeological sites that further highlight these features in the tourists' minds. The findings from this study was found to be consistent with the previous study where the researchers found that all the brand personality dimensions are affecting tourists behavioral intentions either recommendation intention, revisit intention or willingness to pay more (Rojas-Méndez et al., 2019) while some researchers found not all the dimensions were affecting the tourists' behavioral intentions (Usakli & Baloglu, 2011; Xie & Lee, 2013).

This research provides a few take-away key points. Theoretically, this research presents the

importance of brand personality in the tourism marketing literature. The concept of brand personality is still relatively new to be applied on destinations, and therefore, this study has proven that this concept is applicable to archaeological tourism and can be further explored in other type of tourisms. In addition, this research provides a new insight to the applicability of brand personality among the multicultural respondents. In the past, this concept of brand personality was generally applied to a monoculture context. Thus, this study has also proven the robustness and validity of brand personality scale that can be used across both the monoculture and multicultural contexts.

Practically, the findings from this study help to target the different segments of tourists. Fan (2006) affirmed that defining a target market is crucial because some aspects of a destination may seem positive to one segment while negative to another. Due to the historical background of the site, an archaeological site is generally related to educational purposes. Therefore, most visitors who visited the archaeological site are mostly students who are on their study trips. Hence, the researchers hope to help in targeting different segment of tourists in the current study by changing their misperceptions towards archaeological sites. For instance, the promotion of archaeological sites should not be limited to history enthusiasts, but also to tourists who like to experience adventurous or exciting activities at these sites. This can be portrayed through both ruggedness and excitement dimensions.

Moreover, the idea of positioning tourism destination through the use of functional values has becoming less helpful in branding strategies because functional values are easily substituted or imitated, and thus, making it hard for a destination to differentiate its identity (Usakli & Baloglu, 2011). Therefore, the present study focuses on the symbolic values of the archaeological sites by studying the brand personality of archaeological destination. The researchers would like to suggest to the marke-

ting communication officers to utilize these brand personality traits to encourage repeat tourists to revisit these archaeological sites. Hence, destination marketing officers may consider these brand personality traits to design more effective promotional messages to build the destination image in order to attract more local and international tourists to these archaeological sites. For example, the personality traits of these sites need to be emphasized in all the promotional sites and materials to attract tourists who are congruent with these archaeological sites' personality.

There are some limitations in this present study. Firstly, the data collection was only carried out during holiday season that might not represent the entire population. For future researchers, they are advised to collect the data in different seasons to measure the causal relationship more precisely. This might reduce the seasonal bias in collecting the data for this cross-sectional study. Secondly, a majority of the respondents were local tourists. Future researchers should target more international tourists as the research respondents. Currently, the archaeological sites in Malaysia are lack of international tourists and therefore, it would be great to include more foreign tourists in the future research to examine the international tourists' perceptions about the archaeological sites in Malaysia.

Furthermore, the current study only focuses on brand personality dimensions and its impact on revisit intention. Thus, future researchers could also look at other factors such as place attachment, involvement, satisfaction, attitude towards brand, tourists' experience, and tourists' emotion that could be potentially included for investigation as additional antecedents and mediators in predicting the tourists' revisit intention at these archaeological sites. In addition, the future researchers could also consider tourists' motivation in visiting the archaeological sites in Malaysia. Since the number of tourists is relatively low especially among the foreign visitors, it will be important to understand the reasons behind the tourists' moti-

vation when they plan for a vacation at any archaeological sites in Malaysia.

Aknowledgement

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Appendix

Appendix 1 | Exploratory Factor Analysis of brand personality items for BV (N=305)

Factors	Loading	Variance Explained	Cronbach's alpha, α
Factor 1: Sophistication			
Glamorous	0.808		
Upper Class	0.802		
Good Looking	0.667		
Charming	0.628		
Contemporary	0.618	37.263	0.866
Factor 2: Sincerity			
Cheerful	0.849		
Sentimental	0.748		
Up-to-date	0.737		
Original	0.584		
Wholesome	0.580	10.839	0.833
Factor 3: Contemporary			
Family-oriented	0.752		
Unique	0.739		
Imaginative	0.610	7.814	0.784
Factor 4: Ruggedness			
Rugged	0.638		
Tough	0.729		
Masculine	0.531	6.952	0.783
Factor 5: Excitement			
Exciting	0.783		
Trendy	0.598	5.672	0.69
Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin (KMO)	.778		
Barlett's test of significance	.000		

Appendix 2 | Exploratory Factor Analysis of brand personality items for LVWHS (N=300)

Factors	Loading	Variance Explained (%)	Cronbach's alpha
Factor 1: Excitement			
Up-to-date	0.775		
Contemporary	0.747		
Imaginative	0.719		
Trendy	0.515	27.748	0.768
Factor 2: Contemporary			
Original	0.742		
Family-oriented	0.698		
Exciting	0.797		
Wholesome	0.534		
Unique	0.534	12.24	0.735
Factor 3: Sophisticated			
Glamorous	0.822		
Charming	0.781		
Good Looking	0.755	8.976	0.784
Factor 4: Ruggedness			
Tough	0.880		
Rugged	0.822		
Masculine	0.666	8.149	0.755
Factor 5: Sincerity			
Cheerful	0.843		
Sentimental	0.720	6.640	0.682
Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin (KMO)	.789		
Barlett's test of significance	.000		