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Storytelling as an Experiential Marketing Strategy for Non-Alcoholic Beverages: Its Impact on Guest Engagement and Satisfaction at The Balcone Suites and Resort Bukittinggi

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Abstract: This study was motivated by the importance of creating a memorable guest experience as part of efforts to improve service quality in the hospitality industry. The study aims to analyze the effect of storytelling in the presentation of non-alcoholic beverages on guest engagement and satisfaction levels at The Balcone Suites and Resort Bukittinggi. The study employed a quantitative method with a causal-associative approach. Data were collected through a questionnaire distributed to 100 guests who had previously enjoyed non-alcoholic beverages at The Balcone Suites and Resort Bukittinggi. Data analysis was conducted using simple linear regression. The results indicate that storytelling in the serving of non-alcoholic beverages falls into the “very good” category, engagement levels fall into the “good” category, and guest satisfaction falls into the “very good” category. Furthermore, storytelling was found to have a positive and significant effect on engagement levels and guest satisfaction. These findings indicate that the application of storytelling in the serving of non-alcoholic beverages can create a more meaningful experience, increase guest engagement, and enhance their satisfaction with the services provided. Therefore, storytelling can be utilized as a service strategy to improve the quality of the guest experience in the hospitality industry.

Keyword: Storytelling in the Serving of Non-Alcoholic Beverages, Engagement Levels, Guest Satisfaction

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the hospitality industry has shifted from a service-oriented approach to experience-oriented hospitality, in which guests’ experiences and emotional engagement have become key factors in assessing service quality. Guests no longer evaluate service solely based on functional aspects, but also on the experiences, impressions, and meanings they derive from their interactions with hotel services. According to Lemon and Verhoef (2016), guest experiences are shaped through the accumulation of interactions at various service touchpoints, which collectively influence guests’ evaluations of the service they receive. One touchpoint

that plays a strategic role in shaping the guest experience is Food and Beverage (F&B) service, particularly through the serving of non-alcoholic beverages as welcome drinks.

The growth of the non-alcoholic beverage industry demonstrates increasing potential as a key component in creating guest experiences. As public awareness of healthy lifestyles and the need for more personalized experiences grows, non-alcoholic beverages are no longer viewed merely as a complement to service but as a medium capable of creating memorable experiences. In the hospitality context, the presentation of non-alcoholic beverages in an attractive manner can enhance the value of the guest experience while simultaneously strengthening the hotel's image and service differentiation.

One approach that can be used to enhance the value of this experience is storytelling. Hsu et al. (2020) explain that storytelling is the use of narratives in service interactions that help guests understand and interpret the experience more deeply. In the hospitality industry, storytelling can be applied by sharing information about the origins, ingredients, philosophy, or concepts behind a product or service. Santos, Rita, and Guerreiro (2021) state that storytelling can enhance the value of the guest experience by creating a stronger emotional connection between guests and the products they consume. Through narratives shared during the serving of non-alcoholic beverages, guests not only enjoy the products being served but also gain a more meaningful experience.

Based on guest experience theory, the application of storytelling has the potential to increase guest engagement. Calder, Malthouse, and Schaedel (2016) define engagement as a guest's cognitive and emotional involvement in a service experience. Research by Rather (2019) shows that engaging and valuable experiences can increase guest engagement. Furthermore, positive experiences and high guest engagement also contribute to guest satisfaction. Fernandes and Pinto (2019) state that guest satisfaction is a comprehensive evaluation of the experience felt throughout the service process.

Although the relationship between guest experience, storytelling, engagement, and satisfaction has been widely discussed in the hospitality literature, research specifically examining the influence of storytelling in the presentation of non-alcoholic beverages on guest engagement and satisfaction remains relatively limited. Most previous studies have focused on service quality, the stay experience, or destination marketing, while the application of storytelling in F&B services has not received much attention. A similar situation was observed at The Balcone Suites and Resort Bukittinggi. Based on initial observations, guest experiences related to non-alcoholic beverages are still more closely associated with product quality than with the emotional experiences created through storytelling. Furthermore, the delivery of storytelling by staff during beverage service has not been standardized, meaning that the potential of non-alcoholic beverages as a medium for shaping guest experiences has not been fully realized.

The novelty of this study lies in its examination of storytelling as an experience strategy applied to the serving of non-alcoholic beverages and its impact on guest engagement and satisfaction in the context of a resort hotel. This study integrates these three variables into a single research model, an approach that is still relatively rare in the Indonesian hospitality literature. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the effect of storytelling in the presentation of non-alcoholic beverages on guest engagement and satisfaction at The Balcone Suites and Resort Bukittinggi. The results of this study are expected to provide a theoretical contribution to the development of experience-oriented hospitality research and serve as practical guidance for hotel managers in designing service strategies capable of enhancing guest engagement, satisfaction, and loyalty.

METHOD

Type of Research

This study employs a quantitative approach using the associative-causal method. This approach is used to analyze the cause-and-effect relationship between the storytelling variable in the presentation of non-alcoholic beverages—as the independent variable (X)—and guest engagement (Y1) and guest satisfaction (Y2)—as the dependent variables. Causal-associative research aims to test the influence of one variable on another through statistical analysis, thereby identifying the relationships that exist among the research variables (Sugiyono, 2022).

Time and Location of the Study

The study was conducted at The Balcone Suites and Resort Bukittinggi. Data collection was carried out among guests who stayed at the resort and received non-alcoholic beverages during the period from May 20 to June 20, 2026.

Population and Sample

The population in this study consisted of all guests at The Balcone Suites and Resort Bukittinggi who received non-alcoholic beverages, such as welcome drinks or mocktails, during the study period. The study sample consisted of 100 respondents, determined using the Slovin formula with a 10% margin of error. The sampling technique used was purposive sampling with the following criteria: (1) hotel guests who received non-alcoholic beverages, (2) aged at least 17 years, and (3) willing to participate as study respondents.

Data Collection Instruments and Techniques

Primary data were collected through the distribution of a closed-ended questionnaire designed using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from a score of 1 (strongly disagree) to a score of 5 (strongly agree). The research instrument consisted of 32 statements, including 14 items for the storytelling variable, 10 items for the guest engagement variable, and 8 items for the guest satisfaction variable. The questionnaire was distributed directly to guests in the restaurant and hotel lobby areas. In addition, secondary data were obtained from internal hotel documents, operational reports, and various literature relevant to the research topic.

Data Analysis Techniques

The collected data were analyzed using SPSS version 27. The analysis included validity and reliability tests, descriptive analysis, tests of classical assumptions, and simple linear regression analysis. Regression analysis was used to test the effect of storytelling in the presentation of non-alcoholic beverages on guest engagement and guest satisfaction. Hypothesis testing was conducted using a t-test with a 5% significance level to determine whether or not there was a significant relationship between the research variables.

Table 1. Research Instrument Outline

No	Variable	Indicator	Sub-indicator
1	Independent Variable (X): Storytelling in the Presentation of Non-Alcoholic Beverages	Clarity of the Story	The story shared when serving non-alcoholic beverages is easy for guests to understand.
		Interest in the story	The stories that accompany the presentation of non-alcoholic beverages caught my attention.
		Alignment of the Story with the Beverage's Character	The story told aligns with the concept and character of the non-alcoholic beverages served.

		Value of the Experience	The stories that accompanied the serving of non-alcoholic beverages added to the positive impression of my experience.
2	Dependent Variable (Y1) Guest Engagement	Emotional Engagement	I feel emotionally engaged while enjoying the non-alcoholic beverages served.
		Attention	I pay close attention to the presentation and the experience of enjoying non-alcoholic beverages.
		Enthusiasm	I felt happy and enthusiastic as I enjoyed the non-alcoholic drinks that were served.
3	Dependent Variable (Y2) Guest Satisfaction	Emotional Engagement	I feel emotionally engaged in the experience of enjoying that non-alcoholic beverage.
		Conformity with Expectations	My experience enjoying non-alcoholic beverages met my expectations.
		Satisfaction with the experience	I felt satisfied after enjoying the non-alcoholic drink that was served.
		Assessment of the presentation	I rate the presentation of non-alcoholic beverages at this hotel as good.
		Overall Satisfaction	Overall, I was satisfied with my experience enjoying non-alcoholic beverages at this hotel.

Source: Data compiled by the researcher (2026)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Testing Classical Assumptions

a. Normality Test

The normality test aims to determine whether the data are normally distributed or not. The normality test of the distribution of storytelling data regarding non-alcoholic beverages in relation to guest engagement and guest satisfaction was conducted using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. The normality test in this study was performed using SPSS 27.00. The significance level used as the basis for rejecting or accepting a data distribution hypothesis was 0.05. The results of the normality test are shown in the following Table:

Table 2. Normality Test of The Storytelling Variable For Non-Alcoholic Beverages In Relation To Guest Engagement Levels

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test			
N		Unstandardized Residual	
		100	
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	0,0000000	
	Std. Deviation	2,72394881	
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	0,059	
	Positive	0,059	
	Negative	-0,057	
Test Statistic		0,059	
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) ^c		.200 ^d	
Monte Carlo Sig. (2-tailed) ^e	Sig.	0,523	
	99% Confidence Interval	Lower Bound	0,510
		Upper Bound	0,536

Source: Processed by the researcher (2026)

Based on the table above, it can be seen that the value for the normality test result is 0.200, with a significance level of >0.05; therefore, it can be concluded that the storytelling variable in non-alcoholic beverages regarding guest engagement levels is normally

distributed.

Table 2. Normality Test of The Storytelling Variable For Non-Alcoholic Beverages In Relation To Guest Satisfaction Levels

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test			
		Unstandardized Residual	
N		100	
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	0,0000000	
	Std. Deviation	2,00617205	
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	0,079	
	Positive	0,064	
	Negative	-0,079	
Test Statistic		0,079	
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) ^c		0,124	
Monte Carlo Sig. (2-tailed) ^d	Sig.	0,122	
	99% Confidence Interval	Lower Bound	0,113
		Upper Bound	0,130

Source: Processed by the researcher (2026)

Based on the table above, it can be seen that the value for the normality test result is 0.124, with a significance level >0.05; therefore, it can be concluded that the storytelling variable in non-alcoholic beverages regarding guest satisfaction is normally distributed.

Thus, it can be concluded that variable X in Y1 and variable X in Y2 are normally distributed, as their significance levels are greater than 0.05.

b. Linearity Test

A linearity test is a statistical procedure used to determine whether there is a significant linear relationship between two or more variables. The basis for decision-making is as follows: if the significance level of the linearity test is less than 0.05, the relationship between the variables is nonlinear; if it is greater than 0.05, the relationship between the variables is considered linear.

Table 3. Linearity Test of The Storytelling Variable In Non-Alcoholic Beverages On Guest Engagement Levels

ANOVA Table							
			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Tingkat Engagement Tamu * Storytelling Pada Minuman Non-alkohol	Between Groups	(Combined)	189,594	20	9,480	1,293	0,209
		Linearity	34,420	1	34,420	4,693	0,033
		Deviation from Linearity	155,174	19	8,167	1,114	0,355
Within Groups			579,396	79	7,334		
Total			768,990	99			

Source: Processed by the researcher (2026)

Table 4. Linearity test of the storytelling variable in non-alcoholic beverages on guest satisfaction levels

ANOVA Table							
			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Tingkat Kepuasan Tamu * Storytelling Pada Minuman Non-alkohol	Between Groups	(Combined)	476,516	20	23,826	5,948	0,000
		Linearity	394,542	1	394,542	98,488	0,000
		Deviation from Linearity	81,974	19	4,314	1,077	0,390
Within Groups			316,474	79	4,006		

Total 792,990 99

Source: Processed by the researcher (2026)

Therefore, it can be concluded that, based on the two linearity test results above, the deviation from linearity for variable X with respect to Y1 is 0.355, and for variable X with respect to Y2 is 0.390. Since these values are greater than 0.05, the relationship is linear.

c. Heteroscedasticity Test

The purpose of the heteroscedasticity test is to determine whether there is unequal variance of the residuals across observations in a regression model. A good regression model is one that is not heteroscedastic. To detect the presence or absence of heteroscedasticity, the Glejser test can be performed using SPSS version 27.00. The basis for decision-making in the heteroscedasticity test using the Glejser test is that if the significance value (Sig) between the independent variable and the absolute residual is greater than 0.05 (> 0.05), then there is no heteroscedasticity; otherwise, there is. The results of the heteroscedasticity test can be seen in the following table:

Table 5. Test of Heteroscedasticity of the Storytelling Variable in Non-Alcoholic Beverages on Guest Engagement Levels

		Coefficients ^a				
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	0,143	1,874		0,076	0,939
	Storytelling Pada Minuman Non-alkohol	0,033	0,031	0,109	1,087	0,280

a. Dependent Variable: ABS RES

Source: Processed by the researcher (2026)

Based on the results of the heteroscedasticity analysis using the Glejser test in the table above, a Sig value of 0.280 > 0.05 was obtained for the “storytelling” variable related to non-alcoholic beverages and guest engagement levels. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is no evidence of heteroscedasticity for the “storytelling” variable related to non-alcoholic beverages and guest engagement levels.

Table 6. Test of Heteroscedasticity of the Storytelling Variable in Non-Alcoholic Beverages on Guest Satisfaction Levels

		Coefficients ^a				
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3,933	1,502		2,619	0,010
	Storytelling Pada Minuman Non-alkohol	-0,040	0,025	-0,162	-1,621	0,108

a. Dependent Variable: ABS RES

Source: Processed by the researcher (2026)

Based on the results of the heteroscedasticity analysis using the Glejser test in the table above, a Sig value of 0.108 > 0.05 was obtained for the “storytelling” variable in non-alcoholic beverages regarding guest satisfaction levels. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is no evidence of heteroscedasticity for the “storytelling” variable in non-alcoholic beverages regarding guest satisfaction levels.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing using simple linear regression analysis aims to determine the extent of the influence of the storytelling variable on non-alcoholic beverages (X) on guest engagement levels (Y1) and guest satisfaction levels (Y2).

a. Simple Linear Test

Table 7. Simple Linear Test of the Storytelling Variable in Non-Alcoholic Beverages on Guest Engagement Levels

		Coefficients ^a			
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t Sig.
1	(Constant)	35,756	3,155		11,334 0,001
	Storytelling Pada Minuman Non-alkohol	0,111	0,052	0,212	2,143 0,035

a. Dependent Variable: Tingkat Engagement Tamu

Source: Processed by the researcher (2026)

Based on the data analysis results shown in the table above, a t-value of 11.334 was obtained with a significance level (sig) of 0.001. Since this value is at a significance level of < 0.05, variable X significantly explains variable Y1; in other words, the storytelling variable in non-alcoholic beverages influences the guest engagement level variable. Therefore, hypothesis H1 in this study is accepted. To determine the extent of the influence of the storytelling variable in non-alcoholic beverages (X) on the guest engagement level variable (Y1), refer to the following equation:

$$Y1 = a + b.X$$

$$Y1 = 35.756 + 0.111.X$$

Based on the equation above, the regression coefficient yields a value of a, which is the constant term of the coefficient. In this case, the value is 35.756; which is a constant value indicating that for every unit increase in storytelling for non-alcoholic beverages (X), the corresponding increase in guest engagement (Y1) is 35.756, with a value of 0.111 and a significance level of 0.035 < 0.05. This means that every 1-unit increase in storytelling for non-alcoholic beverages will increase guest engagement by 0.111 units.

Table 8. Simple Linear Regression Test of the Storytelling Variable in Non-Alcoholic Beverages on Guest Satisfaction Levels

		Coefficients ^a			
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t Sig.
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	
1	(Constant)	12,690	2,323		5,462 0,000
	Storytelling Pada Minuman Non-alkohol	0,376	0,038	0,705	9,851 0,000

a. Dependent Variable: Tingkat Kepuasan Tamu

Source: Processed by the researcher (2026)

The Table above shows a t-value of 5.462 with a significance level of 0.001. Since this is less than 0.05, variable X significantly explains variable Y2; in other words, the storytelling variable in non-alcoholic beverages influences guest satisfaction. Therefore, hypothesis H2 in this study is accepted. To determine the extent of the influence of the storytelling variable in non-alcoholic beverages (X) on the guest satisfaction variable (Y2), refer to the following equation:

$$Y2 = a + b.X$$

$$Y2 = 12.690 + 0,376.X$$

Based on the equation above, the regression coefficient indicates that a = the constant term of the coefficient. In this case, its value is 12.690; which is a constant value indicating that for every unit increase in storytelling for non-alcoholic beverages (X), guest satisfaction (Y2) increases by 0.376 units, with a significance level of $0.001 < 0.05$. This means that every 1-unit increase in storytelling for non-alcoholic beverages will increase guest satisfaction by 0.376 units.

b. Hypothesis Testing (t-Test)

Table 9. A T-Test of the Storytelling Variable in Non-Alcoholic Beverages on Guest Engagement Levels

		Coefficients ^a			
		Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients		
		Std. Error			
Model		B		Beta	t
1	(Constant)	35,756	3,155		11,334
	Storytelling Pada Minuman Non-alkohol	0,111	0,052	0,212	2,143
					0,001
					0,035

a. Dependent Variable: Tingkat Engagement Tamu

Source: Processed by the researcher (2026)

Table 10. A T-Test of the Storytelling Variable in Non-Alcoholic Beverages on Guest Satisfaction Levels

		Coefficients ^a			
		Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients		
		Std. Error			
Model		B		Beta	t
1	(Constant)	12,690	2,323		5,462
	Storytelling Pada Minuman Non-alkohol	0,376	0,038	0,705	9,851
					0,000
					0,000

a. Dependent Variable: Tingkat Kepuasan Tamu

Source: Processed by the researcher (2026)

Therefore, it can be concluded that the t-test values from the two tests above are accepted because the significance value for the relationship between variable X and Y1 is 0.35, and the significance value for the relationship between variable X and Y2 is 0.001. Thus, it is evident that the independent variable (X) has a significant effect on the dependent variables (Y1) and (Y2).

The Effect of Storytelling in the Presentation of Non-Alcoholic Beverages on Guest Engagement Levels

The results of this study indicate that storytelling in the presentation of non-alcoholic beverages has a positive and significant effect on guest engagement levels at The Balcone Suites and Resort Bukittinggi. These findings suggest that the higher the quality of the storytelling employed, the greater the guests' engagement with the service experience provided by the hotel. Theoretically, these findings align with the concept of customer engagement proposed by Calder, Malthouse, and Schaedel (2016), which explains that engagement refers to customers' cognitive and emotional involvement in a service experience. Through

storytelling, guests not only receive a physical product but also gain the meaning and value embedded within it, thereby increasing their engagement with the service experience.

These findings also support the view of Hollebeek et al. (2022), who state that storytelling is a communication strategy capable of building an emotional connection between customers and products through the delivery of relevant and meaningful narratives. In the context of this study, sharing stories about the origins, philosophy, and characteristics of non-alcoholic beverages creates a more personalized experience, thereby encouraging guest engagement while they enjoy hotel services. This indicates that storytelling serves as a means of connecting the product with the customer's emotional experience.

Furthermore, the findings of this study can be explained through the concept of narrative transportation—a state in which individuals become psychologically immersed in a story, thereby increasing their attention and engagement with the subject of the narrative. Dessart and Pitardi (2022) explain that storytelling can enhance engagement by fostering customers' emotional attachment and cognitive involvement with a product or brand. In this study, the stories accompanying the presentation of non-alcoholic beverages allowed guests to gain a deeper understanding of the products, making the consumption experience more engaging and memorable.

The findings of this study are also consistent with the results of Rather's (2021) research, which states that experiences capable of evoking positive emotions will increase customer engagement. In the context of resort hotels, storytelling in the presentation of non-alcoholic beverages serves not only as a medium for conveying information but also as part of an experience-creation strategy that strengthens the relationship between guests and the hotel. Therefore, storytelling can be viewed as an effective form of experience strategy for enhancing guest engagement in the hospitality industry.

The Effect of Storytelling in the Serving of Non-Alcoholic Beverages on Guest Satisfaction Levels

The results of this study indicate that storytelling in the serving of non-alcoholic beverages has a positive and significant effect on guest satisfaction levels at The Balcone Suites and Resort Bukittinggi. These findings suggest that the higher the quality of storytelling applied in the serving of non-alcoholic beverages, the higher the level of satisfaction experienced by guests. These research results reinforce the view that customer satisfaction is influenced not only by the quality of the product received but also by the experience accompanying the consumption of that product.

Theoretically, the results of this study can be explained through the Expectation Confirmation Theory proposed by Oliver (2014). This theory explains that satisfaction arises when a customer's experience meets or even exceeds their prior expectations. In this study, storytelling provides added value that is not only related to the taste and appearance of the beverage but also creates an emotional experience through the accompanying story. When guests have a richer experience than they expected, their perceived level of satisfaction tends to increase.

This finding is also supported by the concept of customer experience proposed by Lemon and Verhoef (2016), which explains that customer experience is the accumulation of cognitive, emotional, behavioral, sensory, and social responses formed during interactions with a service. Storytelling in the presentation of non-alcoholic beverages enriches this experience because it allows guests to gain a deeper understanding of the products they consume. Thus, the experience created is not only functional but also emotional and symbolic.

The results of this study also support the findings of Santos, Rita, and Guerreiro (2021), who state that storytelling can enhance the value of the customer experience in the hospitality industry. In the context of The Balcone Suites and Resort Bukittinggi, storytelling in the

presentation of non-alcoholic beverages serves as a form of service differentiation that creates a more memorable experience. Thus, storytelling functions not only as a product communication tool but also as an experiential strategy that enhances guest satisfaction by creating emotional value and meaningful experiences.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study shows that storytelling in the presentation of non-alcoholic beverages plays an important role in increasing guest engagement and satisfaction at The Balcone Suites and Resort Bukittinggi. The results prove that sharing stories about the beverages served creates a more meaningful experience for guests, thereby fostering emotional engagement and increasing positive evaluations of the service received. These findings indicate that non-alcoholic beverages not only serve as a complement to the service but can also function as a strategic medium for building memorable guest experiences through an experience-oriented hospitality approach.

Compared to previous studies, which generally focused on service quality, stay experiences, or product attributes as factors influencing customer satisfaction, this study demonstrates that storytelling is a communication element capable of strengthening the relationship between guests and the services provided. Thus, this study provides empirical evidence that the narrative aspect of product presentation contributes to enhancing the quality of the guest experience, particularly in Food and Beverage services within the hospitality industry.

This study also contributes to the development of experience-based hospitality research by broadening our understanding of the role of storytelling as a service strategy that can create added value for customers. In practical terms, the research findings indicate that the implementation of structured and consistent storytelling can serve as an alternative for hotel management to enhance guest engagement and satisfaction. Therefore, developing staff communication skills, integrating local cultural elements into product narratives, and strengthening story-based service experiences can serve as strategies to support hotel service differentiation and enhance the competitiveness of the hospitality industry.

Nevertheless, this study has limitations as it focuses solely on the impact of storytelling on guest engagement and satisfaction at a single research site. Therefore, future research is expected to examine other factors that may influence guest experiences, such as service quality, customer experience, perceived value, brand image, and customer loyalty. Additionally, expanding the scope of research to include various types of hotels, restaurants, or other tourist destinations is expected to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the role of storytelling in enhancing customer experiences in the tourism and hospitality industries.

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