

The Role of Social Media and Youth Participation in Developing Local Tourism (Case Study On Generasi Pesona Indonesia Lombok)

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ABSTRACT

Tourism is a potential industry to be developed, especially in Indonesia, which is rich in cultural diversity and natural biodiversity. Lombok is one of the priority developments in the tourism industry that has evolved over the past five years. The participation of young people in Lombok raised in the form of a volunteer community called GENPI which was first initiated by the youth of the Lombok Sumbawa volunteer community and used social media to disseminate Lombok Tourism. This research focuses on how GenPi develops effective tourism communication strategies through social media. By using the concept of community participation and social media, this research used a descriptive qualitative approach and conducted an in-depth interview as a data collection method. As a result, well-planned communication strategies and uses of social media help develop local tourism. Networking online and offline are essentials to disseminate excellence in the tourism area.

Keywords: participation, youth, tourism, social media, GenPi

1. INTRODUCTION

According to the Explanation of the Ministry of Tourism of the Republic of Indonesia, the 6th KIDi Presentation in 2016, the tourism sector is projected to be the most significant profit source in the year 2020. It also showed that there was a rise of inbound international tourists coming to Indonesia from 8.8 million in 2013 to 9.4 million in 2014, showing a growth percentage as much as 7.20%. Following its importance as a potential sector, tourism also includes the five areas stated in the Development Priority Sector 2017 made by President Joko Widodo. On 4 January 2016, the President published '8 President Instructions 2016' in Cabinet Commencement Court, which one of the instructions was to ensure the progress for the field for the ten national tourism destinations.

These ten destinations are located in ten different provinces and currently being developed under the name '10 New Bali', referring to the already world-famous Bali Island. The 10 New Bali consists of Lake Toba in North Sumatra, Tanjung Kelayang in Belitung, Tanjung Lesung in Banten, Kepulauan Seribu in Jakarta, Borobudur in Central Java, Bromo Tengger Semeru in East Java, Mandalika in West Nusa Tenggara, Labuan Bajo in East Nusa Tenggara, Wakatobi in Southeast Sulawesi, and Morotai in Maluku¹. From these ten destinations, two of them namely Jakarta and West Nusa Tenggara are also included

in the Top 5 Muslim Friendly Destination as shown in the Halal Tourism Indonesia website; a website managed by Secretariat of Halal Tourism who works under the Ministry of Tourism. By the position it has obtained and also considering its stage of development, which arguably fills with many challenges, this research will focus on the West Nusa Tenggara Province, Indonesia.

West Nusa Tenggara Province consists of two main islands, namely Lombok and Sumbawa Island. However, since the development of the tourism sector mainly focused on certain parts of Lombok island, only this paper will be focusing solely on the island, as mentioned before. The island divides into five regencies (*Kabupaten*) and one municipality (*Kota madya*); West Lombok Regency, Central Lombok Regency, East Lombok Regency, North Lombok Regency, and Mataram City where Mataram City itself is the capital city of the province.

¹ Yahya, Arief. 2018. *Indonesia Priority Sector: Tourism* (Presentation slide). Ministry of Tourism.



Picture 1: Map of Nusa Tenggara Barat Province (Left to right: Bali Island (not part of NTB Province), Lombok Island, Sumbawa Island)

As can be seen from Picture 1, Lombok Island is located next to Bali Island, which is already famous as an international tourism destination. Although Lombok is less prominent compared to its neighbouring island, it is due to its position that Lombok Island has gained more visitors in recent years. Following this, Lombok and Bali Island are appointed as National gate of tourism in MP3EI² Corridor V. Development of tourism in Lombok has been transpiring for more than three decades. Yet, its course of development is still unclear until now due to the nonexistent support of any well-made plan (BPPD NTB, 2015).

1.1 Related Work

The Internet has become one of the most significant developments in the development of information technology, especially in the increasing role of social media platforms that allow users to collaborate, communicate content and publish it through blogs, videos, wikis, reviews or photos (Hays, Page, & Buhalis, 2013). The integration of information technology is a marker of an inevitable digital era today. The use of social media and the role of the Internet is not only done by individuals but also spread to organizations, especially nonprofit organizations in Indonesia.

Research on the use of social media by nonprofit organizations as conducted by Lovejoy and Saxton (2012) there are at least three social media functions for nonprofit organizations, namely information, community, and action. Also, there is the form of soliciting a response, interaction of answering messages, acknowledgments, and giving recognition to communities in building organizations. These activities tend to engage the community in and by organizations. Organizations also use social media as a tool in communication strategies because it enables an organization to increase its visibility, define its relevance and achieve its goals (Gálvez-Rodríguez et al. 2014; Guidry et al. 2017).

Other research shows that the use of social media for nonprofit organizations is for organizational legitimacy (Feng et al. 2017; Young 2017) and fundraising, co-creation, and service development (Peng 2017; Sorensen et al. 2017). In Ridho and Miskiah's research (2020) the relationship between human capital, social capital and organizational capital for organizational performance is as a result of the use of internet technology or online media in developing digital marketing, namely the relationship between increasing the creative and

innovative role of capital organizations. Besides, the need for increased online communication activities is emphasized by increasing expansion to the public, as well as offline, closer communication with other parties such as the public (e.g., tourists), government, and private parties.

Youth participation in the activities of nonprofit organizations in communicating local tourism is not new. Research by Suradiva (2018) states youth as supporting actors in the management of tourism villages in Batubulan Village, Bali. This result is inseparable from the participation of the community and surrounding youth to be able to develop their potential through several community organizations and also youth organizations that have formed to carry out programs that they want to achieve together. The motivating factors and reasons for youth to participate are also seen from the personality potential of each person, such as the spirit of devotion, idealism, innovative and creative, having high solidarity, and totality.

Wenang et al. (2017) state youth organizations are the forerunners of activities to increase the promotion and preservation of cultural heritage in Kotagede, Yogyakarta. The importance of participation is (1) Community participation is a tool to obtain information about the conditions, needs, and attitudes of the local community, without which the development programs and projects will fail, (2) Communities will trust the project or development program more if they feel involved in the preparation and planning process because they will know more about the ins and outs of the project and will have a sense of ownership of the project, (3) It is a democratic right if people are involved in the development of their society.

1.2. Our Contribution

This research contributes to providing an overview of the role of social media utilization and youth participation in developing local tourism in Indonesia. In this case the involvement of young people who are members of the non-profit organization Generasi Pesona Indonesia (GENPI, Indonesian Charms Generation) Lombok Sumbawa who utilize social media in reaching the public (tourists) and the world community in general. This research looks at the perspective of the use of new media, namely social media by a group of young people to market local tourism objects in Indonesia.

1.3. Paper Structure

The rest of the paper organizes as follows. Section 2 introduces the preliminaries used in this paper. Section 3 presents the result achieved by doing an in-depth-interview with a key informant of GenPi Lombok Sumbawa and a literature review on relevant researchs. Finally, Section 6 concludes the paper and presents direction for future research.

² Masterplan Percepatan dan Perluasan Pembangunan Ekonomi Indonesia (Masterplan for Acceleration and Expansion of Indonesia's Economy Development)

2. RESULT

2.1 *Generasi Pesona Indonesia*

The Generasi Pesona Indonesia (Generation of Wonderful Indonesia or GenWI), also known as GENPI, was originally a community consisting of Netizens. They have interests in travelling and love to share their travelling experiences on social media. In this research we focused on GENPI which was a channel, to share photos and travel blogs as well as the promotion of tourism destinations on social media. The presence of GENPI directs the interest of young talent who likes to travel and develop tourism, especially in Indonesia.

GENPI does not only has online activities, but also has offline activities designed as attractive and modern as possible called digital destinations. Until now more than 14 provinces in Indonesia and four countries with the name Generation of Wonderful Indonesia (GENWI) dan GENPI consisting of more than 2000 people who were inaugurated by the Indonesian Ministry of Tourism. GENPI or GENWI originally came from West Nusa Tenggara Province. At that time, Indonesia was represented by Lombok to take part in the world-class Halal Tourism Competition (Halal Travel Award 2015). At that time, an Indonesian online community made a movement through social media—to seek support to win. This community was initially called Wonderful Lombok Sumbawa.

After seeing the effectiveness of social media done by young netizens, finally this concept was patented by the Indonesian Ministry of Tourism under the name Generasi Pesona Indonesia (GENPI) So, it says that GENPI originated from NTB. GENPI NTB named GENPI Lombok Sumbawa, is the only GENPI in Indonesia which inauguration is carried out directly by the Minister of Tourism, Arief Yahya, accompanied by the Governor of NTB and also the Head of the NTB Tourism Office. The inauguration in NTB was by opening in several other areas such as West Java, Aceh, West Sumatra, Maluku, Central Java, East Java, South Sumatra, Riau Islands, Yogyakarta, Banten, Nusa Tenggara Timur, Lampung, and Banyuwangi. Up until October 2019, GENPI exists in 34 Provinces and 89 Regencies in Indonesia. This community continues to spread tourism information through social media actively.³

2.2. *Social Media Utilitazion*

Social media refers to the means of interaction between people where they create, share, and exchange information and ideas in communities and virtual networks. Social media, a group of internet-based applications built on a network foundation (Ni Putu, 2020). In the use of social media in every country, especially Indonesia it was discovered that social media has been used as an important business aid to promote the tourism industry. The number of social media applications or social media platforms continues to grow and varies. The most crucial role of social media applications is to encourage users of travel operator services, tourist visitors or travellers to share experiences, comment and their opinions (reviews), thus making it a source of information for other users.

Based on the interview GENPI uses social media as a tool to engage with the public to spread the information. Social Media becomes an ecosystem and a place for a GENPI to perform activities. 70% of the GENPI activities are on social media and 20% offline. They utilize all kinds of social media platforms and create content. GENPI adjusts development and creates social infrastructures. Also, there is social media management which is led by a team leader of an online team. They use a variety of social media and strategic steps, such as social media optimization through both content and strategy. They comprehend and adapts to algorithms and developments. The directions and work procedures are carried out strategically by communicating simultaneously in the GenPi national network.

GENPI activities consists of 70% online and 20% offline activities. They are monitoring coverage event, destinations, and have a role in technical guidance, group discussion forums, video photo creation, and infographics in which all is done through social media. The offline activities of GENPI can be seen from the social community ecosystem and network they have established with tourist activists, local government, tourism, and other communities. GENPI utilizes social media by the characteristics of social media according to the needs of the GenPi organization itself. This can be seen how GENPI use Twitter to create trending topics and affects news editorial, Facebook to do storytelling, Instagram photo and video sharing platform. The most influencing, Youtube for Video activities and destinations more than 1 minute and Blog/Website for Serves as a landing page.

For the benefits of its commercial value, this community moves on through online and offline level to generate income for its members. Through an online commercial approach, this community can directly be part of an Online Travel Agent (OTA) where GENPI can sell digitally developed tour packages. GENPI members also get the benefit of collaborating with other digital marketplace industries. Community members can become content creators who can later generate income through social media platforms by utilizing advertising facilities on mainstream platforms such as YouTube ads, Facebook ads, and so on. To achieve this goal, Kemenpar facilitates this community through the presence of genpi.co, genpi.id, and GenPi applications which can be downloaded at Apple Store and Google Playstore so that they will be able to learn how to produce quality content.

This digital approach is effectively carried out by communities that contain millennial generations, for the target market of millennial tourists as well, where it is at this generation that cyberculture changes have an impact. This approach also carried out through creative online promotional activities such as reporting through the uses of hashtags, as well as offline activities as described previously. All news by GENPI is expected to become viral, which in turn can raise the awareness

³ <https://www.genpilomboksumbawa.com/3559/genpi-generasi-pesona-indonesia.html>

of prospective millennial tourists towards tourist destinations, thus impacting the increase of brand value of Indonesian tourism.

2.3 Youth Participation

Subarkah (2018) explains how to emphasize the involvement of the community in the aspect of tourism awareness as the main actor of public diplomacy in the promotion of Halal tourism in Lombok Sumbawa. The government cooperates with a tourism-aware youth community, the GENPI. It consists of young people who are social media activists with a concern for tourism and actively promoting tourist attractions, tourism events, and tourism-related matters targeting young people. The public, both domestic and foreign is what the GENPI community has been aiming so far. Through voluntary movements, they create content in social media and networks to publish tourism spots, especially in the case of Lombok.

Based on research by M. Ainur Ridlo et al. (2018) research community-based tourism activities can be done because of the initiative of the surrounding community and the community itself also obtains the results. Nasikun (2003) states there are three essential things in participation, namely:

- 1) Participation is in the mental desire for involvement and more than just physical or free involvement.
- 2) The desire to assist and to achieve organization's goals.
- 3) Elements of responsibility, which is the most important element to bring the participation activities.

These three things are found in youth who participate in GenPi Lombok. The youth involved have a desire to be involved in more than physical assistance or mere presence. This desire is manifested in assistance to achieve group goals, that is to make Lombok tourism is internationally famous. And third, there are responsibilities between members so that the GENPI organization runs with sustainability.

Participation is also defined as participation activities of certain groups of organizations whose members are actively involved in a joint activity. For example, members of GENPI participated on offline and online activities to spread information publicly about Lombok tourism. This participation leads to social interactions between individuals who has similar aim (Budi, 2014). Factors that influence community participation consist of elements within the community itself and factors outside the community or organization. Internal factors, as previously explained, namely the ability and desire of the community to participate, while the external factors are the role of the apparatus in existing formal institutions. There are two categories of levels of community participation. First, the community members joined in the actions are taught or designed by other members. Second, participation in the process of forming power to solve their problems. The beginning of

participation is decided, determined, and reflected in the Actions as a form of mutual awareness (Nasdian, 2014).

In GENPI, internal factors, as previously explained, are the ability and desire of the youth community around Lombok attractions to participate, develop and publish their tourist attractions as a form of pride of the Indonesian people. In contrast, the external factor is the role of the apparatus informal institutions that in this case government support through the Ministry of Tourism which opened the way for GENPI to widen its network and as youth who contributed directly in accelerating the progress of local tourism in their area, namely Lombok.

The development of community-based tourism is a model of community participation. In the dynamics, there are different forms and degrees of community participation by the cultural context and social environment (Singgalen et al. 2019). As Yuliane's research (2015), the form of community participation around tourism objects is based on initiatives to develop and manage tourism objects. On the other hand, the community's economy has also emerged as a further implication of youth participation in improving their local tourism. Also, local community and youth participation become a separate evaluation process to assess whether the community is a benchmark of success in managing local tourism resources in the area. The success also indicates that the context of the social and cultural environment also impacts the dynamics of community participation in the development of tourism, especially local tourism (Pharino & Leawpenwong, 2015).

3. CONCLUSION

Generasi Pesona Indonesia or GENPI for short originally a community consisting of netizens who have interests in travelling and love to share their travelling experiences on social media. Initially, GENPI was a channel to share photos and travel blogs as well to promote tourism destinations on social media. The presence of GENPI directs the interest of young talent who likes to travel and develop tourism, especially in Indonesia. Not only online, but also the GenPi community also has offline activities called "digital destinations" which are a form of offline activities.

Social media is used as a mean to publish creative content from local tourism objects, especially those in Lombok Island. Well-planned communication strategies of the uses of social media help develop domestic tourism. Networking online and offline are essentials to disseminate excellence in the tourism area. Support from the government, in this case, the Ministry of Tourism, is an external factor that helps accelerate the actions and movements of the GENPI organization, particularly in terms of youth participation. Youth participation in GENPI voluntarily drives the organization to achieve the common goal of building and developing their local tourism, especially in the case of Lombok. The role of youth participation has implications for the progress of domestic tourism and the community around the tourist site itself.

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