

Maritime Tourism Communication: Strategy to Communicate Local Tourist Destinations in Lebak Regency Post-Pandemic Covid 19

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ABSTRACT : The pandemic caused a significant decrease in the number of tourists in Lebak Regency, namely 83.57% compared to the previous year. The pandemic has caused the tourism sector to experience a multiplier effect; neglected tourist destinations, economic actors close their businesses, and economic income decreases. Case study research method. The results showed that the Lebak Regency Tourism Office identified the problems faced in the tourism sector through online coordination meetings with all stakeholders. The communication program refers to MUSRENBANG and RENSTRA, communicating six fantastic priority destinations, as well as the development of geopark-based tourist destinations. The basis for preparing program evaluations refers to assessing the suitability of program design specifications, evaluating the economic development of local communities for the construction of facilities and infrastructure.

KEYWORDS : *Communication Strategy, Tourism Communication, Tourist Destinations*

I. INTRODUCTION

Lebak destination is not yet popular enough for domestic tourists, due to infrastructure development that is not well established and human resources who do not have full awareness of the potential of the area.

As research that has been done by Hilderiah (2020) about Village Tourism Communication Problems in the Perspective of the Sawarna Village Community, Lebak Banten. The results of the study show that in the perspective of the Sawarna village community, there are nine sources of tourism communication problems in Sawarna Lebak Banten village, which are also a solution to the problem. Among them are, both the community, community leaders, and the Sawarna village government, each of which has not been communicative and creative, both in approaching, and in overcoming existing tourism communication problems, and there are still communication gaps between them, due to the existing communication does not yet have "dual function" and the absence of village tourism communication media that can also be used as a medium for empowering rural communities.

Another problem faced by the tourism sector is currently caused by the Covid-19 pandemic that has hit the world including Indonesia since early 2020. In a macro view, this pandemic has caused tourist arrivals around the world to decline 44 percent during the pandemic when compared to last year (Based on data from the World Tourism Organization , UNWTO). The decline in tourist numbers will have an impact on the income of tourism actors in the region and the government must make recovery in this sector (Ita, detiknews.com 2020).

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Based on the explanation above, the researcher concludes that there is a gap between tourism potential and tourist interest, whether it lies in the efforts of the local government to promote tourism potential in this area, or other problems that cause this destination to not be popular enough for domestic tourists. Another problem to be investigated is the efforts of the local government, especially Dinas Pariwisata, in communicating local tourism to revive the community's economy in the post-pandemic tourism sector.

This study describes communication efforts within the framework of tourism communication strategies through a communication strategy concept approach as stated by Cutlip, Center, and Broom(2006) through the stages of fact finding, planning and programming, action and communication, and evaluation.

Based on the above background, the focus of this research is How the Tourism Communication Strategy of the Lebak Regency Tourism Office in Communicating Local Tourism Post Pandemic Covid-19?

II. RESEARCH METHOD

Tourism communication has several main studies that can be developed in the future in line with the growing complexity of studies in tourism communication, namely Tourism Marketing Communications, Destination Brands, Tourism Communication Management, Tourism Transportation Communications, Tourism Visual Communications, Tourism Group Communications, Communications Online Tourism, Public Relations and MICE, Tourism Communication Research (Bungin, 2015). This research refers to the perspective of Tourism Communication Management, considering that the principles of communication management are important reviews that are carried out and applied in the field of tourism communication.

As mention above, the concept of strategy using the stages of public relations management: fact finding, planning and programming, action and communication, and evaluation. This first step includes investigating and monitoring the knowledge, opinions, attitudes, and behavior of those who care about and are affected by the actions and policies of the organization related to the process of Public Relations activities. This step provides the basis for all other steps of the problem-solving process by determining, "What is going on right now?". By using the SWOT analysis above, it can enable the company to formulate and implement a publication strategy so that the company can achieve its goals. The information gathered in the first step is used to make decisions about programs, strategies, objectives, actions and communications, tactics, and goals. This step will consider the findings of the steps in making organizational policies and programs related to public relations practice. This second step will answer the question "Based on what we know about the situation, what should we change, do, and say?". Planning and programming is making basic strategic decisions on what to do in order in response to or anticipating problems or opportunities. In simple terms, companies usually operate on the basis of Management by Objectives (MBO). MBO now operates with two levels of outcomes: goals and suggestions. Goals are concise statements that state the overall results of a program. While the objective (objective) is the result of specific knowledge, certain opinions, and specific behaviors to be achieved for each clearly defined target public. The third step is to implement an action and communication program designed to achieve specific goals for each public in order to achieve the program objectives. The question in this step is "Who should do and deliver it, and when, where, and how?". While the program is being implemented, adjustments are made based on feedback evaluation of how the program is working or not. The program will be continued or terminated after answering the question "How are we doing now or how well have we been doing?". Evaluation is a continuous and important process. (Cutlip, Center, and Broom: 2006)

This study uses a constructivism paradigm. Through the constructivism paradigm, researchers will describe social reality through direct and detailed observation of the efforts of the Dinas Pariwisata in communicating local tourist destinations after the Covid-19 Pandemic and trying to see these activities for real, making the construction process by remembering and re-expressing experiences, abilities compare and make decisions from the interview results.

The research method used is a case study. A case study is a type of approach in research that examines a case intensively, deeply, in detail, and comprehensively (Ardianto, 2011).

The data analysis method used is qualitative data analysis, which in this case is carried out in four stages (Mulyana, 2004), namely:

1. Make interviews with the intended sources and collect data from observations and observations as well as literature literature
2. Classifying data based on interviews and observations related to the main problem and research objectives
3. Discuss the meaning of the things being studied
Make conclusions

III. FINDING

The results showed that there was a decrease of 83.57% in the number of tourists visiting tourist destinations in Lebak Regency. This is due to the global crisis caused by the Covid-19 Pandemic, so that the central government, followed by Lebak Regency, must establish policies to minimize the spread and transmission of the corona virus.

Dinas Pariwisata realizes that this condition has a huge impact on the tourism sector, especially in Lebak Regency, thus affecting the economy of the population around the tourist destination area. Therefore, Dinas Pariwisata coordinates with related parties to continue making communication efforts to communicate Lebak tourist destinations through online programs and optimizing the use of online media. With hope, when

the pandemic ends, the target public will still have their attention and interest in visiting Lebak tourist destinations.

Regarding the use of online media, in line with research conducted by Ervan Ismail and Ratna Sari (2019), one of the problems in communicating tourist destinations is through digital-divide in terms of accessibility and availability of internet networks. In this case, the Government needs to implement a tourism communication program in the form of designing and implementing innovative tourism support programs and involving the participation of citizens, especially the younger generation such as training in producing digital tourism promotion content and mastering foreign languages so that the younger generation can face tourism competition in the industrial era 4.0.

Another thing that is done by Dinas Pariwisata is to conduct education through online media regarding the openness of areas to receive tourist visits while still paying attention to health protocols. This effort is carried out with the hope of reviving the community's economy, especially from the tourism sector. In addition, Dinas Pariwisata continues to carry out integrated monitoring and evaluation with all stakeholders in order to obtain an overview as initial data in making program recommendations and determining further policies.

Dinas Pariwisata organizes the Virtual Millennial Stage program and Launching Calendar of Events in 2021. This program is one of Dinas Pariwisata communication efforts in promoting tourism destinations and events to be held in 2021, namely 24 Main Events and 15 Supporting Events. The purpose of implementing this program is to achieve 2 objectives, namely 1) Communicating the tourist destinations of Lebak Regency as a national leading tourist destination based on local potential; 2) facilitating the creation of Lebak art creators (artists) during the Covid-19 pandemic. The communication media used in communicating Lebak tourism destination is through the lebakunique.id website and online mass media.

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IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of interviews with key informants and informants, it can be concluded that:

1. Pandemic conditions caused a significant decrease in the number of tourists, namely by 83.57% compared to the previous year
2. The pandemic caused the tourism sector in Lebak Regency to experience a multiplier effect, namely neglected tourist destinations, economic players closed their businesses, and decreased economic income.
3. Identification of problems faced in the tourism sector is carried out through online coordination meetings with all tourism stakeholders, distributing questionnaires to tourists, and direct requests or input from the community.
4. The public target of post-pandemic tourists is divided into two categories, domestic tourists coming from JABODETABEK, and foreign tourists from Malaysia and Singapore.
5. The program that is carried out refers to MUSRENBANG and RENSTRA, while still communicating the six fantastic priority destinations, as well as the development of geopark-based tourist destinations.
6. Efforts made to re-communicate the tourist destinations of Lebak Regency are by optimizing online media and zoom meetings.
7. The basis for preparing program evaluations refers to assessing the conformity of program design specifications and evaluating the economic development of local communities for the construction of facilities and infrastructure. Evaluation is carried out by monitoring and approaching the effects of tourism development on the economy of local communities or those in tourist destinations.

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