

Tourism's Destination Image of Eastern Indonesia on Online Media

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ABSTRACT

The development of tourism has increased the number of new destinations in Indonesia. One of the newly explored destinations are in Eastern Indonesia. The beauty of Eastern Indonesia has captured the attention of travel bloggers, not only to visit but also to share their story for all their readers. This research aims to see how the construction image of tourism destinations of Eastern Indonesia in the two most popular travelling blogs, which are marischkaprudence.blogspot.co.id and naked-traveler.com. The concepts used in this research are destination image, tourism, online media and framing analysis. The paradigm used here is constructivist paradigm with qualitative research method. The researcher found that the Eastern Indonesia is mainly portrayed as a place with pure beautiful natural scenery that is full of fun and relaxed atmosphere. Those descriptions fall into the category of attribute destinations image. However, both bloggers still consider the image of Eastern Indonesia as a place with inadequate infrastructure. Other interesting findings are the difference in which how both bloggers describe the image of Eastern Indonesia's destination, their readers' segmentation and their writing style. Marischka describes Eastern Indonesia from the point of view of pro-naturalist. Her writing style looks better structured comparing to Trinity's. Researchers view that Marischka's writing style is influenced by her journalism background. Marischka also has better photographer's skill as it is shown from the pictures on her blog. Different than Marischka who has journalism background, Trinity used to be a regular office worker. Her writing style looks more casual than Marischka's and she puts more jokes to make her article more appealing and build stronger emotional ties with the readers. Another novelty in Trinity's blog is that she allows company to advertise their product on her blog. Thus, it has proven that blog can be used as one of promotion channel as well

Keywords: destination image, framing analysis, online media, tourism, travel blog

INTRODUCTION

Tourism has been seen as economic and social global phenomenon and Indonesia does not want to miss the race. In the past few decades the country's tourism has started to rise. Statistic echoes the same thing, tourism sector has contributed 9,5% from the National Gross Domestic Product in 2014. Aside of that, the number of foreign tourists who come to Indonesia has increased from 8,8 millions in 2013 to 9,4 millions in 2014. The newly discovered and maintained destinations has captured the attentions of both domestic and international tourist to enjoy the beauty of Indonesia.

Eastern part of Indonesia is a home to the rich amazing natural beauty and diversity. However, not many people are aware of it, thus it is often called hidden paradise. Therefore the country is vigorously introducing tourism in its eastern part namely North Sulawesi, South Sulawesi, Southeast Sulawesi, Bali, Lombok, Sumbawa, Flores, Maluku and Papua. The emergence of new tourism destinations in Indonesia is a result of all the hard work done by the Tourism Ministry. Through the *Country Branding Wonderful Indonesia*, the country who previously had never succeeded to be on top 100 world destination has taken a great leap. In 2015, Indonesia climbed all the way to the rank 47th (Khumaedy, 2017:1)

Tourism happened because there is tourist attraction in every destination. It is indeed the main focus that will attract people to come and enjoy the place. Nevertheless, tourist attraction can never work alone, the role of Public Relations (PR) is very crucial. Creating and maintaining destination image is PR work. Through *Wonderful Indonesia* and *Pesona Indonesia* campaign, Tourism Ministry are doing the PR work by inviting travel bloggers to visit Eastern Indonesia and later share their stories of these destinations via the articles published on their blogs. Out of many travel bloggers in Indonesia, there are two most popular ones, they are Marisckha Prudence (marisckhaprudence.blogspot.co.id) and Trinity (naked-traveler.com). Their writings has been a great support for government PR to promote the Eastern tourism destination to both locals and foreigners.

The researcher is interested to see how *travel blogger* develop the destination image through their writings on their blogs. Through the Framing analysis, the researcher would like to know how the travel

bloggers create a reality construction about these Eastern Indonesia tourism destination. Through the framing, PR help the organization to define the reality from the point of view of organization and build frame reference on certain issues that matter (Prastya, 2016:193).

Problem definition How is the construction of destination image of the Eastern Indonesia’s tourism in marischkaprudence.blogspot.co.id and naked traveler.com blogs? The purpose of this research is to acquire the construction of destination image of the Eastern Indonesia’s tourism in marischkaprudence.blogspot.co.id and naked- traveler.com blogs.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Image

This research sees that destination image is constructed by content of online media. In the book *Public Relations Technique* Frank Jeffkins concluded that generally image is the impression about something as the result of his/her knowledge and experiences (Nova, 2011:298).

Destination Image

According to experts, destination image is described as the following (Utama, 2014: 168):

1. Kotler et al : faith, idea, impression of someone about a place.
2. Gartner : people’s impression that is included of cognitive, affective and konative component.
3. Santos Arrebola : is a mental representation about several attributes and advantages gained by using a product.
4. Parenteau: positive por negative prejudice of customer or distributor towards a product or destinations.

Destination image consists of these following attributes:

Table 2.1. Attributes of Destination Image

No.	Attributes of Destination Image
1.	<i>Natural Resources</i> is manifested in the form of: Climate (weather and air humidity), beach (sands, water, sea, waves), village’s nature (flora and fauna, park, lake, mountains).
2.	<i>Natural Environment</i> is manifested in the form of : natural scenery, attraction, cleanliness, pollution, traffic jam, voice noise.

3.	<i>Culture, History, and Art</i> is manifested in the form of : Festival, crafts, religion, traditional culture, historical buildings
4.	<i>Tourist Infrastructure</i> is manifested in the form of : Hotel, restaurant, recreation and entertainment center.
5.	<i>Atmosphere of The Place</i> is manifested in the form : Comfort, breeze, warmth, destination reputation
6.	<i>Tourist Leisure and Recreation</i> is manifested in the form : Opportunity to do the tourism activities such as fishing, hunting, surfing, diving, trekking, night entertainment
7.	<i>General Infrastructure</i> is manifested in the form : Public road, airport, public transportation, hospital, drainage, communication facilities.
8.	<i>Social Environment</i> is manifested in the form : Quality of life, poverty, language, locals' friendliness
9.	<i>Political And Economic Factors</i> is manifested in the form : Political stability, security, terrorism, prices

Source: Utama, 2014:173

Construction and Classification of Destinations

The main components of destinations are as follows (Tamburaka, 2012:75):

1. Object and attraction: attraction that has the main basis of natural richness, culture whether natural or artificial line events or particular interest.
2. Accessibility that includes transportation support system
3. Amenity that includes supporting tourism facilities such as restaurants, souvenir shops, money exchange, travel agents, information centers, retailers.
4. Supporting facilities such as bank, post office, hospital
5. Organizations, it is related to the existence and role of each part to support tourism activity (local people)

Image Construction on Online Media

Social construction of reality was first introduced by Peter L. Berger dan Thomas Luckmann in their book *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*. Berger and Luckmann described social construction of reality as a social process through

human's act and interaction in which individual simultaneously create a reality owned and experienced together in subjective manner. The constructed reality later will shape the mass opinion (Tamburaka, 2012:75).

Blog as Online Media

Blog is abbreviation of website log. It is a form of web application consisted of writings (these writings are called postings) on web page. *Blog* is an online activity that goes based on reality, events, activity or current situation. *Blog* is part of global communication revolution that keeps going on currently (Nurhajati, Rusfian, 2013:13).

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Paradigm

The constructivist paradigm used in this research is to see the symptomshappened in the globalization and digitalization era that brings more opportunities that can be optimized by media user (in this case travel blogger) to give descriptions about their trip to some destinations in Eastern Indonesia. Furthermore this description can be base to construct how destination image is developed by the travel bloggers' experience.

Research Approach

The use of qualitative approach in this research is to describe or explain the social symptoms on how a blog can describe and construct a positive image about destination based on the experience of the blog writer.

Data Analysis Method

Researcher uses framing analysis model by Zhongdang Pan dan Gerald M. Kosicki (Eriyanto, 2009: 295). This model assumes that every news has a frame that function as the center of idea organization. This method highlights the creation text message. How a person regards an event can be seen by the set of signals occur on the text.

Table 3.1. Framing Scheme Zhongdang Pan dan Gerald M.Kosicki Model

Structure	Framing tools	The observed units
SYNTAKSIS (How a writer arrange the facts)	1. News scheme	<i>Headline, lead, information background, quotes, resources, statement, closing.</i>
SCRIPT (How a writer tells the facts)	2. News Completeness	5 W + 1 H
TEMATIC (How a writer writes facts)	Detail Coherence Form of sentence Pronoun	Paragraph, proposition, sentences, connection between sentence.
RHETORIC (How a writer highlights the facts)	Leccicon Graphics Metaphors	Words, idiom, pictures,, grafic.

Source: Eriyanto, 2009:295

Analysis Unit

The two *travel blogs* namely marischkaprudence.blogspot.co.id dan naked-traveler.com based on the title of their article which is related to Eastern Indonesia destinations.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

There are three most interesting places in Eastern Indonesia that have been visited and written by the Marishcka and Trinity. Below is the comparison between how the two blogs describe the main destinations in Eastern Indonesia :

1. Raja Ampat:

marischkaprudence.blogspot.co.id

Marischka's blog with the title **Reasons Why We Love Arborek** focuses on the attribute of destination image: *Natural Environment*. Because she only describes the beauty of natural scenery when she visited Arborek. Marischka also uses dual language in writing her article. In the end of her article she announce open trip to Arborek for the lucky readers.

Naked-traveler.com

Raja Ampat came with the title “**Raja Ampat adalah Surga Lantai ke-9!**” (**Raja Ampat is the 9th floor Paradise**). She shared her stories while visiting Misool district. The frame on this article focuses on *Natural Resources* (by concentrating on the beaches), *Natural Environment* (how Trinity explains about the beauty scenery of the village), and *Social environment* (how she highlights the friendliness of villagers there).

2. Manado

marischkaprudence.blogspot.co.id

Marischka’s writing has the title **Dolphin Frenzy in Bunaken**. She describes her journey on her way to diving spots in Bunaken. She focuses on her experience meeting the dolphins in wild nature. According to her nature is the right place where dolphins should belong. The frames that stands out the most in this article is *Natural Resources* as she give clear picture of beautiful the beach and the sea there. *Atmosphere of the place* and *Tourist Recreation Facilities* is also on the spotlight as she explains the comfortable place where she dives. Another important notes is how she quotes phrase from a nature enthusiast about dolphin, it shows her great concern on *Social environment*

Naked-traveler.com

Trinity with her article called “**Manado Destinasi Liburan Yang Menyenangkan!**” (**Manado is Fun Holiday Destination!**) highlighted the most on frame *Tourist Infrastructure* in which she gives details information about her experience staying at the resort. She also focuses on the culinary at the restaurant which also fall into *Tourist Infrastructure* frame.

3. Wakatobi

marischkaprudence.blogspot.id

With the title *Surga Bawah Laut* (Under the Sea Paradise), Marischka describe the Wakatobi sea as very beautiful diving spot. She mentioned that it is indeed a paradise for the world diver. In this article, *Tourist Leisure and Recreation* is manifested in opportunity to do the diving activity. In the end of her article, she shares the contact number of local guide to her readers. It shows that the Social environment there has

been so supportive towards tourism activity. Wakatobi has their own local diving instructor and guide that is worth recommending to people in and outside Indonesia.

Naked-traveler.com

Trinity's article has the title **Wakatobi: Surga di Atas, Surga di Bawah** (Wakatobi: Paradise Above, Paradise Below). Not only highlighting on the Tourist Leisure and Recreation as in Marischka's blog, trinity also stressed on what kind of activity and attraction that the tourist can do on the land of Wakatobi. She describes the beauty of nature in Wakatobi. Thus, frames like Natural Resources, Natural Resources are also spotted in her writing. Trinity also loves to explore the rich culinary thus also elaborate the frame Atmosphere of the Place in Wakatobi.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, tourism happened because there is tourism destination. And in order to let people aware of its existence, the work of PR is required. In doing its main work, government PR in this case Tourism Ministry has invited the travel bloggers to help promoting Indonesia's new destination in its Eastern part. Through their blogs, government hopes that a good destination image is developed so that people will be aware and interested to visit the place. The framing analysis used in this reserach is important to acquire and explain how the most popular travelling blogs potray the tourism destination in Eastern Indonesia.

From the point of view Pan Kosicki framing model, Marischka Prudence in her blog marischkaprudence.blogspot.co.id uses the whole unit in syntaksis, script and tematic scheme. This neat form of writing could be a result of her experience of being TV reporter before she decided to become a full time travel blogger. Marischka also uses dual language so that her blog can be understood by foreigners as well. One of the thing that stands out the most is how Marischka post many beautiful photos about the destinations. This part belong to the rhetoric structure. However, she did not include metaphors. She only uses quotations from the expert to strengthen the facts she wants to highlight in her writing. From the way she elaborates the place she visited, the segmented target of her article is millenials generation from the age twenty to thirty something. The way she writes her article shows that her writings are addressed to those with college education degrees.

In Trinity's blog naked-traveler.com, she frames her stories mostly

through words and sentences and rarely pictures. Different from the way Marischka's writings that looks more like journalist, the way Trinity writes her article flows naturally from the point of view of commoners. Researcher believes that this is because before Trinity became full time travel blogger she was regular office worker. Trinity also sometimes uses promotion in her writing for example when she writes about the resort and airlines in her story. The framing analysis unit that stands out the most in her writing is the script and rhetoric schemes in the words part. Trinity writes her story in the form of 5W+1H and uses words that are easy to understand by the readers and bring the readers to experience the places she visited without actually visit them. The strength of Trinity's writings lie in her words and story as Trinity does not use too many pictures to tell about the place (rhetoric – pictures are used at minimum scale). The rest of Pan Kosicki also not really represented much in her writing. She targetted "heavy readers" meaning thos who do not mind to read long sentences and have a wide imagination (as there is limited pictures in it). Later on her popular blog is published in the form of book and transformed into cinema movie.

Other interesting finding that blog can be used as promotion tools. The use of PR concept in this blog is to promote the newly developed destinations in Eastern Indonesia. PR activity is about organizing communication between an organization and its public. Tourism Ministry has taken a smart move by asking travel bloggers to join in and work together in promoting Indonesia tourism. Especially for local government who sometimes find it difficult to reach wider segmentation. The articles of travel blogger can also be a place for society and government tto exchange ideas and opinion about Indonesia's tourism as there is commentary columns provided there. This way, government can find easier way to get feedbacks form society about their works on tourism destinations.

The way each bloggers potrays those destination has helped the government to introduce and shape the destination image. As mentioned by Edward L. Bernay the top three function of PR is to give information to public, to persuade in order to change attitude and behavior and the last one is to integrate the attitude and behaviour of organization to be in accordance with those of public's. The use of blog can be classified as E-PR as it uses online media to spread information to the public. Below is the destination image described by both bloggers:

1. Marischka Prudence

In her blog marishckaprudence.blogspot.co.id, she portrays tourism destination in Eastern Indonesia as a place with breathtaking natural beauty (Natural Environment & Natural Resources). She shows herself as a naturalist who really concerns about the nature. According to her, nature should be guarded by not exploiting the place greedily. She implicitly highlighted the educational message to the readers to take care of the nature beauty (Social Environment). Her background education in Art Science enables her to show off more of visual beauty of the places. On the infrastructure side, Marischka never complains about any of inadequate facilities. She sounded satisfied with everything provided in each destination.

2. Trinity

Through naked-traveler.com Trinity would like to spread the joy of travelling Indonesia. Not only focuses on the beautiful scenery offered by each tourism destination (Natural Environment & Natural Resources), Trinity also writes about other supporting facilities such as restaurants, hotels, tourist activities and souvenir shops (Tourist Leisure and Activities). The use of jokes and informal language makes her writings felt emotionally close with the readers. She also includes her experience in communicating with locals (Social Environment). She portrays Eastern Indonesia as a beautiful place with other interesting objects to visit such as culinary tourism and luxurious resort. Trinity also sometimes uses promotional content in her article. However she also notes some downside of infrastructures in the area.

CONCLUSION

Both bloggers use these following frames to capture the reality of Eastern Indonesia tourism destinations: natural environment, natural resources, atmosphere of the place, tourist leisure and activity, and social environment. The only difference is that Trinity also highlights the tourist infrastructure and facility.

The writing style of those two bloggers differs in the way they share stories. Marischka uses better structured sentences and more detailed information with many beautiful photos to describe the place. While Trinity uses a more informal language and jokes that are more widely used by commoners, she also writes in a more conversational

way to describe the tourist destinations. Marischka with her journalism background write in the angle of someone who would share experience as well as educate her readers to take care of the nature. Trinity with her regular office worker background put herself as one of the people with the needs to get decent facilities, and infrastructure. That is why this opportunity was used by companies to include some promotional content in her writing (hotel and airlines). The different style can be used to approach different segmented readers as well.

The two bloggers can support the government PR job in promoting the tourism destination as they have more flexible and closer gap and access to the public. In the future government should approach more popular bloggers to support them in promoting tourism as well as other fields in government concerns.

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