Communication strategy of Tourism Department Yogyakarta in promoting tourism during the COVID-19 pandemic

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1. Introduction

Since the discovery of the COVID-19 virus, many countries have been affected. Indonesia was also affected by the spread of the virus (Ciotti et al., 2020). The impact of COVID-19 virus affects many sectors (Ferrel & Ryan, 2020). The implementation of the PSBB at the beginning of 2020 caused losses to the community and entrepreneurs in various industries (Miharja et al., 2021). Losses experienced by Indonesia alone in the first six months since the pandemic reached USD 9 trillion to 15 trillion (Indradi et al., 2020).

One of the industries that have suffered is the tourism industry (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2020). This is due to the implementation of the PSBB and suggestions from the government for people to stay at home, making tourist attractions empty of visitors (Ramatillah & Isnaini, 2020). In 2019 the tourism sector contributed USD 19.2 billion to the country’s foreign exchange. In 2020 the country’s foreign exchange earnings in the tourism sector dropped to USD 3 billion (Koshy et al., 2021). This makes tourism actors have to think about how to revive the tourism industry again amid the uncertainty caused by COVID-19 (Tiwari et al., 2021).

The tourism industry in the city of Yogyakarta is the most reliable sector (Grincheva, 2022). The tourism sector contributed 17.46 percent. This makes the tourism sector the most significant contribution to economic development (Baloch et al., 2021). Even though tourism has been affected due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Yogyakarta City government will still encourage regional development through tourism (Pahrudin et al., 2021). This creates a challenge for tourism actors and stakeholders to find out how the communication strategy is to promote the City of Yogyakarta for
tourists to want to visit the City of Yogyakarta even in the conditions of the COVID-19 pandemic (Salsabila & Jamiati, 2022). Against the background previously explained, the researcher is interested in knowing the communication strategy of the Department of Tourism of Yogyakarta in promoting tourism during the COVID-19 pandemic (Nieamah & Purwoko, 2021).

Harold D. Lasswell in Marvick (1980) states that a communication strategy is considered adequate if it can answer the question “Who Says What in Which Channel to Whom With What Effect”.

- **Who (Communicator):** A communicator is a person who has a role as a maker of messages and as a source of information, either intentionally or unintentionally (Tohari & Prayogi, 2022).

- **Says What (Message):** Messages are things that are sent either directly or indirectly. The message can be a verbal or nonverbal message (Abdul Karim, 2016).

- **In Which Channel (Media used):** Media is a tool that has a role as an intermediary for the messages the communicator conveys to the communicant (Lasswell, 2021).

- **To Whom (Communicant):** Communicants are certain groups or individuals who are the target destination of the message conveyed by the communicator and have a role as message recipients in the communication process (Marvick, 1980).

- **With What Effect (Effect):** Effects are reactions, responses, or communication responses when someone receives a message from the one who created the message, or it can also be said that effects are the result of communication activities (Zahra et al., 2023).

Bungin interprets tourism communication in its development as being able to unite several scientific disciplines into a study that links communication and tourism (Tsiakali, 2018). Tourism communication science has a biological bond between communication science and tourism (Yeh, 2021). Communication has theories of mass, group, interpersonal, and persuasive communication, while tourism has studies of tourism definitions, destination accessibility, tourism institutions, human resources, and tourism marketing (Law et al., 2019).

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1. Promotion

Ramdani (2020) defines promotion as persuading people to accept products, concepts, and ideas. Todorova (2015) say that promotion is the process of informing, persuading, and influencing a purchase decision. From some of the expert definitions above, it can be concluded that promotion is an activity/communication technique carried out by individuals/companies to inform, persuade, or influence consumers to make product purchase transactions from a company in order to achieve sales targets using a cost-effective way of providing value (Suprapto et al., 2020). Add a product. Promotion is included in one of the Marketing Mix (Zimmerman & Blythe, 2018), which is an optimal combination for various promotional activities that effectively increase sales (Kwok et al., 2020). The following are the four Marketing Mix:

1) **Advertising**

Advertising is any form of non-personal presentation and promotion of ideas, goods, or services by an identified sponsor that requires payment (J. P. Jones, 2003). It can be concluded that advertising is persuasive sales messages that require payment to deliver the message (Gauthier et al., 2020). Media or advertising tools in carrying out promotions are grouped as follows: (1) Print media; (2) Electronic media; (3) Outdoor media (Arya & Kerti, 2020). Advertising is an unusual marketing communication activity carried out by companies to build awareness of the products or services offered, persuade potential customers to buy, increase consumer knowledge, and differentiate one company from another (Lynch & West, 2017).
2) **Personal selling (Personal Selling)**

When compared to advertising media, the messages conveyed from this media are addressed to people who are not prospects (potential buyers) (Keke & Trisakti, 2018). On the other hand, through individual sales, the company is already dealing with potential buyers (Chen et al., 2020).

3) **Sales promotion**

Sales promotion are all activities aimed at increasing the flow of goods or services from producers to consumers directly face to face/meeting aimed at introducing certain products to consumers and forming consumer understanding of the product so that consumers are encouraged to try and buy products (Muhariani, 2021). Then, Public relations is a critical aspect in which companies not only engage with customers, suppliers, and dealers but also engage with the larger public interest pool (Singh et al., 2021).

2.2. **Tourism Office**

Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 10 of 2009 concerning tourism Article 1 paragraph 3 states that Tourism is a variety of tourist activities supported by various facilities and services provided by the community, business people, Government, and Regional Governments (Amin & Priansah, 2019). Yogyakarta City Tourism Office was formed based on Yogyakarta City Regional Regulation Number 5 of 2016. It is an agency within the Department of Tourism of Yogyakarta which has the main task of carrying out government affairs in the tourism sector to achieve good governance, realize community aspirations, and achieve regional goals (S, 2020). Department of Tourism of Yogyakarta was formed based on Yogyakarta City Regional Regulation No. 5 of 2016, located on Jl. Suroto No. 11 Yogyakarta. The current Department of Tourism of Yogyakarta building is one of the Cultural Heritage Buildings (BCB) included in the Cultural Heritage Area (KCB), which is protected by RI Law number 5 of 1992 by Minister of Culture and Tourism Regulation Number: PM.07/PW. 007/MKP/2010 (Pendit, 2002).

Department of Tourism of Yogyakarta has changed the name of the institution three times, namely, the Tourism Office of the Municipality of the Level II Region of Yogyakarta based on Regional Regulation No. 5 of 1996, the Arts and Culture Tourism Office (Salim & Swasto, 2022) based on Regional Regulation Number 19 of 2000, and the Department of Tourism of Yogyakarta based on Regional Regulation No. 10 of 2008. Following Article 3, paragraph 2, Mayor Regulation Number 81 of 2016, the Tourism Office is led by a Head of Service who is located under and is responsible to the Mayor through the Regional Secretary (Nieamah & Purwoko, 2021). The Head of the Tourism Service oversees five main areas: the Tourism Attraction Sector, the Tourism Marketing Sector, the Tourism Industry Sector, the Tourism Resource Development Sector, and the Secretariat Sector (Yulianto, 2019).

2.3. **The Development of Tourist Visits in the City of Yogyakarta Tourism**

Yogyakarta is ranked second after Bali as the most popular tourist destination in Indonesia because it has various tourist attractions (Yulianto, 2019). The tourism objects owned by the City of Yogyakarta have unique and robust characteristics (Utami, 2022). Tourist objects such as the palace, Tamansari, Malioboro, Kotagede, and others are the main attractive factors for the city of Yogyakarta (Astrika et al., 2021).

The tourism potential of the Yogyakarta area is formed from its geographical, historical, and cultural conditions. However, this tourism potential experienced a decline when the pandemic hit in early 2020 (Rimapradesi, 2022). This utterly unexpected condition resulted in the collapse of the tourism industry in Yogyakarta. A significant increase occurred in the previous year, namely in 2018 with 4,103,240 tourists and in 2019 with 4,378,609 tourists (Young & Markham, 2020). This condition lasted only a short time because tourism in the city of Yogyakarta dropped dramatically by 88% to 1,384,781 tourists in 2020 (Awaluddin, 2022). The most drastic decrease in the number of tourists was at the start of the pandemic, from March to August 2020, with the lowest number of tourists at 2,376 (Saputra & Roychansyah, 2022). Tourists in May 2020. The closure of access to travel in every country caused by the pandemic has made the city of Yogyakarta empty of foreign tourists. However, the city of Yogyakarta can still move with domestic tourists visiting during these critical months, although less than during normal conditions (Atmoko, 2018).
3. Method

This study used qualitative research methods. Taylor and Bodgan in Wahidmurni (2017) define a qualitative method as a research procedure that produces data in spoken form or words and the observable behavior of a subject (Kriyantono, 2006). This research was conducted at the Yogyakarta City Tourism Office. The data comes from interview notes, field notes, personal documents, photos, videos, and other documents (Raudeluiiene et al., 2018). Qualitative methods are used in this study to analyze the actual situation and the situation when the research was carried out without manipulating it. In this research, the researcher acts as a consistent research tool, and the research results are obtained directly from in-depth interviews and observations (Rau et al., 2018). This study uses a case study research approach. The case study approach is a research method that uses as many data sources as possible to research, describe, and provide a thorough explanation of aspects of groups, individuals, events, or organizations in a systematic way (Kriyantono, 2019).

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Communication Strategy

In addition, the communication strategy aims to convince public opinion that can shape people's attitudes and behavior. According to Cornelissen (2007), the purpose of a communication strategy is to build awareness must pay attention to things such as understanding the communication process, message clarity, persuasion, and the completeness of the message (Mohammed & Bungin, 2015). Therefore, an organization must determine communication objectives before implementing a communication strategy to communicate a product effectively. Based on the results of the interviews, the purpose of the communication from the Yogyakarta City Tourism Office, in this case, is to inform tourists and potential tourists who will visit the city of Yogyakarta regarding the conditions and situation of tourism development in the city of Yogyakarta during the coronavirus pandemic based on predetermined phases, implement and convey standard information on implementing tourism during a pandemic by government instructions.

1) Message Content:

Based on the results of the interviews, the researchers found that the contents of the Yogyakarta City Tourism Office's tourism messages varied. The contents of the message conveyed by the Department of Tourism of Yogyakarta include the following:

- Phase one of the coronaviruses, is declared a pandemic. Department of Tourism of Yogyakarta informs that tourists are temporarily prohibited from visiting because Yogyakarta is focusing on dealing with the pandemic.
- Phase two, when the coronavirus has slightly improved and is under control, Department of Tourism of Yogyakarta has begun to inform tourists who will visit the city of Yogyakarta to be obliged to implement health protocols according to the provisions of the adaptation to new habits or new normal.
- Phase three, when the PPKM was implemented starting July 3, 2021, Department of Tourism of Yogyakarta only informed that tourists were prohibited from visiting and that there was a closure of the tourism sector in the City of Yogyakarta.
2) Messaging Media

Boyd in Dr. Rulli Nasrullah (2017) said that social media is a collection of software that allows individuals and communities to gather, share, communicate, and in some instances, collaborate or play with each other. Social media has the strength of user-generated content (UGC), where content is generated by users, not by editors as in mass media institutions (Setiadi: n.d). Based on the results of interviews with researchers with informants, Department of Tourism of Yogyakarta uses media that can convey message content in an informative and interactive manner. The Tourism Office, in conveying its information, uses various social media such as Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, TikTok, and the Website to reach a massive and broad audience. These media are manifestations of the Yogyakarta City Tourism Information Center (TIC) as a tourism information center for the city of Yogyakarta.

4.2. Tourism Promotion

According Utami (2022) argues that tourism promotion activities, in principle, are communication activities carried out by tourism organizing organizations (destination) that seek to influence the audience or tourist market, which is the foundation or target of selling their tourism products. (Herat, 2015). Promotion is part of the marketing process, which is one aspect of the marketing mix. The marketing mix is the coordinated interaction of the four 4P components: product, price, distribution location/place, and promotion Kenton & Abbott (2019). Based on Law no. 10 of 2009 concerning Tourism, a limitation is given regarding Indonesian tourism marketing: “Tourism Marketing together, integrated and sustainable by involving all stakeholders and responsible marketing in building Indonesia as a competitive tourism destination (Herat: 2015).

According to Garrett et al., (2017), Interactive media advertising reaches a broad audience in order to connect clear sponsors with buyers (target audience) and provide information about products (goods, services, and ideas). According to Kotler & Armstrong (2018), the purpose of advertising is to provide information, persuade, remind, and remind (Raudeljuniene et al., 2018). The advertising strategy carried out by the Department of Tourism of Yogyakarta is to use the tagline "Kangen Jogja" as the spearhead in promoting tourism during a pandemic. Department of Tourism of Yogyakarta communicates its goals by creating a tourism tagline, "Kangen Jogja".

4.3. Tagline "Kangen Jogja"

Karim (2019) state that a tagline is a short sentence closing the main text, which briefly summarizes the purpose of an advertisement's communication. The tagline is a short phrase containing a message that is solid and easy to remember (Zinaida et al., 2020). Taglines are also called jargon or slogans. The use of taglines aims to strengthen the ability of advertisements to influence audience behavior in accordance with communication objectives (Widyastuti & Nugroho, 2019). States that the role of the tagline is very important to be able to help embed an advertised product into the minds of consumers (Hasan et al., 2022).

Based on the results of the interviews, the purpose of communication using the tagline "Kangen Jogja" is to inform tourists or potential tourists to save for missing Jogja first and not have to visit the city of Yogyakarta directly because the pandemic situation is still ongoing and has not improved. Therefore, Department of Tourism of Yogyakarta created this tagline so that tourists or potential tourists can visit the city of Yogyakarta after the situation improves and the pandemic ends. In addition to creating a tagline, Department of Tourism of Yogyakarta has also created a tourism newsletter that contains tourism information in the city of Yogyakarta (Fatimah, 2022). Personal selling is an organizational effort to communicate directly with prospective target customers with the intention of generating responses and/or sales transactions (Supriyadi et al., 2022).

Based on the results of the interviews, Department of Tourism of Yogyakarta accommodates and facilitates tourism businesses in the city of Yogyakarta, such as restaurants, hotels, travel agents, and others, in selling their products to buyers. This selling activity is included in a series of Jogja Vaganza events where sellers and buyers meet face to face, and transactions occur at the peak of the Jogja Vaganza event, namely Table Top.

Sales promotion is all marketing activities that try to stimulate the action of buying a product quickly or making purchases in a short time. Sales promotion consists of all marketing activities other than personal selling, advertising, and public relations. Sales promotion is usually a short-term
tool used to stimulate demand as soon as possible (Rodrigues et al., 2016). Based on the results of the interviews, Department of Tourism of Yogyakarta has several sales promotion activities that are carried out in a hybrid manner (online and offline) through Kangen Jogja activities which promote local SMEs in the city of Yogyakarta in accordance with their respective kemantren. Then there is Jogja Vaganza which focuses on tourism promotion on a large scale and invites all stakeholders in the tourism sector throughout Indonesia (Ramantoko et al., 2018).

In carrying out the tourism promotion communication strategy, Department of Tourism of Yogyakarta, as a government institution that oversees the Yogyakarta city tourism sector, cannot carry out its activities alone (Kurniawati, 2017). Based on the results of the interviews, Department of Tourism of Yogyakarta involved stakeholders in all lines of the tourism sector, such as hotels, restaurants, travel agents, transportation, tourist attractions, and others (Aliyev & Ahmadova, 2020). Among the promotional events for Department of Tourism of Yogyakarta, which involve many stakeholders, are Regional Performances, Kangen Jogja, Sarkem Fest, Allegorical Parade, Dimas Diajeng, and others.

Based on the results of the interviews, the form of cooperation that was carried out was the creation of health protocol certification that stakeholders in all lines of the tourism sector were ready to operate in the new normal period by implementing established health protocol standards. Making this certification is expected to be able to create a sense of security for tourists or potential tourists who are going on vacation to the city of Yogyakarta.

4.4. Communication Media

Department of Tourism of Yogyakarta uses social media such as Instagram and YouTube to convey information or messages related to the situation and conditions of tourism in the City of Yogyakarta. Social media was chosen because it has more engagement than other social media so that audiences who can reach the information provided by Department of Tourism of Yogyakarta are better responded to by the community (Pendakur, 2019).

Based on the interview results, one of the strategies used by the Department of Tourism of Yogyakarta in delivering interactive and updated information regarding the conditions and information on tourism in the City of Yogyakarta during the pandemic is to use the official website of the Department of Tourism of Yogyakarta. The website contains several recent news articles that inform about the condition of tourism in the city of Yogyakarta. In addition, there is also some information about events that have been and will be carried out by Department of Tourism of Yogyakarta during the pandemic. There is also a list of tourist destinations and hotels in the city of Yogyakarta. In addition, there is also an infographic that shows data on the number of tourist visits in previous years. The information presented on the website is quite complete and neatly arranged so that the audience can easily access information about tourism in the city of Yogyakarta.

5. Conclusion

The communication strategy implemented by Department of Tourism of Yogyakarta in promoting tourism during the Covid-19 pandemic is by implementing a communication strategy that aims to provide tourism information on the city of Yogyakarta to tourists and potential tourists with the tagline "Kangen Jogja". The Yogyakarta City Tourism Office has provided information on tourism messages consisting of three phases according to government instructions on various social media.

In addition to disseminating information, Department of Tourism of Yogyakarta also carried out a series of promotional activities, which were carried out in a hybrid manner (online and offline). Promotional activities such as advertising, personal selling, direct promotion, and public relations have been realized in activities such as Kangen Jogja, Jogja Vaganza, Dimas Diajeng, Allegorical Parade, Sarkem Fest, Regional Performances, and others. In disseminating information to the public, Department of Tourism of Yogyakarta uses communication media in the form of social media such as Instagram and YouTube, as well as websites. Social media is used in order to reach a more massive community. The website is used so that people can find various information, such as what events will be and have been carried out by Department of Tourism of Yogyakarta.
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