Tourist experience of Indonesia's tourism in the era of digitalization

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Abstract

Millennials are stakeholders as well as consumers of the tourism sector for a country. Millennials' needs, wants, habits, and behavior, especially regarding the use of new media in daily life, are seen as important things to pay attention to. Millennial characteristics, competitiveness and attractiveness of tourist destinations, and public relations are important concepts in this study. In this context, Malaysian tourists visiting Indonesia provided input regarding digital tourism in Indonesia. The main concepts used were Social Media and Digital Era for Tourism. Qualitative case studies were the research methodology in this study. The data collection technique used was in-depth interviews. The informants in this study were Malaysian tourists, totaling 6 people. The results show that the tourism experience of foreign tourists provides valuable information regarding the use of information and communication technology for better tourism in Indonesia.
Keywords: Tourism, Indonesia Digitalization, Malaysia Tourists.

Introduction

The Indonesian Government set a target of 20 million international visits in 2019. In order to achieve the target, there are some strategies to do (Bisnis.com, 2019). To meet the target, the Minister of Tourism prepared three strategies that comprise the strategies of ordinary, extra ordinary, and the super ordinary. One of the most strategic plans is focusing on ICT, that is Competing Destination Model (CDM). Arif Yahya (Minister of Tourism Indonesia 2019) said that CDM is important because, nowadays, almost 70% of people in the world search and share information through technology.

The development of the Travel 2.0 concept has been prompted by the application of technology in the travel and tourist sector. The primary focus of this idea is on the travel and tourism sector, which is now dealing with more sophisticated and new consumers as a result of simple access to consumer reviews of actual experiences. The tourism industry is undergoing a major transition from business-to-consumer to peer-to-peer commerce and communication methods (Dwityas & Briandana, 2017). The growth of traveler communities, whether they are based offline or online in various social media like blogs, Facebook, forums, and so on, provides real proof about these issues. Similar to what Berners-Lee mentioned, social media is a platform that allows for universal access to meeting, reading, and writing (Liu & Chou, 2016; Mowforth & Munt, 2015).

In Indonesia, there has been an increase in the number of communities formed by people with shared interests, particularly in the travel and tourism sector, both in terms of the communities' own existence and in terms of the people who join them (Buhalis & Amaranggana, 2015). According to Goeldner and Ritchie (2012), the term "traveler community" refers to a group of people who have established travel organizations for their mutual benefit and who occasionally have an interest (even if it is merely in travel) (Goeldner & Ritchie, 2007). Some of them, for instance, buy an airplane and then plan vacations for their members. The inherent traits of the traveler community closely resemble those of the "new travelers," who are increasingly in charge and playing a big role in the process of developing and molding the brand experience (Benur & Bramwell, 2015). Even when they are traveling with a particular community or group, people who exhibit these traits are frequently perceived as individuals rather than as members of a community or group. Similar to this point of view, Wellman explained that decisions made regarding tourism-related activities are made by an individual, not a collective (Mason & Paggiaro, 2012).

Ministry of Tourism also focuses on the super ordinary strategy, i.e. border tourism. One of

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the strategies is to promote border tourism. Indonesia's border tourism area with other countries such as Singapore, Malaysia, and East Timor will be intensively promoted. In addition, Indonesian Tourism Minister are also eager to tap into millennials market. According to the Minister of Tourism, millennial generations will be Indonesia's tourism target in 2019. He also mentions that millennials target will be 50% of total international tourist. The Millennials or Y generations—and is also referred as echo boomers—is a cohort born between 1980-1990, also early 2000 and after.

As generations, Ericson explain that millennials are those who are not limited by demographic characteristics, but their specific behavior and trends instead. Millennials are heavily influenced by information and technology. On average, they spend their time in front of mobile devices and gadget. ICT and social media are their main information sources (Kominfo.go.id, 2016). The Nielsen Global Survey of E-commerce as cited in Kompas found that millennials shopping behavior has changed. Millennials's purchase decision making is shaped by ICT. They tend to gather information and seek any information to fulfil their daily needs online (Kompas.com, 2019). Given the fact that technology is the important strategy of government to reach millennials, hence the researchers were led to carry out this research. Predicting millennials' desires and behavior, it is possible that millennials will share their experiences on social media and rely heavily on user reviews to make travel decisions.

In this context, the researchers highlighted technological problems and their relation to tourism in Indonesia. Tourism issues are the strategic priority for the Indonesian Ministry of Tourism from 2015 to 2021. Even during the COVID-19 pandemic, tourism is still a priority for the Indonesian government. In this case, the researcher wants to see how the role of technology in supporting tourism is played out from the point of view of foreign tourists who come from Malaysia. Based on this axiom, knowing millennial traveler's need is crucial and finding what is needed by Malaysian millennials as one of the neighborhood countries will be meaningful for Indonesia.

The phrase "Travel 2.0" describes the changes that have taken place in the tourist industry as a result of technological development, notably in the information and communication technology fields (Kurniawan et al., 2016). The phrase itself is from a Web 2.0 application used in the tourism industry, according to Philip Wolf (Kiráľová & Pavlíčeka, 2015). It facilitates simple access to a variety of experiences that other customers have had in the past, which is the key tenet of the Travel 2.0 notion about the assertion that the tourism sector is and will confront "new customers," i.e., customers with better control and information literacy (Sutono et al., 2018). Travel 2.0 offers numerous significant controls and features to travelers, and they can have an impact on the reputation and earnings of tourism locations, businesses, and organizations (Giaoutzi, 2017). Providing and exchanging information New tourists have begun to purchase tourism goods as a result of technical development, social welfare improvements, and changes in values and lifestyles (Walpole & Goodwin, 2000). The decision-making process is more in their hands for the clients mentioned above. Poon (1993) claims that new tourists are more aware, independent, individualistic, and engaged than previous ones (Benur & Bramwell, 2015; Buhalis & Amaranggana, 2015; Christou, 2016; Jaafar & Rasoolimanesh, 2015). The capabilities of internet technology are notably responsible for the information access that new tourists enjoy(Huang et al., 2016). Rifkin (2000) and According to Windham and Orton (2000), the internet, which offers inexpensive and convenient access to numerous information sources and a range of communities, empowers new travelers. Each user of the internet has access to personalization tools, and consumers anticipate that marketers will be able to identify and cater to their preferences. According to Gretzel, Fesenmaier, and O'Leary in Buhalis & Costa, 2006, p. 10, new visitors become more manageable and play a major role in the creation and establishment of brands and experiences, i.e. (1) travelers are those who become new technology users, (2) travelers are those who become co-producers of the impressive experiences, and (3) travelers are Storytellers (Goeldner & Ritchie, 2007; Wang & Fesenmaier, 2004).

Before choosing any strategies or techniques, it is essential to ascertain the demands of the stakeholders. Negative stakeholder or visitor experiences will harm the reputation of the travel location and the nation. Participants who are actively involved in the tourist sector might identify

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areas where a destination needs to improve. The viewpoint of a tourist stakeholder aids in identifying the advantages and disadvantages of developing ICT and tourism.

The experience of traveling is created by the traveler themselves. The exchanges and experiences that are had at the destination excite the inner mind's cognitive process, which then produces a reflective or emotive condition of experience. The individual's initial trip expectation and on-site interaction correspond to the emotional state, and both are influenced by the individual's motivation and mental state.

In other words, experience production is psychological in character, which contributes to its complexity. This entire process will affect the emotional state and experience of tourists. Even though people's reliance on virtual connectivity in daily life ensures that it is more than just a travel tool, technological experience is seen as a relevant new perspective of tourist experience formation that undoubtedly transforms the entire tourism industry (Mohd, Nur S. et al., 2018).

Every country's tourism industry is expanding, therefore a destination can get a competitive advantage by making purposeful efforts to strengthen their position and by creating strategies and regulations. Being unique entails both having a competitive advantage and being attractive. Both act as key determinants in the tourism industries. When a destination's market share is growing as indicated by visitor counts and financial gains, it can be called to be competitive (Lee et al., 2015).

The ideas of what competition is and how to measure it. Competitiveness has been correlated by a number of authors with economics, marketing, strategic perspectives, price, quality, and satisfaction (Orams, 1999). In a 2013 OECD publication, Dupeyras and Callum coordinated competitiveness indices. Three different categories of indicators—core, supplemental, and for future development—can be used in the measurement framework to assess competitiveness in the tourism industry.

A destination's appeal is a reflection of how its visitors feel and think about how well-suited it is to meet their needs. According to Johnson (2017), a place is viewed as more attractive and is more likely to be picked the more it can accommodate tourists' needs. Johnson also cites the following as contributing aspects to a destination's allure and its characteristics:

1. Safety & Security – aspects including the cleanliness of the spa's amenities, the safety of the bathing environment, the accessibility of emergency medical services, personal safety, and the overall hygiene and security of the location are employed as qualities.
2. Transit Infrastructure: Convenient access to the destination, dependable public transit, a good local transportation system, and plenty of parking spaces are employed as features.
3. Leisure and Recreation – Factors utilized as qualities include seasonal recreation, outdoor adventure, and souvenir buying. Special events and festivals are another.
4. Seasonal menu options, authentic recipes and ingredients, and health-conscious gourmet are employed as attributes in the food industry.
5. Accommodations: Capacity and superior quality of accommodations are employed as qualities.
6. Cultural Assets – Factors that are qualities include historical sites and guided excursions.
7. Natural resources: abundant natural hot springs, high-quality natural hot springs, and rich natural landscape are employed as qualities.

According to Vengensayi and Mavondo (2009), there are various categories of destination attractions. In some cases, it is clear that various attractions differ from one another. Theoretical studies have attempted to connect the number of visitors and the sufficiency of various tourist locations and support services. According to Vengensayi (2003), a place's appeal is a reflection of how its visitors feel and think about how well-suited it is to meet their needs. A destination's perceived attractiveness and likelihood of selection increase in direct proportion to how well it can accommodate tourists' needs. The Goeldner attractions were divided into five major categories by Vengensayi (2003): cultural, natural, events, recreation, and entertainment.

Method

In this study, researchers used a qualitative research design, aims to describe or explain something as it is so that the object under study can be discussed in depth. As for the descriptive research design, researchers used the case study method. A case study is a research method that

examines a case intensively, in depth, in detail, and comprehensively (Yin, 2013). Case studies can be conducted on individuals or groups.

In a study that uses this method, various variables are examined and traced, including the possible relationship between existing variables (Yin, 2013). Hence, case study research may give birth to explanatory statements. Elvinaro quoted Cozby that a case study provides a description of an individual. This individual is usually a person, but it can also be a place such as a company, school, and neighborhood (Creswell & Miller, 1997).

Primary data were gathered through in-depth interview with the informants. The categories of informant were: (1) Millennials in various age range; (2) Gender; (3) Frequencies of visiting Indonesia; (4) Area or tourism destination; (4) Media exposure. Secondary data were collected through literature and any available supporting documents

Results and Discussion

Sharing Experience

In accordance with the analysis of the interview results conducted with informants who are Malaysian teenagers regarding their experiences traveling in Indonesia, it was found that social media play a role as the main source of information in every stage of tourism decision making that each informant experiences. Sharing experiences is a modification of the study of sharing knowledge in the context of tourism as a whole. According to Kang and Schuett (2013), sharing travel experiences on social media is a behavior or activity that occurs when a person spreads experiences related to travel to other members through social media. In the tourism industry, knowledge sharing refers to the desire of travel members to exchange their experiences with other members.

Knowledge sharing involves community members in various activities including sharing experiences, skills, knowledge, and interests (Ridings, Gefen, & Arinze, 2002). Munar and Jacobsen (2014) grouped the factors that motivate tourists to share their travel experiences through social media into 2 large groups, i.e. 1) Self-centered motivation and 2) Community-related motivation.

The results of this study indicate that Malaysian informants who shared their experiences of traveling to Indonesia had various views. In this case, however, they provide their experiences when traveling to Indonesia. The informants made the following statements:

"I think there are a lot more in Indonesia. But it's not very different. Because Indonesia you can differentiate, like, from the facial features, like the color of the skin and such. But in Indonesia, it's not that different." (Informant 2)

"I'm just excited for the food. Because I know that Indonesian likes to eat spicy food. So I was like, when I went to Indonesia, I was like, I was up to the challenge, and I so it's very nice." (Informant 3)

"When I first planned to go to Indonesia, I was three, I think I was around eight or seven. So but I do know, because my dad told me that it was such a big country, it is still a big country. So I was looking forward to it. And also, I think I was really looking forward to it. The building there for some reason. Because I want to see I want to compare how Jakarta looks like compared to KL and such, and how the beach is there. And I wasn't really looking forward to it. Because my dad always say that he said spicy food. They have spicy food. And I'm not really good with spicy stuff." (Informant 4)

"I was actually scared. I was young. I was 11 I think. I mean, I was scared that people might be aggressive, because I don't know football fans are aggressive to me, they can get aggressive, especially males. So us get that the people there might not actually harm or maybe attack us Malaysians. So I was a bit scared. But then when I went there, the people are actually nice. Everyone is nice there they treat us nicely and some of them are very soft spoken. And then of course like my mom told me Bandung and Jakarta are nice places to shop. So I was looking forward to shop for more clothes and stuff." (Informant 5).

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"First my impression Before I went to image freeze, I think they seem like athirah like, a bit scared, because I was careful with the people, they're being aggressive. And then but then when I when there is very nice, they are very friendly. And then I am also excited about their foods, because they are very famous with spicy foods like so. And I also like to eat spicy [food]. But then when I went there, and I eat the foods in Indonesia, I can't handle that. And then also the scenery and things to show because they also they always told us that Bandung is a good place to shop and yeah, it's very nice experience." (Informant 6)

Regarding the informant's experience of visiting Indonesia, the researcher asked the informants to answer what things really interest them most, which will increase their interest in visiting Indonesia in the future, and what factors made the informants decide to go and visit Indonesia again next time.

"For me, I think it would be the people itself because they were so friendly and quite welcoming. I mean, we can see those differences. I mean, in UK, it's the same thing. We have some groups that are very, very welcoming. They're very friendly. And also some that are like they're quite protected, quite keeping it to themselves. But we don't see that quite much. We just focus on the world coming by. And also the food and the scenery because for me, because I went to the two places that tourists usually go to in Indonesia Lombok, Bali, and Bandung. And in Bandung I really liked the weather, It's not cool, but it's quite chill." (Informant 4)

"We just visited like Kawah Putih. And also I don't remember, like, it was a coffee at the light on the mountain, because one of the students from the Telkom university work there. But if I can go there, I want to go to the floating market, because I was looking forward to eat the food there. Because we had no chance during our exchange program, and also, I want to go to the Tangkuban Perahu. Now, because like when I was looking for the pictures from the Google, or also the Instagram, it was so nice, but we had no chance to go there. So I think if I can go to Bandung again." (Informant 3)

"I think they call it *tempat wisata*. I want to visit it, especially Jogjakarta because my sister had been there and all our pictures are nice, the scenery were also nice so I'm so tempted to go there. The ambience, the lighting was very romantic. We had to find out actually, so I was looking for it to go there again, especially with my family." (Informant 5)

"If I had a chance I want to go to the mountain to hide or maybe some mention and I remember when I went to Bali immersion has this like culture. When I went to Bali I saw that. They get tense, like fire something like that. So it's like oh, it's interesting. And everyone like watching that and it's kind of different from other country." (Informant 2)

The informants also revealed information related to tourism accommodation in Indonesia based on their experience while visiting tourist attractions in Indonesia.

"I think [the problem in] Indonesia is the traffic. It is very busy, especially in the evening. If you want to go somewhere there's so [many vehicles], especially motorcycle, right?" (Informant 1)

"For me tourism infrastructure to Indonesia is not all good, some roads are damaged, jammed, and facilities such as public toilets and clinics near tourist attractions are not available. Because my brother had fallen and needed medicine for first aid." (Informant 6)
"Transportation is very easy, because I think they use the Grab system better than Malaysia, when I went there by Malaysia is improving now. And also they have the like, you have choices like Gojek. I think just that my tip the traffic, it's just the traffic. But other than that, I think it's very good. Because, um, even though the traffic is like that, and everything, you

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see, like very less accidents happen, because people are ready assembly and adapt to how the traffic is. And yeah, I think it's convenient, it's quite convenient. But sometimes at rush hour, or, like, those times, it's took me a long time to reach somewhere like, I think we went to went to go to Roma from the university is supposed to take like 20 to half an hour, but because it's rush hour in such, it's like, an hour or something. So yeah, just because of the traffic. But other than that, we use Grab lot there. And it's very convenient, because it's there's a lot of choices. And also it's fast. me like one and then they're like, they're just like, three to five minutes away from you." (Informant 7)

"The different thing is the traffic is very jam that might check, and then it's very convenient for us to book a grab. So like, just book, and they they can arrive in like three minutes something but due to the trophy we the estimate time arrival to the place that we want to go like, we differ from what we search like maybe like, because when I went I think I went with like a small group, like maybe with Sarah and athirah during that time, we want to go just like maybe five kilometers." (Informant 4)

ICT and Tourism Experience

Based on the results of this study, the informants' experiences related to ICT were discussed when they came to Indonesia. Current technology not only affects daily life and behavior, but also affects the development of the tourism industry. Along with advances in technology, especially the internet, it is one of the most important parts of sharing information. New media introduce new possibilities to provide opportunities and challenges for those involved in the tourism sector.

"When in Indonesia, every day I will check on internet, like: Are there any places we can visit? So we came up with many cases." (Informant 2)

"I use internet to check the distance of the places, some can be near each other, but if you want to go that far, a bit far to the countryside is, like, all the places you can just check it out before you go. So you can estimate like the time where when you want to go, if you want to go fast, we have to, we have to like you're always." (Informant 4)

"Yeah, I did a lot of research on the internet. Because when we go to the, like Bali, lombok. And bandung, we try to find places that we want to go like it's interested for interesting for us to go and visit and activities that people usually do there. And sometimes it's not only on Google or website, it's also on like Facebook, because facebook, facebook groups that have like, people sharing the itinerary when they go and such. So usually we just, I just researched it and put it in my list of things to to do or places to go. And also activities that we can go. But for like food. Usually when I'm at that place itself when I arrive, and when we're finding the food and stuff, only then I'll do my research. So back in Malaysia just to the research on places to go and things to do food." (Informant 5)

I also did a research before and because when we joined the exChange program we had like a chat group on WhatsApp. So we do share some links that we can look about bundung, and also search for things to avoid in our things not to do in Indonesia that might offend the people in there. So I think like, is quite similar, I think maybe pretty similar. And same with Malaysia, like you can join the race ethnicity and also you cant drink alcohol publicly is the same thing. (Informant 3)

"I watch like a vlog lots of people going to Indonesia and also yes, just made a research on Instagram, like, I put on tags, like bandung and thay can show beautiful places." (Informant 6)

"Lembang has the official website or page of the place went to see the price and search the opening hours, just things like that. But like official page from Kementrian Indonesia,

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things. We don't usually go on those type of websites a lot or every day because we just call it when you Google it. The first thing that we see is what we click. So sometimes not the first thing that we see are the government sites and such. But for other places no information from website, I just checked by instagram or facebook." (Informant 7)

The media also has an important role in providing information to the public. In this context, the informants tell about the media that give them positive impressions.

"My suggestion is that maybe try to I think it's everyone wants to promote, like just beautiful things, no one wants to show their flaw. So try to maybe be more transparent. Also update more frequently on the place on the conditions itself. Like maybe if they have they can suggest like when to visit the place like they say like, okay, during this time you say there's gonna be a lot of people, blah, blah, blah, something like that. And don't come like during the season because it's going to be like raining all the time in such an effective experience. Or maybe some of the like, advice, I mean, tips, more tips, instead of just information they should also include like tips and such. Like maybe we step people can go how to go there, because they always left out that kind of information that people have to go there and then search it for themselves or even pay for to Skype and such. So it would be better if it's just why people tend to see vlogs or Facebook group shares because they also include the cheapest way you can go there or do and also how you can want to go there you need to take this thing to take this math or science To display so, yeah, I think I'd add more information. For the portrayal itself, I think, be more transparent. Just be more transparent if people want to be like, maybe tune more towards, like not only beauty, but history of the place or things that can catch the attention. Instead of just being at like, let's see danau toba, but it's really beautiful, but also just putting the the story because I was intrigued to him because of the story. And I know the place that really exists and then I, then only I googled for the place." (Informant 4)

"I think like for the information that we get from the media, I think it really helps us very much because I like to search something like famous please Of course, and also like the hidden gems in in Like, Indonesia, hidden gems, it helps a lot. But maybe because of, we didn't get like, very much details on the the timing on what? What time should we go there." (Informant 5)

"The information that the media provide it can it's sufficient enough but if you want to if you want more details more specific you have to look for it like watching other people who have been there by the official so they show they show sufficient information about your country about your country like how to go there which basis can you go interesting places that you can go by some maybe some other website is not enough, now they have many new places that you can maybe is more interesting than the other." (Informant 6)

The results of the analysis show that male and female informants show higher experience of self-centered motivation. Men have traditionally been driven by self-efficacy, self-assertion, and achievement orientation. However, not for these tourists, both male and female informants were driven by self-focused motivation. This means that both male and female informants have the same motivation in sharing their tourism experiences through social media. When tourists miss the past or moments during their travel, they can review the results of photo documentation, videos, and stories of their travel on social media.

The role of information in the process of sharing tourism experiences with Malaysian youth informants does not only appear at the information gathering stage. Information is there and plays an important part in each stage. The information referred to here is information that is created and uploaded by other users.

At the initial stage, i.e. at the stage of introducing the need for tourism, the informants responded to those on social media as stimuli that assisted them in recognizing the need or desire to

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carry out tourism activities. The informants access content on social media as a daily activity, and when accessing social media with content about tourism, the informants respond to the content by viewing pictures, watching videos, or reading text. These activities assist informants to recognize or realize the need or desire for tourism, and also specifically for tourism in certain areas in Indonesia.

In the next stage, the informant introduces the need or desire for tourism. Here the informants collect information to fulfill these needs. Information gathering is a process by which informants conduct research on their environment with the aim of obtaining appropriate data as a basis for making appropriate decisions.

The activities carried out by the informants were making additional preparations and also tourism experiences. In the additional preparation stage, the informants enriched information about tourism products needed in tourist destinations through social media. Because the need for information at this stage is an "immediate" need so that the search for information sources carried out by the informant leads to interactive information sources, or information sources that can directly provide answers to the informants' information needs, for example by using keywords in search.

Conclusion

Social media as a new platform provide an opportunity for marketers in the tourism industry to carry out a marketing strategy that is more focused on consumers. The complexity of travel behavior forces marketers to be able to build and develop a marketing strategy based on an understanding of consumer behavior that develops.

This research in particular can be an input for the tourism industry and other industries that depart from an understanding of the experiences of tourists in the information age. The development of Information and Communication Technology has encouraged travelers to have more control over the process of fulfilling their needs. Today's consumers have changed from passive consumers to be much more active. They search for information to meet their needs with a wider range of sources than before.

Social media is one of the promising media for today's tourism strategy. This is not only because it has become an inseparable part of the life of modern society, but also because consumers now think that social media is more trusted content compared to content delivered by marketers or company.

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