ABSTRACT

Objective: This article will describe how the CPUGP Management Board utilizes social media in the diffusion of geotourism as a form of sustainable tourism development.

Method: The method used in this research is qualitative. The researchers obtained primary data from interviews and observation. Then for secondary data, the researchers obtained it from documents related to the management of the CPUGP.

Result: Media has a major role in the diffusion of information about Ciletuh Geopark. It is done through various platforms, either mass, non-mass or online media. The results showed that despite the diffusion, the Board faced several social media management problems, from personnel to equipment to third-party management.

Conclusion: The addition of public relations personnel will certainly help the diffusion or communication process to be more effective. Moreover, the addition of hardware will allow public relations to deliver messages about sustainable tourism development in the Geopark more quickly.

Keywords: diffusion, social media, geotourism, geopark, sustainable tourism development.

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RESUMO

Objetivo: Este artigo descreverá como o Conselho de Administração da CPUGGp utiliza as mídias sociais na difusão do geoturismo como forma de desenvolvimento turístico sustentável.

Método: O método utilizado nesta pesquisa é qualitativo. Os pesquisadores obtiveram dados primários a partir de entrevistas e observações. Em seguida, para os dados secundários, os pesquisadores obtiveram-nos a partir de documentos relacionados à gestão da CPUGGp.

Resultado: A mídia tem um papel importante na difusão de informações sobre o Geoparque Ciletuh. Isso é feito através de várias plataformas, seja de massa, não-massa ou mídia online. Os resultados mostraram que, apesar da difusão, o Conselho enfrentou vários problemas de gestão de mídias sociais, de pessoal para equipamentos para gestão de terceiros.

Conclusão: A inclusão de pessoal de relações públicas certamente ajudará o processo de difusão ou comunicação a ser mais eficaz. Além disso, a adição de hardware permitirá que as relações públicas emitem mensagens sobre o desenvolvimento do turismo sustentável no Geopark mais rapidamente.

Palavras-chave: difusão, mídia social, geoturismo, geoparque, desenvolvimento sustentável do turismo.

1 INTRODUCTION

Tourism has become one of Indonesia’s priority sectors. Based on the 2020-2024 National Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN), it is known that foreign exchange from the tourism sector is expected to reach USD 30 billion, employment in the tourism sector to be 15 million people, and tourism’s contribution to GDP to reach 5.5 percent. These prospects should be best utilized in order to meet the needs of tourists and the tourism industry, as well as to make it a source of livelihood for local people. Therefore, tourism must be developed in a sustainable manner. Sustainable tourism development should refer to qualitative growth, where it can be ecologically supported in the longterm while being economically viable, ethically fair and socially acceptable (Sustainable Tourism Charter in (Pitana & Diarta, 2019)).

The concept of sustainable tourism development is derived from sustainable development. In general, development involves maintaining ecological integrity and diversification, meeting basic human needs, opening up choices for future generations, lowering injustice, and enhancing self-determination for local people (Dorcey in (Picard, 2006). Thus, the goal of sustainable development must adhere to three principles: (1)
ecological sustainability; (2) socio-cultural sustainability; and (3) economic sustainability, where the ability to meet today's needs does not compromise that of the future generations.

Geotourism is a sustainable natural tourism activity with a primary focus on the geological surface of the earth in order to encourage understanding of environment and culture, appreciation and conservation, and concern for preservation of local wisdom. Geotourism offers natural tourism and highlights the beauty, uniqueness, rarity, and wonder of a natural phenomenon that is closely related to geological characteristics and described in popular or simple language (Kusumahbrata, 1999 in (Hidayat, 2002)). Thus, it can be concluded that geotourism is a concept of sustainable tourism.

The regulation of the Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy/Head of the Tourism and Creative Economy Agency of the Republic of Indonesia Number 2 of 2020 states that geotourism is an effort to develop geoparks. On the other hand, according to UNESCO (2004), geopark is an area with outstanding geology, i.e. archaeological, ecological, and cultural values, that involves local communities to protect and complement natural heritage functions (Zakaria, 2018: 65).

Ciletuh-Palabuhanratu Geopark has been designated as part of the Unesco Global Geopark (UGG) since April 17, 2018 by the Program and External Relations Commission through the UNESCO Executive Board's 204th session in Paris-France. The designation makes Ciletuh-Palabuhanratu Geopark (CPUGGp) the only area in West Java that is currently recognized by the world (Raharjo et al., 2019). This is certainly a source of pride for West Java, a province with many natural resources that can serve as a sustainable tourism destination.

It is not easy to communicate a new concept or idea to the public. In this case, geotourism can be seen as a new concept with innovations for sustainable tourism development, especially geoparks. As an innovation, it is necessary to diffuse the concept to make it accepted and implemented by the community and all parties involved in tourism development, especially in existing tourism areas, where the community and stakeholders are accustomed to the existing tourism management. The presence of new concepts or ideas will require a lot of effort to replace those that already exist.

Diffusion is a specialized communication that deals with the dissemination of messages as new ideas, while innovations are ideas, practices or objects that are considered new by individuals or groups of people (E. M. Rogers, 2003). New in this case
is not solely in terms of the time since the innovation was discovered or first used. According to Rogers and Shoemaker, it is the novelty in perception or subjective novelty for an individual that determines his reaction to the innovation. In other words, if something is new to an individual, then it is an innovation. Similarly, geotourism is new to people who are used to general tourism development.

Geotourism must be properly diffused to make it adopted and implemented by the community in their longstanding tourism management. This adoption process is influenced by a factor called the five characteristics of innovations. Individuals’ perceptions of them can predict their adoption rates. Thus, this article will describe how the CPUGGp Management Board utilizes social media in the diffusion of geotourism as a form of sustainable tourism development.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

The diffusion of innovations theory proposed by Everett M. Rogers serves as the foundational framework for the current research. This theory, introduced in 1962, has significantly impacted various academic disciplines, including sociology, communication, marketing, and public health.

At its core, the theory posits that the adoption of innovations follows a predictable pattern within a social system, allowing individuals to be classified into distinct adopter groups based on their readiness to embrace new ideas (P. S. Rogers & Ross, 2013). Rogers delineates five adopter categories: innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority, and laggards, representing a spectrum from those quick to adopt innovations to those resistant to change.

Key elements of the diffusion of innovations theory include:
1. Innovation Attributes: Innovations possess specific attributes that influence their adoption. These attributes include relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability, and observability. Innovations perceived as having greater relative advantage, compatibility with existing values, simplicity, trialability, and observability are more likely to be adopted.
2. Communication Channels: The theory underscores the role of communication channels in the diffusion process. Various channels, such as interpersonal communication, mass media, and social networks, play vital roles in
disseminating information about innovations. The choice of communication channels can significantly impact the rate and extent of adoption.

3. Social Systems: Rogers emphasizes the significance of social systems in the diffusion of innovations. These systems encompass networks of individuals, organizations, and communities that influence the decision to adopt. The social context, norms, and interpersonal relationships within a system profoundly shape the diffusion process.

4. Time: The diffusion process unfolds gradually over time. Rogers introduced a diffusion curve that illustrates the adoption pattern, depicting the percentage of adopters at each stage of the process. This temporal aspect highlights that the diffusion of innovations is not instantaneous but evolves over a period.

5. Adopter Categories: Individuals are categorized into adopter groups based on their willingness to adopt innovations. Innovators and early adopters, being more adventurous and open to change, stand in contrast to the early and late majorities, which represent a more cautious majority. Laggards, resistant to change, typically adopt innovations only when they become a social necessity.

In this research, the focus is specifically on the communication channels employed in the diffusion process of the geotourism concept as a novel idea within the development of sustainable tourism in the Geopark Ciletuh Palabuhanratu region. Building upon Everett M. Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations Theory, the study explores how communication channels play a pivotal role in disseminating information about the geotourism concept and influencing its adoption within the social systems of the Geopark community.

3 METHODOLOGY

The method used in this research is qualitative. This was because in this research, the researchers sought to explore in detail how the diffusion was applied in the implementation of geotourism in sustainable tourism development in Ciletuh-Palabuhanratu UNESCO Global Geopark.

Using this method, researchers can see the natural state of the object of research (Sugiyono, 2016). The researchers were the key instruments of this research and the data source was the informants selected by snowball and purposive methods. The key
informants of this research were members of the Ciletuh-Palabuhanratu UNESCO Global Geopark (CPUGGp) Management Board, represented by a member of secretariat, two division heads, and a staff. Other informants were other stakeholders: communities; local people of tourist destinations; managers of tourist destinations; business people of tourist destinations such as shopkeepers/merchants and inn/homestay owners; and domestic tourists either from the Geopark area or those from the outside.

In this study, researchers used primary and secondary data. The researchers obtained primary data from interviews with informants and observation of geopark development activities at several geosites and social media used to socialize the geotourism concept of the CPUGGp. In terms of secondary data, the researchers obtained it from documents related to the management of the CPUGGp, especially the utilization of communication media. Since the method was qualitative, and thus data analysis was inductive, the results of research emphasized insights, not generalization. Therefore, researchers triangulated sources to support the collected data. In addition, the techniques of data analysis involved data reduction, data display, and data conclusion/verification.

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The diffusion of information about geotourism development in Ciletuh Geopark is conducted through media. Rogers (1983) suggests that diffusion is a process in which innovations are communicated through certain channels within a certain period of time among members of a social system. In this case, Ciletuh Geopark applies the diffusion through both mass and non-mass media. However, since the development of social media, the Management Board has also increased the role of non-mass media, in this case social media, to reach a more diverse public.

Technology plays a crucial role in social innovations, whether through the provision of replacements for outmoded technologies or through the provision of a socio-technical infrastructure for the development of such innovations, facilitating widespread collaboration and the development of novel economic models (Sharma & Singh, 2023). The diffusion of the innovations of Ciletuh Geopark (hereafter the Geopark) through mass media is authorized and managed by relevant agencies of Sukabumi Regency. The CPUGGp Management Board (hereafter the Board) acts as a referrer, coordinates with related agencies on information to convey, and becomes the gatekeeper of mass-media information. The government, in this case the relevant agencies, act as a
mass media facilitator, especially in financing the media operations such as making pamphlets and brochures and coordinating with electronic and print media to deliver information about the Geopark. The Board plays more of a role in the management of non-mass media of the Geopark.

This research results sub-chapter describes the digital media used by the Board for the diffusion of information about the Geopark. Facebook becomes the main social media. This is because it is UNESCO's main one. Nevertheless, the CPUGGp also use other social media, including Instagram, Twitter, Youtube, and Website. In some posts, the Board feature hyperlinks in platforms they use.

Online media or new media is a communication medium that utilizes the internet, whereas the internet is a network of computers. The network is continuously available as electronic messages, including e-mail, file transmission, and two-way communication between individuals or computers (Haryoputro, 2015). The application of media strategy by the CPUGGp stakeholders, especially the Board, is mainly based on non-mass media. This is partly because the pandemic that began in 2020, which required everyone to stay at home, created a new culture.

This, which encouraged the use of technology to stay adaptable to the situation, became a good opportunity for the Board to implement information diffusion. Thus, the management innovated by using online media in publishing, documenting, and providing information because it made it easier to reach audiences without direct interaction. People are influenced by the internet through characteristics including communication, entertainment, social interactions, and product selections (Murugaiah et al., 2023).

The Board chose Facebook as their main social media for information diffusion. The reason is that it is the main platform of UNESCO and the UN. UNESCO Paris rarely live streams on Instagram, Twitter or Youtube. As a result, the main source of information is Facebook. Thus, in terms of data collection, other CPUGGp social media dossiers were only used for comparison. Dedi Suhendar as the public relations officer of CPUGGp stated:
"The official accounts of the UN or UNESCO global management are mainly on Facebook. The UNESCO of Paris, the headquarter, usually live stream on Facebook, rarely on Instagram. So, inevitably, Facebook is our main platform now. Instagram is only a supplement or comparison when collecting data in the dossier. So, if according to the dossier the archive should be submitted to Paris in two years, we'll use Facebook.” (Dedi Suhendar, 2022)

Apart from Facebook, the CPUGGp also use other social media, including Instagram, Twitter, Youtube, and Website. In terms of publishing a post, Facebook and Instagram are easier.

"Page. We have two accounts on Facebook: personal and page. The page is linked to the Instagram account in order to maximize the latter account. And, so, we created it first. Now, Facebook is linked to Instagram. So, like it or not, I should manage Instagram and Facebook in Meta, specifically in Facebook's Meta management. Thus, I can share a post to several accounts at once.” (Dedi Suhendar, 2022)

Since the two platforms now work together, when a post is published on Facebook, it will automatically be published on Instagram as well. This media strategy practice is in accordance with one of the five characteristics of digital media according to Lister et al (2009), namely hypertextual. However, not all platforms can make a post with a hyperlink to another ones. One which can is Facebook, where a page can directly post to an Instagram account. It is different from Twitter, which requires manual caption (Dovey et al., 2009). This is in line with Dedi Suhendar said:

"We have two accounts on Facebook: personal and page. The page is linked to the Instagram account in order to maximize the latter account. And, so, we created it first. Now, Facebook is linked to Instagram. So, like it or not, I should manage Instagram and Facebook in Meta, specifically in Facebook's Meta management. Thus, I can share a post to several accounts at once.” (Dedi Suhendar, 2022)

YouTube posts are also different from those on other social media, because they are videos and descriptions.

The following is a list of social media of the Board, where each of them conveys messages in different ways, and their examples of posts.
4.1 FACEBOOK (@CILETUHGEOPARK)

The Facebook page of Ciletuh-Palabuhanratu UNESCO Global Geopark was created in 2013, with 9,724 likes and 10,151 followers (as of October 29, 2022). The cover displays the official logos of Ciletuh-Palabuhanratu UNESCO Global Geopark (CPUGGp) and the UNESCO. This account is managed by Sukabumiface. It contains all the activities at CPUGGp and important world events.

Figure 1 The Cover of Facebook of Ciletuh-Palabuhanratu UNESCO Global Geopark

![Figure 1](https://www.facebook.com/ciletuhgeopark/?locale=id_ID, 2022)

In this post, there is a collage and logos of various relevant stakeholders, coupled with a caption that explains the content and includes relevant social media accounts or campaign hashtags.

4.2 INSTAGRAM (@CILETUH)

Unlike those on Facebook and Twitter, the cover of the Instagram account has only a profile picture and no background. The account has 16,600 followers, 302
following, and 1,790 posts (as of October 29, 2022). Unlike on other platforms, the CPUGGp make use of the highlight feature here. The earliest post on Instagram was in 2015.

![Figure 3 The Cover of Instagram @ciletuh](https://www.instagram.com/ciletuh/?hl=en, 2022)

Obviously, the Instagram account @ciletuh has the same contents and captions as those on Facebook, because they are automatically posted on Instagram. Therefore, there will be no difference between posts on Instagram and Facebook. This post has 7 likes.

![Figure 4 Same Instagram post as Facebook one](https://www.instagram.com/ciletuh/?hl=en, 2022)

4.3 TWITTER (@CILETUHGEOPARK)

The Twitter cover is nearly as same as that of Facebook, with the logos of UNESCO dan Ciletuh Pelabuhanratu Unesco Global Geopark, with 1,358 followers (as
of October 29, 2022) and contents similar to those on the other social media, namely documentations of activities and world events.

![Figure 5 The Cover of Twitter @ciletuhgeopark](source=https://twitter.com/ciletuhgeopark?lang=en, 2022)

On Twitter, with the same contents as those on Instagram and Facebook, the CPUGGp has 1,358 followers, 8 retweets, and 6 likes on the International Day for the Risk Reduction. However, it differs in captions, which contain only headlines, in designs, and in tagging. The reason is that Twitter is not interconnected with Facebook and Instagram. Thus, it requires manual captioning.

![Figure 6 An Example of a Post on Twitter @ciletuhgeopark](source=https://twitter.com/ciletuhgeopark?lang=en, 2022)
4.4 YOUTUBE (CILETUH-PELABUHANRATU UNESCO GLOBAL GEOPARKS)

Figure 7 YouTube Channel of Ciletuh-Palabuhanratu UNESCO Global Geopark

Source: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC6gityVj1N4jZcX9wVl6MZQ, 2022

This is the official Youtube of the CPUGGp, which contains videos of activities in the Geopark area, with an average number of views of 20 (as of October 29, 2022).

4.5 WEBSITE

Figure 8 The Homepage of the Ciletuh Geopark Website

Source: https://ciletuhpalabuhanratuuugg.id/home/, 2022

This website helps the development and implementation of geotourism by the Board. It contains information about the CPUGGp, from geotourism to partnerships to events, and more. This website is very helpful for tour guides and tourists. Since the information is actual and factual, it is easy for travelers and tour guides to find credible information. This was said by a tour guide named Ade at Curug Cisodong "Like tourists, I get information from the social media and website of Ciletuh Geopark." (Ade, 2022)
4.6 PINTEREST (@CILETUHPALABUHANRATU)

The cover of Pinterest contains the logos of UNESCO and Ciletuh-Pelabuhanratu Unesco Global Geopark. The account has 8 followers and 1,400 monthly views (as of October 29, 2022).

The CPUGGp doesn't post on Pinterest as actively as it does on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. It has a lesser traffic since there is no posts about the CPUGGp activities and major events. Most of the contents is information about geosites in Ciletuh.

In terms of social media management, CPUGGp has only one manager, Dedi Suhendar, who serves as Public Relations. From Twitter, Facebook, Website, Instagram, Pinterest to Facebook, all are managed by himself. The reason is that it is quite difficult to teach the social media management to the members of the Board. Thus, it makes him...
manage it alone. This is because he was once the media manager of @Sukabumiface, making him understand the characteristics of each social media.

As the social media manager and public relations officer, he cannot document all activities by himself. However, he gets help from the surrounding community to get information. In addition, the development and enlivenment of the CPUGGp is also helped by videos from tourists. In fact, some tourists know about CPUGGp from viral videos made by other tourists. The communities also take part in documenting and disseminating information about the activities, and therefore he used them as sources as well. Thus, data on social media posts was obtained from the management board, various communities, and local people.

4.7 IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGY

In terms of implementation of geotourism concept in the development of sustainable tourism in Ciletuh, especially that in social media, the Board obtained the information from communities. This pattern shows the main role of the communities in the implementation. It can be referred to as community-based tourism, one of sustainable tourism principles. Its main requirement is that it must be carried out based on initiatives and encouragement for the benefit of the community. In addition, they must also be given the opportunity to be involved in the whole process of planning and implementing the development (Nasikun, 2000).

In terms of diffusion, members of a community, for the Management Board, are the main source of information about Ciletuh Geopark to spread. The concept of community involvement in tourism management is known as the bottom-up model. It takes into account tourism management in the following ways: (1) paying attention to physical preservation; (2) applying the snowball process, where implementation starts from a small scope with simple problems to activities that require a wider scope with complex problems that require interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral collaboration; and (3) people-centered management, where the community is not only given the opportunity to be involved in an activity but also guided to manage it (Setyastuti, 2005).

This is supported by the Regulation of the Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy Number 2 of 2020 concerning the Development of Earth Parks or Geoparks where active community involvement is needed. In addition, (DeSeve, 2007) states that
geopark management collaboration may fail if the approach is still top-down or starts from government policy. Therefore, a bottom-up approach must be taken.

However, in terms of implementation, it will not happen by itself. Collecting information about activities in Ciletuh Geopark should be the task and role of the Board through their public relations officers. However, due to limited resources and equipment, they rely on the community to provide information about activities in the field, from details to documentation.

The collected information is processed based on needs, with media and message strategies described in the previous sub-chapter, and then published through the official social media. The message will be posted to Facebook first, the main social media, and then to the other platforms through hyperlinks, enabling multiple posts in just one click. However, Twitter posts need some adjustment in caption due to limitations of a tweet.

4.8 PROBLEMS WITH COMMUNICATION MEDIA MANAGEMENT

There are some obstacles in the implementation of the geopark concept. The main obstacle is the management of Ciletuh Geopark's social media, which is currently managed by one person, Dedi Suhendra as the Geopark's public relations officer. He has no staff to help him. From coordinating with the community to collect and process data for the contents to designing and publishing them to various platforms, he does it all by himself. This can hinder the flow of information to the public. Moreover, if there is an error in the initial post, it will affect the following publications.

Furthermore, the limited equipment of the Board also hampers the creativity in content creation. They only receive information from the community, and thereby they cannot create their own concept for their contents. This issue is closely related to the availability of photography, videography, computer and mobile devices for the social media manager. Currently, the equipment is inadequate to manage the Geopark's official social media.

The second problem is related to the management of the official ebsite. So far, the management of the website has been the responsibility of the Communication and Information Office (Diskominfo) of Sukabumi Regency, not the Board. This interferes with updating content and information about activities in the Geopark since the main flow of information is from the Board. Given that the website is managed by another organization, information updates will potentially be much delayed. Other cases include
late payments for the website's domain name. As a result, it is often claimed by other institutions, and it has to be changed again and again. Therefore, it would be better if the website management is also handed over to the Board to centralize the flow of information through a one-stop approach.

5 CONCLUSION

Media has a major role in the diffusion of information about Ciletuh Geopark. It is done through various platforms, either mass, non-mass or online media. The mass and non-mass media are managed by the Sukabumi Regency Tourism and Culture Office and the Sukabumi Regency Communication and Information Office. The Board only acts as a referrer and gatekeeper of the messages to publish and an evaluator of the published messages. The CPUGGp's official social media is managed by the Board through their public relations. They use Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Youtube, and Pinterest to diffuse information and promote the Geopark.

Limited personnel and equipment are the problems in the implementation of media management, especially social media. The entire social media is only managed by one personnel with limited equipment. This is certainly not effective. The addition of PR personnel will certainly help the diffusion or communication process to be more effective. Moreover, the addition of hardware will allow PR to deliver messages about sustainable tourism development in the Geopark more quickly.

The Geopark's website, which is not directly managed by the Board, is another obstacle to the delivery of information. The website management by the Diskominfo has the potential to delay information updates because the Board is the one who knows the latest information. Therefore, even though the official website was built by the Diskominfo, the researchers suggested that it be managed directly by the Board to allow for a quicker and more precise update.
REFERENCES


