Folklore Branding Strategy towards Tourism Destination in West Sumatra Indonesia

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INTRODUCTION

- Folklore functions as a character, identity, and symbol of society and its place.

- Locality or uniqueness in folklore is a reflection of the character of the people who created it, as well as a source of regional cultural information and strengthening national identity. Because of this function and uniqueness, it is possible if folklore is also used as a strategy for branding the place that has it.

- The local government is trying to project tourism in West Sumatra as one of Indonesia's super priority tourist destinations. As supported by Sandiaga Uno, the minister of tourist and creative economy, who said that West Sumatra must have a tourism icon to become a super priority tourist destination.

- For this reason, in order to support the local government's efforts, this research is expected to provide recommendations to make the West Sumatra region as one of Indonesia's super priority destinations.

- Folklore branding strategy can be unique in itself as a tourism icon of West Sumatra which is known to be rich in treasures of oral tradition, especially folklore.

- Thus, the study of the influence of folklore on the branding strategy of tourist destinations must be explored more deeply.

LITERATURE REVIEW

- *Storynomics Tourism as an Effective Marketing Strategy on Tourism Destination (Case Study on Tangkuban Parahu, West Java-Indonesia)*, yang ditulis oleh Kartika T. dan Riana N (2020);

- *Analisis SWOT terhadap Storynomics Tourism sebagai Strategi Promosi Pariwisata (Studi Kasus Kawasan Wisata Kali Cisadane, Kota Tangerang, Banten, Indonesia)* yang dikerjakan oleh Kartini (2021);

- *Storynomics Tourism: Kualitas Wisata Desa Tenganan Pegringsingan* yang dikaji oleh Sukmadewi (2021).

- *Storynomics Desa Wisata: Promosi Desa Wisata Munggu Berbasis Storytelling* (Arini, dkk, 2022)

- *Pemasaran Ekowisata Way Lalaan melalui Konsep Storynomic Tourism sebagai Strategi Pelestarian Budaya dan Sejarah* (Astriyantika, 2022)

- *Destinasi Wisata Sastra dalam Cerita Rakyat dari Sumatera Kajian Sastra Pariwisata* (Anggaraputra dan Wulandari, 2022)

METHOD

- Formally, this study will use a qualitative approach with a descriptive analysis method. Based on this approach, this research is classified as library research.

- The data collection stage begins with the search for primary reading materials; Minangkabau folklore, whether in the form of fairy tales, legends or myths, which contain regional settings in West Sumatra. The next process is searching for data on tourist destinations in West Sumatra which will be traced through the Tourism Office of West Sumatra Province and/or districts/cities in West Sumatera. Data collection was also carried out by interviewing tourism managers, tour business owners, and tour guides. Meanwhile secondary data will be more directed at popular reading materials related to tourism, such as newspapers, tourism magazines, and freelance articles/opinions found in online media.

- The data analysis stage was carried out using a tourism literature approach, especially storynomics about how to use stories (narratives) to gain economic benefits (McKee and Gerace, 2018). In the tourism context, storynomics is used to construct stories and other cultural capital into narratives of living culture, as the center of tourist objects.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

- The branding strategy for tourist destinations is nothing new in West Sumatra. Air Manis Beach in Padang City has become popular for domestic tourists because it is associated with the legend of Malin Kundang. Air Manis Beach is believed to be the place where Malin Kundang was stranded and cursed to become a stone. This is strengthened by the presence of a human-like rock in a prostration pose on the edge of Air Manis Beach which is perceived as Malin Kundang.

- There is also the Hikayat Siti Nurbaya which is the narrative background for the Siti Nurbaya bridge which is projected to become one of the mainstay tourist destinations in the city of Padang. These areas show how the community is able to make very good use of the identity and locality of the folklore they have for naming tourist objects. Here, folklore has proven to be effective in attracting tourists to visit tourist objects related to the story. And of course, as the number of tourist visits increases, the socio-economic level of the local community will also increase.

- In 2022, Air Manis Beach will experience a 300% increase in tourists, with a total of 4500 visitors per day

- The folklore of Malin Kundang is not the only reason tourists visit Air Manis Beach. There are many other factors that also influence tourists' interest in visiting, such as beautiful natural landscapes, vacation time, and other adequate tourist facilities. Even so, the influence of the Malin Kundang folklore remains difficult to deny as the main attraction of Air Manis Beach. The high interest of tourists at Air Manis Beach compared to other beaches in West Sumatra—even other tourist objects—is proof that the folklore of Malin Kundang significantly influences the motives for visiting tourists.

- Folklore as a type of oral literature can certainly be a tool to strengthen the identity of the community who created it.

- The function of these folklore can be useful for the development of places into tourist destinations. Tourist destinations have a positive impact on the creative economy of society and if folklore is used as a tourist attraction, then tourist destinations can also become a tool for preserving literature and culture.

- This study describes 5 folktales that can be used as recommendations for branding strategies for tourist destinations in West Sumatra.

- Data were collected and processed qualitatively from various potential tourism areas in West Sumatra, both potential in terms of tourism and in literature.

- The five folklores were selected based on the 5 regions in West Sumatra with the highest number of tourist visits in 2021. The choice of this year was taken into account with tourism activities carried out under difficult conditions, namely during the Covid-19 pandemic. These five areas survived and were still able to attract tourists to visit even during these difficult times.

- Ngarai Sianok, Bukittinggi City

- Danau Kembar, Solok Regency

- Kapalo Banda Taram, Lima Puluh Kota Regency

- Danau Maninjau, Agam Regency

- Pantai Air Manis, Padang City

CONCLUSION

- This research was conducted to support the local government's efforts to project tourism in West Sumatra as one of Indonesia's super priority tourist destinations that can have an impact on the people's economy and as an effort to preserve Minangkabau culture. This research is expected to provide strategic recommendations to realize these goals.

- Folklore has a function as a character, identity, and symbol of society and the region so that it can be developed into a folklore branding strategy for tourist destinations which can be unique as a tourism icon of West Sumatra which is known to be rich in treasures of oral tradition, especially folklore.

- The Tourism Literature Approach, through the Storynomics theory of how to use stories (narratives) to gain economic benefits can be a tool to see the influence of folklore on tourist destinations.

- Folklore branding strategies have had a major influence on tourist destinations in West Sumatra, such as the Legend of Malin Kundang on Air Manis Beach, Padang City, which has been able to attract many tourists to this day. This strategy can be used for other tourist destinations, such as Ngarai Sianok in Bukittinggi, Danau Kembar in Solok Regency, Kapalo Banda Taram in Lima Puluh Kota Regency, and Danau Maninjau in Agam Regency.

- Government supports in building adequate facilities and revitalizing tourist destinations is also an important factor to make West Sumatra a super priority tourist destination of Indonesia.

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THANK YOU!