Instagrammable tourism: local government policies in sustainable environmental management

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Abstract. Tourism development using social media or policy-makers favor Instagrammable Tourism due to its assumed effects on destination image, social and infrastructure developments, and economic benefits. However, the dynamics of making a tourism destination instagrammable sometimes bring up conditions that ignore the aspects of sustainable environmental management. Tourism business actors who process natural lands into artificial instagrammable tourist attractions and consumer behavior that damages the aesthetic value of tourist destinations are few operational examples of outcomes caused by local policies related to instagrammable tourism. This paper aims to present the description and implementation of local government policies in Instagrammable tourism management from two different areas of Kaliurang in Sleman regency and Tawangmangu in Karanganyar Regency. Data in local tourism development policy, spatial plans, and land use in tourist destinations were analyzed using descriptive qualitative, descriptive statistics, and policy analysis methods. The analysis results show that the two tourist areas have been regulated and managed based on local regulations. The local regulation interpretations can be seen in the different directions of the two tourism area developments. The different emphasis on the orientations of tourism area managements bear implications on implementing a sustainable environmental management concept.

1. Introduction

In line with the dramatic development of information and communication technology (ICT), tourism in Indonesia is growing rapidly. The use of new media in the tourism industry, especially social media, has become an inevitable contemporary need for tourism stakeholders and users. The concepts of "tourism social media" [1], Instagram tourism [2], or what is known as "Insta Tourism [3] are some interesting and prominent concepts about the role of social media in the tourism industry. These concepts show how the social media platform, especially Instagram, enables organizations and individuals to promote or research travel opportunities [3].

Many studies have shown how social media is used as a promotional medium that positively impacts tourism. In tourism marketing, stakeholders usually create official accounts on social media to offer tourist destinations [2], implement geospatial applications in the management of tourist destinations using Instagram [4], or explore how the comfort and safety of social media users are related to tourist
destinations that are marketed on Instagram [5]. In addition, there are not many studies that examine the negative side of insta-tourism. For example, insta tourism can cause over-tourism, which disrupts the tourist destinations' community or environment [6]. The desire to get photos that go viral on Instagram is an important consideration for tourists. Tourism managers then respond to this demand by making/renovating tourist attractions to be instagrammable without paying attention to the concept of environmental sustainability [2]. Such actions are considered ways in which Instagram is 'ruining travel' or the 'Insta effect' [3].

One of the catalysts of the instgrammable tourism problem is the stakeholders' policies in managing tourism objects, especially those of the local governments. Several existing studies show that, in general, the management of instgrammable tourism objects emphasizes the tourism destination marketing management at the central government level. Not many have reviewed tourism management at the local level [7]. Policies in tourism management are essential when the current state of tourism is influenced by broad societal transformations such as changes in the people who become hypermobile, new models of relationships through social media, shared economy, and tourism practices [1]. The pace of social development and new technologies adds to the urgency of developing and implementing long-term solutions. In this context, sustainability becomes fluid and adaptable concept that includes multi-level transformations and challenges [1].

This study contributes significantly to literature availability in several respects. First, empirical studies on instgrammable tourism in natural tourism areas have not been widely carried out by previous studies. Second, this study emphasizes the concept of sustainable environmental management at the local government policy level. Third, a policy analysis approach is used to describe the direction of development of natural tourism, related to implementing a sustainable environment in instgrammable tourism. Sustainability is currently an important issue. Although environmental protection has been emphasized in many countries such as China, Japan, and the UK, some countries still do not prioritize this issue as a solution or top priority activity. Dissemination of adequate knowledge about improving environmental protection is still not optimal and has not been used as a comprehensive program [8]. A sustainable environment is the ability to maintain valued qualities in the physical environment such as land, water, atmosphere, buildings, roads, and other physical resources. The environment itself in the context of a rural environment may consist of agriculture and community settlements, land, water, atmosphere, and other biological elements. For this reason, maintaining the physical environment is essential because humans depend in many ways on the physical environment, both the natural and artificial ones. Maintaining environmental conditions directly contributes to maintaining humans and society itself in terms of both social and economic sustainability [9].

This study describes how local government policies related to instgrammable tourism management are regulated and implemented by two regencies with instgrammable tourist destinations, namely Karanganyar and Sleman. The tourist destinations in both regencies are located in mountainous areas. Kaliurang (Sleman) is situated on the slopes of Mount Merapi, and Tawangmangu (Karanganyar) is located on the slopes of Mount Lawu. The two tourist destination areas have similar climates and tourist destinations that rely on mountainous nature.

2. Methods

This research is a qualitative study using a descriptive approach to analyze the direction and implementation of instgrammable nature tourism development (instgrammable tourism) to support sustainable environmental management in Karanganyar and Sleman Regencies. Both regencies have instgrammable natural attractions, namely: Tawangmangu in Karanganyar and Kaliurang in Sleman. The data of this study include documents of regional regulations on tourism development, regional regulations on spatial planning, the number of instgrammable tourism objects, and data on land use as tourism objects. All of these data are secondary data collected from the publications of the two regions. Observation activities were also carried out to collect Instagram post data about 4 tourist attractions in each area.
The data were analyzed using several methods, including the descriptive qualitative method and policy analysis. Conceptually, policy analysis has been elaborated by MacRae [10]. MacRae mentions several elements in policy analysis consisting of (a) definition of the problem, (b) criteria for choice, (c) alternatives, models, and decisions, and (d) political feasibility. These elements were applied to analyze instgrammable tourism development policies in supporting sustainable environmental management. However, the policy analysis approach that was determined was qualitative. As far as the authors' knowledge, policy analysis on instgrammable tourism that supports sustainable environmental management in Karanganyar and Sleman regencies had never been researched and developed. Thus, this study contributes significantly to the literature.

3. Results and discussion

3.1. Condition of instgrammable tourism

Karanganyar and Sleman regencies are two areas on the island of Java that have instgrammable natural attractions. Both natural attraction areas are located not too far from one another but under the administrations of two different provinces. In particular, these two tourism areas have interesting historical values. Tawangmangu nature tourism in Karanganyar has historical relation to the Hindu Majapahit Kingdom, while Kaliurang tourism in Sleman has historical relation to the Mataram Kingdom (Ngayogyakarta Hadiningrat). The results of instgrammable tourism identification in the two tourism areas are described in Table 1.

Table 1. Instagrammable tourism in Karanganyar and Sleman Regencies in 2020.

| Tourism Location | Tourism Object | Followers (person)/ Proportion (%) | Land Area (Ha)/ Proportion (%) | Tourist Attraction |
|------------------|----------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------|
| Tawangmangu Karanganyar | TLP | 57,800 (34.55) | 5.5 (19.43) | Natural Tourism, Snow Park, Outbound, artificial photo spots, Forest Resort |
| | SH | 42,800 (25.58) | 13.8 (48.76) | Nature Scenery, artificial photo spots |
| | TW | 40,700 (24.33) | 7 (24.73) | artificial photo spots, theme Park, villa, Camping, Outbound, Swimming pool, Agrotourism |
| | BS | 26,000 (15.53) | 2 (7.07) | Nature Scenery, artificial photo spots, villa, inns, outbound, |
| Total | 167,300 (100) | 28.3 (100) | | |
| Kaliurang Sleman | TLW | 47,900 (60.31) | 1.3 (4.15) | Artificial photo spots |
| | TMP | 29,000 (36.51) | 2 (6.39) | Artificial photo spots, flower garden, Playground and outbound. |
| | KHL | 1,460 (1.84) | 1 (3.19) | Artificial photo spots, dancing Fountain, Hot Air Balloon, Lantern Park, Garden Light Decoration, LED Decoration |
| OS | 1,068 (1.34) | 27 (86.26) | Agriculture Tourism of planting and picking farming yield, camping dan outbound |
| Total | 79,428 (100) | 31.3 (100) | | |

Source: www.instagram.com, https://profildaerah.karanganyarkab.go.id
Note: Follower means a person who follows an Instagram account.

In general, the data above show that the Instagram followers of tourist destinations in Tawangmangu area are more than the followers of tourist destinations in Kaliurang area. In other words, tourism in Tawangmangu is more instgrammable than tourism in Kaliurang. However, both tourist areas offer and highlight nature scenery, artificial photo spots, camping, outbound, and culinary tourism.

3.2. Analysis of local government policies

Several local regulations on the tourism in Karanganyar and Sleman regencies were identified as the policy analysis's fourth component (political feasibility). They include the Regulation of the Regent of
Karanganyar Number 8 of 2016 concerning the Implementation of Tourism and the Regulation of the Regent of Sleman Number 43 of 2016 concerning the Development of Sleman Agricultural Tourism. These two regions have also established regional regulations for tourism development, namely: Karanganyar Regent Regulation Number 6 of 2016 concerning the Master Plan for Tourism Development of Karanganyar Regency for 2016-2026, and Sleman Regent Regulation Number 11 of 2015 concerning the Master Plan for Regional Tourism Development for 2015-2025. Furthermore, comprehensive regional development has been established through the following regional regulations; Karanganyar Regent Regulation Number 19 of 2019 concerning Amendments to Karanganyar Regency Regional Regulation Number 1 of 2013 concerning Karanganyar Regency Spatial Planning 2013-2032, and Sleman Regent Regulation Number 12 of 2012 concerning Sleman Regency Spatial Planning 2011-2031. Thus, both regions have comprehensive and integral political and legal awareness in tourism development.

The findings in Table 2 show the definition of problem elements in policy analysis. The results of the identification of tourism development in Karanganyar and Sleman regencies are an element of criteria for choice in policy analysis, as described in Table 2. Several criteria were selected and described, including vision, mission, direction, and tourism development.

Looking at the direction of tourism industry development as described in the Master Plan for Tourism Development of each region, it can be seen that the existing regional policies of Karanganyar Regency have opened its tourism industry development for investors and tourism business partners. This also provides great opportunities for the creative economy as long as the actors are environmentally responsible. Such policies have encouraged the massive number of instagammable nature tourism investors in Karanganyar. This is different from the policies of Sleman Regency, which focuses on developing the tourism industry in terms of tourism quality, diversity, facilities, regulations, and support to MSME partners, which means that one of the focuses of Sleman Regency is the provision of regulations in tourism management.

Several literatures have discussed specific models/approaches of tourism and environmental policy analysis. Such literatures are the third element in policy analysis. For example, Guo, Jiang & Li argue that sustainable tourism policy effectively responds to the global environment and sustainable development [11]. However, the practice of tourism policies emphasizes economic growth orientation. Further, Pan et al. [12] identify challenges and obstacles to sustainable tourism, including large-scale energy use, excessive water consumption. They emphasized several concepts that stimulate tourism sustainability such as green energy, green transportation, green building, green infrastructure, and green agriculture. Therefore, Liu, Pan & Zheng emphasize several policies, including energy conservation and emission reduction, open economy (marketization) policies for tourist visitors, and free trade policies [13]. In addition, networking in applying tourism sustainability concept is one of the key elements [14]. This study emphasizes qualitative descriptive analysis and policy analysis focusing on instagammable tourism studies that support sustainable environmental management. This means that this study provides an alternative method in analyzing instagammable tourism in Karanganyar and Sleman regencies that did not exist in previous empirical studies.

The data in the two tables show that Karanganyar regency policies related to tourism development are more moderate. This can be seen from its policies that are more open to investors than the policies of Sleman Regency that are more directed towards nature conservation and educational tourism. The presence of investors encourages tourism development that features artificially instagammable tourist attractions in Tawangamangu to meet the demand of Instagram users as their potential consumers. This can also be seen from the higher follower number of Tawangmangu tourist attractions.
Table 2. Criteria for tourism development in Karanganyar and Sleman Regencies.

| Criteria          | Sleman Regency                                                                 | Karanganyar Regency                                                                 |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Vision            | To become a tourism destination with global competitiveness and to improve sustainable community welfare based on local potential. | To create world-class art, culture and tourism that are competitive, sustainable and able to encourage regional development and the people's welfare |
| Missions          | 1. To develop regional tourism as a tourism industry based on the character of local culture, education, environment and to promote economic strength to increase the people's and regional income; | 1. To promote Karanganyar Regency as a world-class art and cultural tourism centre; |
|                   | 2. To develop tourism institutions and human resources that are credible, reliable, competent, and professional both among local governments, business actors and the community as well as to encourage the passage of effective and efficient regulations towards the realization of sustainable tourism; | 2. To utilize tourism as a support to community economic improvement; and |
|                   | 3. To develop integrated, synergistic, effective and efficient tourism marketing to increase tourist visits to the region. | 3. To develop effective, efficient and quality tourism marketing. |
| Direction         | 1. Principles of sustainable tourism development; | 1. Preservation and maintenance of regional arts and culture; |
|                   | 2. Orientation on efforts to grow, increase job opportunities, empower communities, and preserve the environment; | 2. Improvement of tourism human resources |
|                   | 3. Implementation of good governance; | 3. Development of a community-based tourism industry; |
|                   | 4. Implementation of integrated manner across sectors, regions, and actors; and | 4. Improvement of the quality and quantity of tourism products and tourist accommodation as well as facilities and infrastructure; |
|                   | 5. Implementation through public encouragement and private partnerships. | 5. Increase on the contribution to local revenue and community welfare; and |
|                   | | 6. Making tourism a mainstay to create jobs and reduce unemployment. |
| Tourism industry  | 1. Improvement of the quality and diversity of tourism products; | 1. Investment development; |
| development       | 2. Improvement of facilitation and regulation for tourism business development; and | 2. Development of tourism business partnerships; |
|                   | 3. Strengthening of micro, small and medium enterprise partnerships in supporting tourism businesses. | 3. Development of environmental responsibility; and |
|                   | | 4. Creative economy development. |

Source: Karanganyar Regency tourism development master plan 2016-2026, Sleman Regency tourism development master plan 2015-2025

4. Conclusion

This study emphasizes academic discussions about Instagrammable tourism from the local government policy point of view in the context of a sustainable environment. Two regions were selected as samples with several considerations, such as having Instagrammable and nature-based tourist destinations, geographically located in areas that are not too far away, and the different tendencies of local government policies in managing the Instagrammable tourism areas. The two areas are Tawangmangu tourist area in Karanganyar Regency and Kaliurang tourist area in Sleman Regency. A qualitative descriptive approach and policy analysis was applied to achieve the study objectives.
The study findings show that Tawangmangu and Kaliurang tourism areas have implemented the concept of Instagrammable tourism. This can be identified from the use of Instagram in nature tourism promotion activities with increasing followers each year. Instagram followers' data indicate that Tawangmangu tourism tends to be more Instagrammable than Kaliurang tourism. Furthermore, the two tourism areas have been regulated and managed based on local regulations. The local regulations are interpreted in different directions of tourism development. The different emphasis on the development orientations bear implications on the implementation of sustainable environmental management concepts.

The policy implication recommended to local governments is the development and improvement of Instagrammable tourism areas based on sustainable environmental management. The local government can also set an Instagrammable tourism roadmap according to the established regional regulations. In particular, local governments and nature tourism actors can pay more attention to and maintain environmental sustainability in the long term by using Instagram media more considerately.

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