

THE EFFECT OF WORD OF MOUTH COMMUNICATION ON STUDENTS INTEREST IN VISITING MADASARI TOURISM IN PANGANDARAN

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ABSTRACT

Madasari Beach is a beach that has potential and exotic. Promotional activities undertaken by local governments have not had an enormous impact on the number of visitors. One form of tourism promotion communication activities with word of mouth in increasing tourist interest is visiting Madasari Beach. This study aims to determine the effectiveness of the influence of the credibility of the word of mouth contribution to the interest of students visiting Madsari attractions. The study results revealed that students' interest to demonstrate to Madasari Beach was relatively high. Meanwhile, the factors that influence the effectiveness of Madasari beach tourism promotion with WOM are the message characteristic factors, in this case, the message quality. As for the credibility factor, the source has no real influence on the interest in visiting Madasari Beach.

Keywords : Words of Mouth, Communication, Tourism, Madasari, Pangandaran

INTRODUCTION

Pangandaran is one of the regencies with superior commodities contributing to its regional budget for the tourism sector. The beauty of Pangandaran, is quite well known as a tourist attraction. Of course, Pangandaran has various interesting tourist objects, ranging from nature tourism, artificial tourism, cultural tourism, historical tourism, culinary tours, sports tours, animal tours, and shopping tours.

Nature tourism in Pangandaran is one of favorite tours for visitors. It is marked by the emergence of more and more nature attractions that are starting to be discovered every year. Madasari Beach is one of the most exotic beaches with a cluster of islands and beautiful coasts. Although this beach has enormous potential, some people are not very familiar with this beach. Besides, this beach's location is quite far from the city of Pangandaran, so the level of visits is still relatively low. The local government has made various efforts in increasing the intention of tourists to visit Madasari Beach. The government's efforts to promote this tourism promotion start with mass media, social media to the WOM (Word of Mouth) communication method. However, the increase in tourist visitors has not shown significant results. The effectiveness of tourism communication determines the high intention of individuals to visit Madasari.

Several studies have shown that one model that can explain an individual's intention to do something can use the concept of WOM (Word of Mouth) communication. Researchers and

practitioners have long recognized the importance of face-to-face and word-of-mouth communication. The strong influence of the Word of Mouth on behavioral intention has prompted many researchers to explore this phenomenon in depth (Frenzen & Nakamoto, 1993); (Lam & Mizerski, 2005). In contemporary research, word of mouth communication takes different forms, initially face-to-face communication, then projected into media communication (Steffes and Burgee, 2009). Most researchers see the effect of the effectiveness of the Word of Mouth in the context of purchase or subscription intentions. Researchers have tried to explore the extent to which electronic word of mouth affects online discussion boards and found that discussions in virtual communities are an essential factor in shaping consumer purchase intentions (Fong & Burton, 2006).

The type of influence of the credibility of the Word of Mouth communicator on intentions has different effects (Goodrich & de Mooij, 2014). Baber et al., (2016) revealed that the credibility of the communicator determines the effectiveness of word of mouth in influencing intention. Several studies that test the effectiveness of word of mouth with the ELM model theory framework, note that the dimensions of communicator credibility are described in two aspects; trustworthiness and expertise (Cheung, 2014). Research (Wang, 2016) reveals that the message credibility dimension directly influences a traveler's attitude to visit tourist attractions.

In explaining the effect of word of mouth on tourists' intention to visit Madasari beach, this study examines the word of mouth model to explain how much influence word of mouth has on tourists' intention to visit Madasari Beach. This study aims to test the effectiveness of word of mouth on the students of Study Program outside the Main Campus (PSDKU) Pangandaran. PSDKU Pangandaran students are the students from all regions of Indonesia who are currently studying at the PSDKU Campus. This research object's choice is with the consideration that students are a millennial generation who is active both in social media and in their environment doing word of mouth communication. By knowing the effectiveness of word of mouth, it is hoped that it can enrich the repertoire of effective tourism communication strategies.

The research hypothesis is;

H1: It is suspected that the communicator's credibility affects the individual's intention to visit Madasari beach.

H2: It is suspected that the message's characteristics affect the individual's intention to visit Madasari beach.

The objectives of this study are (a) To determine the effectiveness of the influence of the credibility of the source of word of mouth on students' interest in visiting Madssari tourism objects. (b) To determine the effectiveness of credibility or the quality of word of mouth messages on students' interest in visiting Madasari attraction.

METHOD

This research is designed with a quantitative research paradigm with a correlational survey approach to see the relationship between two variables. This study tested the effectiveness model of Word of mouth on the interest in visiting Madasari Beach.

This research was conducted in November 2019- December 2019. The population of this study was all 600 students of PSDKU Unpad Pangandaran. PSDKU Pangandaran students are

students from all regions of Indonesia who study at the PSDKU Campus. This student research object's selection considers that students are active millennial generation both on social media and in their environment doing word of mouth.

This research instrument uses a conceptual word of mouth that is adjusted to the research concept. The questionnaire or instrument was tested for the validity and the reliability of the instrument. The sampling technique in this study used a simple random sampling technique.

Data analysis in this study used multiple linear regression tests. The regression equation can be used to create a straight-line regression function/model. The equation of the regression analysis can be described as follows:

$$Y = a + b_1 X_1 + b_2 X_2 + e$$

Where:

Y = interest

a = constant,

b = correlation coefficient

X₁ = Credibility of the communicator

X₂ = message characteristics.

DISCUSSION

Madasari Beach is located in Pangandaran Regency. This beach is a very exotic beach with a not inferior charm to the famous beaches in Indonesia. Its location is hidden and relatively far from Pangandaran City's center which makes relatively fewer visitors than other beaches in Pangandaran.



Source: Anonim (2020)

Various tourism promotion activities are carried out, both interpersonal, outdoor media, and social media. These various promotions are expected to increase local and international tourists' interest in visiting this beach.

Student Interest to visit Madasari Beach Tourism Object

Students are part of the millennial generation, whom become potential visitors for the tourism. In addition to the relatively large number of students, student activities that carry out promotions through social media can increase tourists' number. PSDKU Pangandaran Campus is "Pangandaran Branch" of Padjadjaran University, which was just established in 2016. The students of this campus come from all regions in Indonesia who can be potential tourists.

Based on the questionnaires distributed to 46 respondents, the results obtained were 20 male respondents and 26 female respondents who were active students of PSDKU Pangandaran who come from within and outside the region. Students are elements of society who are relatively high in their various activities. As a millennial generation, the willingness of students to visit tourist objects is relatively large. Based on the results of the analysis, it is known that students' interest in visiting Madasari beach is described in table 1 below:

Table 1. The frequency distribution of student interest in visiting Madasari tourist objects

NO	Students' interest in visiting Madasari tourist attractions	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	High	21	54,3
2	Medium	25	45,7
3	Low	0	0
4	Very low	0	0

Source: primary data analysis

Table 1 above shows that, in general, students' interest in visiting Madasari beach is categorized as high. Students' high intention or interest to visit the beach can be seen from most of them having visited this tourist spot. The hypothesis of this research suspects that word-of-mouth communication is effective in increasing student interest in visiting Madasari tourist object. The researcher conducted a multiple linear regression test using SPSS for Windows software to answer the study's objectives and hypotheses. The test results from the data collected can be described in the following table:

Model	Sum of Squares	df	F	Sig.
1 Regression	6.279	2	5.525	.007 ^a
Residual	24.438	43		
Total	30.717	45		

a. Predictors: (Constant), KP, KS

b. Dependent Variable: interest

Source: Primary data analysis

Based on table 3 above, the ANOVA test results show that the model or function of testing factors influencing student interest in visiting tourist objects, with independent variables of message characteristics and communicator credibility, jointly affect interest. It can be seen from the simultaneous F test in Table 3 above. Based on the results of the analysis of the two variables together, there is sufficient evidence to influence student interest in visiting Madasari beach tourism objects with a value of F count > than F table with a significance value less than 0.05. To answer the research hypothesis, the regression test with t-test analysis is shown in the following table:

Partial test table of the regression coefficients of factors that affect interest in visiting tourist objects

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Const)	4.394	.683		6.433	.000
KS	.077	.068	.182	1.144	.259
KP	.169	.081	.331	2.085	.043
a. Dependent Variable: interest					

Source: Primary data analysis

Based on the table above, the factor regression equation that affects student interest in visiting Madasari beach attractions is described in the following equation;

$$Y = 4.394 + 0.07X_1 + 0.169 X_2 + e$$

With:

Y = interest

a = constant,

b = correlation coefficient

X₁ = Credibility of the communicator

X₂ = message characteristics

a. The Effect of Communicator Characteristics on Visiting Interest

Source credibility is an essential factor influencing individual attitudes and behavior. Many studies reveal that credibility affects the formation of attitudes and behavior ((Kosasih, Setianti, & Wahyudin, 2017), (Stephanie, 2013). Some researchers divide credibility into two parameters that have an influence on individual intentions or intentions, namely; trustworthiness and expertise (Cheung, 2014)

This study's hypotheses suspect that the credibility of the word of mouth information source influences student interest in visiting Madasari tourism objects. The results of this hypothesis testing analysis are described in Table 4 above.

Based on the table, it can be obtained that the t-count value is 1,144 with a Sig value of 0.259. It shows that the t-count value is smaller than the t-table value of 1.681 and the Sig value is more significant than 0.05. Thus H0 is accepted, and Ha is rejected. It shows that the communicator's variable characteristics do not have a significant effect on the visiting interest of Unpad PSDKU Pangandaran students to Madasari Tourism Beach.

The absence of influence and the relationship between the communicator's credibility and the interest shows that in the context of word of mouth, the effectiveness of communication in Madasari beach tourism is not based on communicators' credibility affecting attitudes or behavior. It means that the better the credibility of the endorser will not have an impact on the visiting. Respondents assessed that the interest in visiting tourist objects is not based on the communicators' credibility but more on visitors' credibility and quality. It is in line with the research that examines individual interest in purchasing behavior (Rahmah, 2015).

b. The Effect of Message Characteristics on Visiting Interest

This study's hypotheses suspect that word of mouth message's credibility influences student interest in visiting Madasari tourist object. The results of this hypotheses testing analysis are described in Table 4 above. Based on the table, it can be obtained that the t-value is 2.085 with a Sig value of 0.043. It shows that the t-value is greater than the t-table value, and the significance is smaller than 0.05. Thus H1 is accepted, and Ho is rejected. It shows that the message characteristic variable has a significant influence on Unpad PSDKU Pangandaran students' visiting interest to Madasari Tourism Beach.

These results indicate that the message's characteristics, the better the message content's quality, the more it affects student interest. One unit increase in the quality of the message can extend the increase in interest by 0.169 units. In building communication effectiveness, quality messages shape attitudes and provide knowledge to the audience and increase the likelihood of changing interests and behavior. There are four problems involved in message formulation, according to Kotler (2005). The four factors are message content, message structure, message format, and message source. The results of this study support Kotler's (2005) statement that message effectiveness depends on the structure and content of the message. A message in an advertisement is not necessary to contain many messages or information about the object. However, it should be able to get attention, attract interest, and arouse audience desire.

CONCLUSION

Madasari Beach has exotic potential. Tourism promotion activities with word of mouth can increase the interest of tourists to visit Madasari beach. Based on the results of the study, it is known that the students' interest in visiting Madasari Beach is relatively high. Meanwhile, the factors that influence the effectiveness of Madasari beach tourism promotion with WOM are the characteristics of the message, the quality of the message. The source credibility factor does not have a real influence on the interest in visiting Madasari Beach.

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