City Branding Strategy of Yogyakarta Tourism Office in Maintaining Destination Image Amid the Rise of Klitih News

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Abstract. The strategy in managing an area was called a city branding strategy. The city branding strategy was an effort to form or develop the unique identity and characteristics of an area. The Yogyakarta Special Region Tourism Office was considered capable and had adequate capabilities in making city branding strategies because it could maintain the image of the region as a tourism city which had an impact on increasing the attention of tourists to keep traveling to Yogyakarta in the midst of widespread klitih news. The purpose of this study was to find out and at the same time analyze in depth the city branding strategy implemented by the Yogyakarta Tourism Office. This study uses a qualitative research approach. This study used a depth interview technique as the primary data source. The results of this study indicated that the Yogyakarta Tourism Office was based on the six aspects of the city branding hexagon by Simon Aholt, namely by using presence, potential, place, people, pulse and prerequisite so as to maintain the destination image which results in increased tourist visits in the midst of the rise of klitih news.

Keywords: City branding strategy · Image · Kitih · Turists · Yogyakarta tourism office

1 Introduction

Organizations need a branding strategy. Strategy is useful for maintaining, maintaining, improving the performance and excellence of an organization (Rahim & Radjab, 2017). The city branding strategy plays a very important role in maintaining the image (Sulistio, 2020). This of course can provide benefits for the organization (Oskar & Susanti, 2018). One of the organizations assessed for implementing a city strategy branding is the Department of Tourism which is located on Jl. Raya Janti No.4, Wonocatur, Banguntapan, Kec. Banguntapan, Bantul Regency, Yogyakarta Special Region. Where, the

Yogyakarta Tourism Office is still able to maintain the image of Yogyakarta as a City of Tourism in the midst of the rise of klitih news. Destination image is a belief or knowledge about a destination and what tourists feel during their trip. According to Yananda, the existence of a positive image of the city is an accumulation obtained from knowledge and experience through news about the city (Yananda, 2017). The Yogyakarta Tourism Office is considered capable and has adequate capabilities in making branding strategies because it can still attract people's attention to keep traveling to Yogyakarta even though the klitih news spreads outside the province of the Special Region of Yogyakarta. In the formation or preparation of city branding, it can be seen from the potential that exists in the area, both natural potential, human resource potential, or other potential (Rusadi & Wedayanti, 2019).

The Yogyakarta Tourism Office is considered capable and has adequate capabilities in making branding strategies because it can still attract people's attention to keep traveling to Yogyakarta even though the klitih news spreads outside the province of the Special Region of Yogyakarta. In the formation or preparation of city branding, it can be seen from the potential that exists in the area, both natural potential, human resource potential, or other potential6. Yogyakarta has a high tourist attraction every year, recorded in data taken from the Regional Government Agency of the Special Region of Yogyakarta, in 2018 there were 25 million visitors, in 2019 there was an increase of 2 million visitors. In 2021, Yogyakarta will aggressively reopen tourist attractions while still complying with health protocols, so that the total number of visitors will increase by approximately 1 million tourists from the previous year. In 2022, the number of tourists will increase by approximately 1 million tourists. The data beside shows that many tourists are interested in visiting Yogyakarta in the midst of widespread news about the existence of klitih actions. This action took place at night until the early hours of the morning, so the klitih action disturbed the people of Yogyakarta (Pamungkas, 2018). The klitih tragedy in Yogyakarta has indeed reached a level that is troubling residents. In addition, there has also been a klitih that caused as many as two people died after being victims of persecution in Seturan, Caturtunggal, Depok District, Sleman Regency, Yogyakarta Special Region (DIY). The incident of persecution occurred on Sunday, May 8, 2022, at around 01.00 WIB (Pamungkas, 2018).

According to Simon Anholt, there are six aspects to determine whether city branding has an impact so as to increase tourist visits, namely by using city branding hexagons (Anholt, 2007). As for city branding hexagon includes: 1. Presence (Presence): Describes how the position of a city or how people - people familiar with the city. The presence aspect explains the status and position of the city in the eyes of the international community and how far the city is known by the citizens of the world. 2. Potential: The opportunities the city offers to visitors, entrepreneurs or local residents. Ease of getting good and decent places and facilities. 3. Place: shows the physical aspects of the city. For example, the urban area supports supporting facilities for local residents. 4. People, assessing whether the residents give a positive response, are friendly, and make the visitors of the city comfortable. 5. Pulse: Whether residents or visitors find the city attractive in the short or long term. 6. Prerequisite (Prerequisite): The prerequisite describes the public's potential on the basis of a city.

In addition to the use of the city branding concept, the Yogyakarta City government uses a promotional strategy through Instagram social media. The management of the official account of the Yogyakarta City Tourism Office on Instagram social media can be accessed via (@pariwisata.jogjakota) as a medium for introducing tourist attractions, event activities that are being carried out. Instagram social media accounts are an effective digital communication tool to use because they have various features, such as sharing photo and video content, sending messages, sharing messages, as well as a forum for discussion and information sharing. The success of developing the image of the City of Yogyakarta cannot be separated from the context of managing Instagram accounts which contain elements of giving messages for uploaded photo and video content. In addition, the communication aspect means that followers of the tourism.jogjakota account have succeeded in understanding the tourism potential and events being held by the Yogyakarta City Government. The explanation above is the reason for the author to find out the branding strategy carried out by the Yogyakarta Tourism Office to maintain the destination image of Yogyakarta in the midst of the rise of klitih news that is troubling the public. The Tourism Office has succeeded in bringing many tourists to the Yogyakarta area, although lately there has been a lot of klitih. Thus, the researcher wants to know as well as analyze the branding strategy implemented by the Yogyakarta Tourism Office.

2 Method

This research uses a qualitative research type. Qualitative research also analyzes and interprets without using numbers. Qualitative method is a way for researchers to answer the phenomena that occur with data in the form of narratives taken from various sources, such as: interviews, observations, and extracting documents (Wahidmurni, 2017). The data collection method used to be used as primary data by the author is the in-depth interview method (depht interview) with key informants (key informants). Don Charles, SE. The secondary data in this study was obtained from various information in print, electronic and digital media, such as Instagram, Youtube, Facebook, articles, and other media platforms. Data Analysis Techniques using data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. Meanwhile, in this study, researchers conducted data validity using triangulation of data sources through examination of other sources, in this study Yogyakarta tourists.

3 Result and Discussion

Yogyakarta is known as a City of Tourism which has a policy to implement a city branding strategy. The city branding strategy plays a very important role in maintaining the image of an area. By implementing a city branding strategy, it can help maintain the destination image of Yogyakarta as a Tourism City that has unique and characteristics. The impact that can be generated is an increase in tourist interest in visiting Yogyakarta, even though there is a lot of klitih news. There are six aspects to determine whether the city branding strategy has an impact so as to increase tourist visits.

The first aspect is **Presence.** Yogyakarta has the status and position of a city that is very familiar in the eyes of the international community. This is evidenced by the results of interviews conducted by researchers to informants "*The dominant tourists to Jogja are tourists from Malaysia and Singapore. There are also quite a lot of tourists from Europe. That's why they pay a lot of attention to Jogja…Malaysia and Singapore want to increase the frequency of flights to Jogja.*" (Salsabila dkk, 2022). The high demand from the international world for tourist visits in Yogyakarta makes the city of Yogyakarta has the status and position of the city attached to foreign tourists. Foreign tourists who are familiar with the city of Yogyakarta include Malaysia, Singapore, Europe, Australia, and the Netherlands. Yogyakarta is considered as a cultured city. "*If Jogja is actually a city of culture, the Governor often says, Jogja is a city of culture that provides tourism facilities. So, Jogja is not the tourism that comes first, but the culture.*" (Salsabila dkk, 2022). This is what makes the status and position of the city of Yogyakarta very familiar with foreign tourists. Culture is superior, because Yogyakarta is a special area with a Sultanate system and has a palace as the residence of the Sultan of Yogyakarta. "*Yogyakarta palace. Special Region, yes, it is recognized by the state as a royal area, which has existed until now.*" (Salsabila dkk, 2022). The privileges of the City of Yogyakarta also make the status and position of Yogyakarta more familiar.

The second aspect is **Potential**, Yogyakarta has city opportunities that are offered to visitors. "*Its natural beauty is a tourist attraction…*" (Salsabila dkk, 2022). Yogyakarta has a natural beauty that is an attraction for tourists. Many tourists are attracted to travel to Yogyakarta because of its natural beauty, so Yogyakarta also provides offers to tourists both services and products. With this, it can open up job opportunities for residents of the city of Yogyakarta or settlers. In addition to the natural beauty, the life of the people of Yogyakarta itself is an attraction. "*…Where from Mount Merapi to the South Coast, everything has a philosophy. Human relationships with God, human relationships with the natural surroundings, human relationships with each other. And that's the attraction.*" (Salsabila dkk, 2022). The lifestyle of the people of Yogyakarta, which is friendly and simple, is a special value in the eyes of tourists. With this, many people feel comfortable and safe living in Yogyakarta. Every tourist who visits tourist attractions in Yogyakarta will feel a different feeling even though they often visit the same tourist attractions, this means that tourists never feel bored even though they have visited. One of the potentials that exist in the city of Yogyakarta is the Keraton, although it has been visited repeatedly but there is always something different every time you visit, there is always an attraction that the City of Yogyakarta has. The image is formed from the perception or first experience of tourists coming to Yogyakarta. A positive image that is depicted because of the cultural characteristics that are highlighted.

The third aspect, namely **Place**, Yogyakarta, shows the physical aspect of an inclusive city, where the ease of accessing a place does not only apply to normal people but also to people with disabilities. "*Now there is an inclusive awareness that tourism is for all…Therefore, in Jogja, we have made disabled-friendly toilets, disabled-friendly sidewalks, and makes it easy for people with disabilities to climb stairs by making it look like a sloping road*" (Salsabila dkk, 2022). The distinction of place is intended to make people comfortable around the city of Yogyakarta. The Tourism Office implements programs that are very friendly for people with disabilities such as one of the visits with

disabilities to the Kulon Progo destination, they are invited to visit destination places. "*The Tourism Office has started trying to provide for friends with disabilities. Tourism and everything here should be enjoyed by everyone.*" (Salsabila dkk, 2022). The Tourism Office has provided friends with disabilities when visiting certain places. So that comfort is not only felt by normal people, but also people with disabilities.

The fourth aspect, namely **People**, Yogyakarta residents provide a friendly response and make visitors comfortable. "*…there are seven charms that we must do, it is the attitude of hospitality that is put forward. When there are tourists who come, smile, say hello, greetings.*" (Salsabila dkk, 2022). The residents of the city are friendly and provide convenience in exchanging culture, as well as language so that it creates a sense of security when they are in it. "*There is a gesture criteria for friends who do tourism, every tourist comes like 'monggo', sugeng rawuh (hand while positioned politely, thumb welcomes in)*" (Salsabila dkk, 2022). The people of Yogyakarta highly respect the manners of guests who come, not infrequently many tourists who have never had a bad perception or image of the city of Yogyakarta. "*I think the people of Jogja are the same as the perception of outsiders towards Indonesia. People are friendly. And for tourists themselves, I'm sure once they go to Jogja, they rarely get a bad impression.*" (Salsabila dkk, 2022). Usually a bad impression arises when there is no friendly action given. So it can be concluded that the residents of Yogyakarta uphold politeness and courtesy to guests who come, giving rise to positive perceptions.

The fifth aspect is **Pulse**, residents and tourists find it eye-catching. It is very easy for the public to find interesting things in Yogyakarta. "*Jogja is full of festivals…*" (Salsabila dkk, 2022). One way to attract the attention of residents and tourists is by holding festivals. Yogyakarta from 2013 to 2019 was active in the field of tourism events, until now.

The sixth aspect is **Prerequisite**, Yogyakarta provides the accommodation provided, Yogyakarta is able to make social adjustments in the interaction between organizations and human groups to defuse conflicts or problems. The way the DIY Tourism Office handles the rise of klitih news is by countering, this is done through social media. "*…We should be able to counter that. Countering in the sense of not saying that it is not true*" (Salsabila dkk, 2022). The Tourism Office confirmed that klitih exists and is dangerous, on the other hand, what the DIY Tourism Office does is counter disturbing news so that it becomes news information that is more positive and fun. "*But we have to counter that with an enlightening news, a positive news.*" (Salsabila dkk, 2022). So the Yogyakarta Tourism Office countered it with positive news, for example news about night tourism destinations in Jogja. This is part of the positive news that we are trying to spread to the public through social media. Without any action taken by the Tourism Office, tomorrow the Yogyakarta Tourism Office will make Yogyakarta comfortable and safe. "*… If you want to travel here, just go ahead, nothing will happen and we guarantee that all community activities are safe*" (Salsabila dkk, 2022). The Tourism Office guarantees that tourists visiting Yogyakarta will be safe and comfortable by cooperating with authorities such as the police.

Social media is the most effective means of disseminating information, so the Tourism Office has been looking for the right time to spread positive content. "*If it's lunch time, surely he will open social media and then we will post it. Then in the afternoon*

maybe we go home from work, the point is we will post again…" (Salsabila dkk, 2022). The Tourism Office uploads content to various social media such as tourism activities, culinary, creative economy, fashion business, culinary, and Yogyakarta hidden gems. With that, the Tourism Office is considered to provide a positive aura for tourists. The tourism office does not directly provide information related to klitih on social media, because the Yogyakarta Tourism Office assesses that if this is the case then tourists are even more curious which makes it even more noisy. The Tourism Office focuses on providing positive content related to the potential and advantages of Yogyakarta. "*Sometimes people tend to say no, as if they were yes, they say yes as if they were no.*" (Salsabila dkk, 2022).

One of the visitors when asked about the news about klitih, he replied that he was not afraid of klitih because he thought that Jogja was safe. The thing that sticks in his mind is only Jogja, which is full of destinations, so there is no space to think about the bad events that happened in Yogyakarta. "*I'm not afraid, besides on the social media of the tourism office, there are no appeals urging tourists to be banned from going to Yogyakarta because they are klitih. So as long as the government is still providing information that is safe, why am I afraid?*" (Salsabila dkk, 2022).

From the results of interviews conducted by researchers with the marketing promotion sub-coordinator of the Yogyakara Tourism Office and Yogyakarta City Tourists, namely LS Don Charles, SE and a Yogyakarta tourist named M. Eldi Ermawan, there are similarities in the data obtained by the authors. At the interview stage with LS Don Charles at the Yogyakarta Tourism Office, he said that one of the things that kept tourists visiting Yogyakarta was optimizing the role of social media as a means of finding information which was very loved by tourists, this was in line with what was conveyed by M. Eldi Ermawan when interviewed in Malioboro Yogyakarta that before he visited Yogyakarta the first thing he did was to see information on the social media accounts of the Yogyakarta Tourism Office. Uploaded posts that inspire tourists to visit because they share positive and interesting content even though tourists already know about the existence of klitih in Yogyakarta.

4   Conclusion

The Digital Movement of Opinion or DMO that occurred with the hashtag #percumala-porpolisi is again massive on Instagram in the case of the murder of Josua Hutabarat by Ferdy Sambo. The formation of public opinion carried out by the community as a response in this case is very varied. The DMO shown by this community can be in unison even though it is reflexive, not organized at all, and there is no movement leader. The opinions expressed by these netizens in the end formed a very great controversy, even though most of the comments submitted were swearing words and insults to the agency. Police. This digital opinion movement is a form of disappointment and empathy for the cases that occurred. Opinions formed by the public take the form of criticism and curses. Opinions formed from the community can be uniform because of the influence of the same culture and mutually agreed norms. The case of Ferdy Sambo is considered by the community to be not in accordance with the culture and norms on which they are based.

Based on the results of research and data collection, it can be concluded that the city branding strategy really needs to be applied by each region to keep the area alive even in

the midst of rampant bad news. The Tourism Office can apply six aspects of city branding hexagon by Simon Aholt, namely by using presence, potential, place, people, pulse, and prerequistite can maintain a destination image which results in an increase in tourist visits in the midst of widespread klitih news. The city branding strategy carried out by the Tourism Office in maintaining the destination image in the midst of widespread klitih news is in line with the results of an interview with one of the visitors to Yogyakarta tourist destinations who stated that they are not afraid of klitih while the government is still informing them of something safe on social media. The content that is shared on the social media of the Tourism Office makes it stick in the minds of visitors, so there is no gap to be afraid of klitih actions. The six aspects of the city branding strategy by Simon Aholt are not shown which one is the most dominant in maintaining the destination image which results in an increase in tourist visits in the midst of widespread klitih news. On the contrary, all aspects complement each other.

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