

The Governance of Tourism Development on North Rupal Island as a Destination: A Branding Exercise in Bengkalis Regency, Riau Province, Indonesia

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Rupal Island in the Bengkalis Regency of Riau Province is being developed as a destination of natural and cultural tourism and has become a part of the National Tourism Strategic Area (KSPN) through Indonesia's Presidential Regulation in 2011. The development is followed by the local government through the Regional Medium-Range Development Plan (RPJMD). This research aims to investigate the awareness of the local community on the potential of traditional arts as the main attraction, and the effectiveness of communication and promotion to support the management of the Northern Rupal Island as a tourist destination. This research uses qualitative methods and uses primary and secondary data as the main source. The results of the study found that high levels of community tourism awareness are not matched by infrastructure. Another result has shown cultural tourism programs are not prepared as comprehensively as natural tourism programs. Moreover, evidence of a significant promotional program was not found in either print or digital media formats.

Keywords: *Destination branding, Communication tourism, Rupal island, Cultural tourism.*

INTRODUCTION

The Riau Provincial Government has decided to develop several cultural tourism destinations, one of which is Rupal Island. The island is administratively located in the Bengkalis Regency and covers an area the size of 1,500 kilometres squared, which is inhabited by a population of

47,000 people. As the outside area, the development of Rupert Island is also a concern and priority of the Indonesian Government. This effort can be seen in a specific programme, such as the Kota Terpadu Mandiri (KTM), the Integrated Remote City, in 2009. The island is administratively divided into two: the Rupert Sub-District, and the Northern Rupert Sub-District, which have been developed as natural and cultural tourism destinations. This research is focussed on the northern side, due to its greater variety of assets and supporting factors as a marine and cultural tourism destination.

In the marine tourism aspect, the Northern Rupert Sub-District has the longest white sand beach at approximately 17 kilometres in length, which is directly opposite Malaysia. It has been stated in Indonesian Government documentation to be part of the image of national tourism.

Figure 1. Northern Rupert Sub-District Beach



Besides the white sand beach, this marine area also offers a unique ecological area. For example, one of the famous beaches is Pesona Beach, which extends from east to west and faces Tanjung Rusa in Port Dickson, Malaysia. From this beach, people can see national and international ships that are passing through very crowded international waters. This beach is also utilised for various leisure activities, such as beach volleyball, sunbathing, swimming, diving, and surfing.

These advantages of the island have encouraged the Government from the central, provincial, and district levels to develop the Northern Rupert area as a branded tourism destination, both on a regional, and national scale. Several steps have been made to support this programme, among others, such as to include the Pesona Beach as one of the five leading tourism regions in the National Tourism Master Plan. Another step has been made by combining cultural tourism in the area through traditional arts attractions and exhibitions, including the Safar Bathing Festival, and the Zapin Fire Dance, on the beaches along the island to attract tourists to visit.

The Safar Bathing Festival is a routine ritual every month during Safar (in the Islamic calendar). The festival involves the whole community bathing at the beach to prevent or even eliminate all kinds of bad luck, outbreaks of infectious diseases, disasters or accidents that will or have come (Ashubli, 2018). Meanwhile, the Zapin Fire Dance is a performance performed by several men on live coal, which can only be found in the Rupert Utara. This traditional art performance is part of cultural tourism, which is also a representation of the identity of the local people. Therefore, cultural tourism also plays a significant role in the process of destination branding in Northern Rupert Island.

Figure 2. Zapin Fire Dance



However, the significance of cultural tourism potentials has not been fully explored and utilised. To date, only the marine tourism aspect has received attention and has become a significant milestone. Therefore, more attention and more assistance must be focused upon cultural tourism needs that are to be increased, in line with the management of natural tourism, which has already been carried out to support the Government's efforts to make the Northern Rupert Island a branded tourism destination.

Despite all the efforts, the promotion and communication related to the destination branding programme are far from ideal. Print and digital media only report and promote events sporadically and tentatively. There is no website or regular promotions that are specifically utilised to encourage this tourism destination. The Government also has not used social media, which is one of the most effective tools of today to communicate the destination branding programme on Northern Rupert Island.

Based on this background, this research intends to explore the various possible governance actions that can be carried out upon cultural tourism on Northern Rupert Island to increase the effectiveness of the destination branding programme. Firstly, it investigates the level of awareness of the local community regarding the management of its tourism potential. Secondly, it assesses an exploration of the management of traditional arts, which is the main attraction of cultural tourism. Thirdly, to describe the provision and utilisation of the

Government's communication facilities. Fourth, and lastly, to formulate a promotion technique to support the management of the Northern Rupert Island as a tourist branding destination.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This research uses several concepts in considering the destination branding process on Northern Rupert Island, which are outlined as follows.

Governance Concepts

Governance is a process that includes coordination, collaboration, and cooperation between various stakeholders to ensure the multiple effects of natural and social and/or cultural tourism development upon the local economy (Islam et al., 2018; Pulido-Fernandez, 2018; Keyim, 2018). This process concerns not only the actions and responsibilities of government or the activities that are solely related to formal institutions, such as national and local governments, but also the activities that involve a series of relationships between actors in the public, private sector, and of course, local communities (Hall, 2011). Their ultimate goal is to bring together tourists, local communities as hosts, and industry players to achieve sustainable tourism management. Included in the governance process is tourism policy, risk management, capacity studies, service quality and tourist satisfaction, competitiveness, environmental impact, digitalisation, and the smart economy (Dos Anjos, 2019).

Based on the above explanation, the management of the Northern Rupert Island to become a tourism destination includes the processes of coordination, collaboration, and cooperation between various stakeholders — ranging from the Government, and actors in the public sector, private sector, and the local community — for the sake of improving the local economy. This governance applies especially to tourism potential, and cultural products. Management has also been carried out on the process of communication and promotion of tourism potential, and these products.

The Concept of Destination Branding

Destination branding is a process carried out by governance actors to attract tourists and increase competitiveness against other similar destinations. Destination branding has several dimensions, including destination image, destination awareness, destination culture, destination personality, and destination quality (Tsaor et al., 2016). A destination image is defined as attitudes that reflect beliefs, ideas and impressions of tourists towards specific tourist destinations (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999). Meanwhile, destination awareness is reflected in the ability of tourists to identify particular tourist destinations and their differences with others (Tsaor et al., 2016). Destination personality refers to the set of human characteristics associated with a tourism destination (Ekinci & Hosany, 2006). Destination culture also refers to a system

of attributes based on cultural aspects that exist in specific tourist destinations (Risitano, 2005). Finally, destination quality leads to tourists' perceptions of the achievement of tourist destinations in meeting their expectations (Ferns & Walls, 2012). The quality of this destination is the most basic and essential element that influences the attitude of tourists (Žabkar et al., 2010), and will, therefore, influence other factors as well.

In the context of this research, the dimensions of destination branding are scattered and determined by several aspects. Firstly, destination image, destination personality, and destination culture relate to the awareness and involvement of the local community as the host, as well as the essential stakeholder in tourism on the Northern Rupa Island and its cultural products. In this case, traditional arts and rituals that have been sustainable until now. The last two dimensions, destination awareness and destination quality, are closely related and determined by the extent to which various parties on Rupa Island communicate and promote the tourism potential they have.

The Concept of Cultural Tourism

According to Czapo (2011), there are several types of cultural tourism, namely heritage tourism, cultural, thematic routes, cultural city tourism and/or cultural tours, traditional or ethnic tourism, event and festival tourism, religious tourism and pilgrimage routes, and creative tourism. Based on this division, the cultural tourism on Rupa Island — namely, the Safari Bathing Festival, and the Zapin Fire Dance — are included as simultaneously traditional or ethnic tourism, and event and festival tourism. These two cultural events are the product of the culture of the local people who inhabit the island, which also reflects their identity. As an event, the celebration of these products is growing bigger every year. Therefore, it requires further search. Apart from these two products, Rupa Island also has other potential products of cultural tourism, such as spiritual practices, architectural and/or cultural heritage sites, and gastronomic experiences.

The Concept of Tourism Communication Strategy

In the most contemporary definition, communication is a multidimensional process of meaning, which is making that is interactive and participatory (Blichfeldt & Smed, 2015; Gyimothy, 2013). This definition includes an understanding that communication models should not be sender or receiver oriented but actor-oriented, as all actors should be seen as active and able to take initiatives to create, exchange, share, and advance meanings (Blichfeldt, 2017).

Furthermore, communication is said to be strategic if it involves the deliberate spread of information, ideas, principles, doctrines, and so on. This communication strategy is a term commonly used by organisations and institutions, such as government, national and business

agents, non-profit organisations, and others. However, not only that, communication strategies also occur in direct communicators (Blichfeldt, 2017), which in the context of this study are tourists, and the other communities involved.

METHODS

The research into the management of the development of the Northern Rupert Island as a branded tourism destination has been carried out for two years. The research subjects and research informants were determined purposively. The informants consisted of two community groups. The first group served as a decision-maker, both at the executive and legislative levels, and was directly related to the field of tourism. The second group was the local community, who are members of the Tourism Awareness Group (POKDARWIS).

The data or information used in this study consists of primary data obtained through interviews, and secondary data taken from supporting references. As a qualitative study, the data analysis was carried out through three activities: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion and verification activities.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This research attempts to answer the problems which were outlined in the introduction. These problems include the position and role of local communities in destination branding programmes; the management of traditional arts, as the main attraction of cultural tourism; providing and utilising the Government's communication facilities; and a feasible promotion technique to support the control of the Northern Rupert Island as a tourist branding destination for the Riau Province. These points will explained in further detail, as follows.

The Position and Role of Local Communities

In managing a branded tourism destination, the role of the local community is incredibly significant. The term, 'local community', has been defined as a group of interacting people living in a shared location; and as a group that is organised around shared values and has attributed with social cohesion within a shared geographical location, generally in social units that are more extensive than a household (Beck, 1992). Based on this definition, the local community of the Northern Rupert Island includes all residents who inhabit and who share the same cultural values.

Based on the above understanding, the Rupert island is located in the Bengkalis Regency, comprising an area of approximately 1,500 kilometres squared that is inhabited by a population of 47,000 people. The island is divided into two sub-districts: the Rupert sub-districts, and the Northern Rupert Utara sub-districts. The Northern Rupert Utara sub-districts is being developed

as a tourist area for both natural and cultural tourism and is the focus of this research. The Table below provides the population and gender ratio in the Northern Rupert sub-district for the period of 2012–2017.

Table 1. Population and Sex Ratio in the Northern Rupert Sub-District

Year	Population		Total	Sex Ratio
	Male	Female		
2012	6,983	6,582	13,565	106
2013	7,114	6,672	13,786	107
2014	7,220	6,779	13,999	107
2015	7,303	6,898	14,201	106
2016	7,415	6,984	14,399	106
2017	7,510	7,082	14,592	106

Source: Bengkalis Regency Statistics Agency

With a population of 14,592 people, the role of the local community is essential in the process of managing the branded tourism destination on Rupert Island. In this context, tourism developed by the Government must become indigenous tourism, namely tourism as a means of facilitating socio-economic benefits to indigenous individuals, communities, and host regions. Like all forms of tourism, the development, implementation, and management of Indigenous tourism should arguably be underpinned by the principles of sustainable development and natural resource management (Carr, 2016). Therefore, tourism activities on Rupert Island need to prioritise and benefit local inhabitants. The developed tourism also needs to be run in harmony with the principles of survival of both the ecological, and socio-cultural factors of the Rupert Island community.

To date, the active involvement of local communities can be seen in the formation of tourism awareness groups (POKDARWIS) in several villages on Rupert Island. The POKDARWIS is a community that grouped and independently created programmes to enhance the development of local tourism. The POKDARWIS can be a government partner in increasing public awareness in tourism, strengthening human resources, encouraging the realisation of Sapta Enchantment, and improving product and tourism quality to improve competitiveness and restore tourism as a whole (Andiani & Widiastini, 2017). On Rupert Island, there are at least four active POKDARWIS, namely POKDARWIS Tuah Negeri Tanjung Punak Village, POKDARWIS Tanjung Lapin Beach Tanjung Punak Village, POKDARWIS Pesona Utara Pesona Desa Rhu, and POKDARWIS Kilau Pasir Putih Desa Teluk Rhu.

Figure 3. Travel Work Training Center



With government support, the POKDARWIS carry out several programmes to increase the capacity of the tourism community. The programme includes: the establishment of an English Tourism Village in Tanjung Punak; flower tree cultivation, namely nursery and colourful flower tree cuttings to add beauty and provide a sale value; fostering homestay owner groups, which is organised coaching in tourism, especially regarding the Sapta Pesona; procurement of culinary materials, especially to sellers of special foods, homestay facilities; and infrastructure and tour guide equipment, namely the procurement of POKDARWIS costumes, secretarial equipment, permanent space facilities, superior products of Tanjung Punak, and documentation equipment. The Government also supports programmes to increase the appreciation of art and culture that is organised by POKDARWIS through providing equipment and raw materials for craft and product labelling, art equipment, and exhibition and/or gazebo spaces. Another POKDARWIS' programme concerns organisational management training to improve performance, which is carried out at the POKDARWIS Tanjung Lapin.

The POKDARWIS is one of the national programmes that seems to be successful, especially for the Northern Rupa area. On many occasions the Tanjung Laping POKDARWIS has won the Sapta Pesona competition at the provincial level. The POKDARWIS has also conducted mass activities, such as cleaning up the sea, and the beach. These programmes can provide quite actual and progressive. However, there are still several obstacles that hamper the progress of these programmes. The barriers came mainly from the aspect of infrastructure. Several tourism programmes and activities, such as the construction of homestays, art performance, and handicraft production, require adequate support. Meanwhile, infrastructure is still minimal on Rupa Island.

The community has also incorporated other community-based organisations that have contributed to the Rupert Island branded tourism destination. For example, the Tanjung Punak Village has community organisations such as non-government organisations (NGOs), LINMAS, FKPM, and arts organisations, including the Kompong Society, and the Rabbana Society. These organisations also need to gain serious attention, including from the POKDARWIS, because they have involved local people and are also an essential part of the tourism development programme.

Other parties that contribute to tourism on Rupert Island are companies or travel agents. One of them is the Association of Indonesian Travel Companies or the Association of the Indonesian Tours and Travel Agencies (ASITA), specifically the Rupert Island branch. This tour and tour agent needs to gather support from infrastructure, and the improvement of its human resources. In general, integrated travel tour agents to Rupert Island are limited. Furthermore, tourism programmes have not been compiled comprehensively, and there have not been significant promotions in various media related to the programme.

Besides, another concern related to the participation of local communities is the equality of recognition of the community itself. In developing and managing a place as a tourist destination, the community is the host, an essential component that determines the success of the programme. In the scenario of Rupert Island, several community groups showed active involvement, but some others, due to various factors, had not yet participated. For example, there is an isolated ethnic group called the Akit, who live in villages such as the Titi Akar Village, Tanjung Medang, and Ayu and Suka Damai Forests. The Akit people, in various aspects, are left behind and apart from the local communities that have been mentioned above. Thus, empowerment of the Akit to become involved in the destination branding process is essential. Based on Ghofur's research (2014), such empowerment requires a particular approach, due to a lack of experience in economic, educational, cultural, and value-based disadvantages that have not been influenced by external elements. This empowerment will face several obstacles, such as static values, stable culture over a long period, fatalism, and ethnocentrism and rejection of innovation. The solution is to use indigenous learning systems.

Cultural Tourism Attractions on Rupert Island

One of the faces or images of Rupert Island in its tourism destination branding programme is represented through cultural tourism. Besides reflecting the cultural products of the local community, this tourism is also a part of their identity. Therefore, the appeal is a significant aspect of the branding process. On Rupert Island, two cultural practices have been embraced by the Government and are developed continuously in various elements. They are the Safar Bathing Festival, and the Zapin Fire Dance.

Safar Bathing Festival

Safar bathing rituals can be found in several regions in Indonesia, including, among others, several areas in West Nusa Tenggara, Sulawesi, Maluku, Kalimantan, Riau provinces, and Riau Islands (Ashsubli, 2018). In the Riau Province, this festival is regularly held in the Tanjung Punak Village on Rupert Island, located in the Bengkalis Regency.

Safar bathing is a routine ritual of bathing together, which is held every month of Safar on the beach and is attended by hundreds or even thousands of residents, both men and women, and old and young from the surrounding area and other regions. The community believes that the Safar bathing rituals can prevent or even eliminate all kinds of bad luck and epidemics that will or have come, especially during the month of Safar. They named this the Safar Bathing day, 'Capuk Wednesday', which means Wednesday that always leaves terrible marks. On this day, there are several prohibited activities, such as work, fishing, cutting wood, and even just picking leaves or breaking branches. According to the local beliefs, people who are injured by axes, crushed by wood or have fallen on that day serve as bad signs (Ashsubli, 2018).

The Safar bathing ritual is considered as a form of acculturation of the Rupert Island local community's beliefs in Islam. In its implementation, the ceremony is accompanied by readings sourced from the Qur'an. Other sources say that the ritual comes from the traditions and teachings of Islam (the Qur'an and the Hadith of the Prophet). More than the fact of acculturation, the routine also continues to be developed and has expanded to a festival. This ritual activity is fully supported by the Bengkalis Regency Government, so that it can be held routinely every year as a festival, with other activities and attractions that accompany it to promote the tourism potential on Rupert Island. In 2019, the festival was held for one week (20–27 October 2019), followed by other activities such as contests (fishing contests, Malay races, and beach sports competitions), Zapin Malay dances, traditional game performances, evening artistry, casual walks, and a beach clean-up. As a grand festival, the local government hopes that in addition to increasing the number of tourists, this festival can be a moment to inventory, preserve or improve the understanding of the young generation of local people regarding the traditions and culture of their ancestors.

Besides its scale, the Safar bathing festival is also deeply rooted in the daily life of the people on the Northern Rupert Island. The ritual and festival have a basic function in their lives. Ashsubi (2018) noted at least three functions: social function, political function, and religious function. The social function of the Safar bathing is to create togetherness and solidarity. Its political function is to unite the people in one social bond regardless of race, religion, and class. The last function is as an economic function, which can improve the economy of the people.

Zapin Fire Dance

The Zapin Fire Dance is a typical Malay dance originating from the Northern Rupert Island in the Bengkalis Regency. In 2017, the Zapin Fire Dance was designated as intangible cultural heritage (WBTB) from the Province of Riau by the Ministry of Education and Culture, with the registration number 2017007392, along with other types of Zapin dance, namely the Zapin Meskom.

The Zapin Fire Dance has a long history that shows its attachment to the social aspects of the community. Firstly, 'Zapin Fire' is related to the origins of the people who inhabit Rupert Island. Secondly, Zapin Fire, in its development, has the significant influence of Islamic values, so it is closely related to the practice of community religiosity. Thirdly, as a cultural heritage, Zapin Fire is a wealth that has been used as the main attraction of tourism, which in turn, can improve the economics of communities.

There are many versions of which community the Zapin Api Dance first originated. One version says the Akit ethnic group brought the dance from Malacca, who came to the area as fugitives. Another version says that the dance originated from the Rokan Hilir area because it has also been found to be the medical tradition of the Bonai ethnic group, which used the media of sparks with a similar spell as the ritual leader (caliph) of the Zapin Api Dance in Rupert Utara (Suryanto, 2018).

Apart from the versions above, the Zapin Dance is rooted or lived by the indigenous people. Therefore, the Zapin Fire Dance is a wealth of traditional art that represents the local community of the Northern Rupert Island. Preserving this dance also means protecting the identity and existence of the community.

Furthermore, in its development, the Zapin Fire Dance has also experienced several changes, especially after being influenced by Islamic values. Before it was known as Zapin Api, precisely in pre-Islamic times, this dance was only referred to as the 'Fire Dance'. At that time, the Fire Dance performance was closely related to the practices of the local ethnic animism-dynamism, especially in the aspects of using magic and mystical rituals in the dance series. Subsequently, the influence of Islam was brought by the Acehnese people of Arab descent. They developed the Fire Dance by incorporating Zapin elements and making them into the Zapin Fire Dance. Previously, Zapin Dance, which is a typical feature of Malay, can already be found in several regions in the Archipelago. This dance receives substantial influence from the Arabic culture, especially in its movements. This dance was developed into today's Zapin Fire Dance, as it is now, which is played with Zapin music but is also accompanied by the recitation of spells by the handler, which is called the Khilafah. In this aspect, the Zapin Fire Dance has become not only a local of artistic activity, but also a spiritual event of the people on the Rupert Island. Thus, this reflects identity from a different perspective.

With the significance of the role of the Zapin Fire, it is appropriate to make this dance a significant element of the Rupert Island tourism destination branding programme. By performing this dance, the Government not only preserves, but also supports the existence of the identity of the local community on Rupert Island. As the central element of the branded cultural tourism, the Zapin Fire Dance can sale its value, which can attract many tourists. This effort also means the dance can support the improvement of the welfare of the local people.

The local government has supposedly supported the establishment of the Zapin Fire Studio in terms of funds, musical instruments, and equipment. The Government recommends displaying Zapin Fire from significant events on Rupert island. In fixing the clothes and makeup, it must be adjusted to the players' condition. With the opening of the Zapin Fire Studio, people on the Northern Rupert Island, especially in the village of Tanjung Medang, have brought this tradition back to life, as it was in the past.

In addition to increasing the scope and success of the two cultural tourism activities above as the main images in the destination branding programme, the local government must inventory the other cultural and artistic practices that exist on Rupert Island. Based on the distribution of the types of cultural tourism, the following sites also need to be developed as tourism destinations on Rupert Island, among others: cultural tourism, which is heritage tourism, such as architectural sites found in the Suar Tower in the Rhu Bay Village, Putri Sembilan Tomb in Putri Sembilan Village, Cin Heng Keng Temple in Tanjung Medang Village, Vidya Sagara Temple in Kadur Village, and Cin Bu Kiong Temple in Titi Akar Village. Some of the last sites mentioned can also be included in the category of religious and/or pilgrimage tourism. Other cultural tourism which can be developed is ethnic tourism. For example, Tanjung Jaya Fisherman Village in Teluk Rhu Village, and Akit Tribal Village Village in Hutan Ayu Village. The local government can also develop creative tourism, which presents various performing arts, as well as what is known as 'gastro-tourism', which is mainly related to traditional culinary events on Rupert Island.

Utilisation of Communication Tools and Strategies

There have been many studies related to the communication strategies which are carried out by the Bengkalis Regency Government related to tourism potential, especially those on Rupert Island. Nurjanah (2018) underlined the efforts made in utilising communication facilities to promote Rupert Island tourism. First, the use of direct promotions through demonstrations, such as pictures and prints (leaflets, folders, booklets or brochures, stickers, calendars, wall clocks, etc.), which have been distributed through special exhibitions at regional booths that are displayed both at the national and provincial level. The second, indirect promotion, can be done through the provision of information in the form of printed material published in magazines or news reported by online and print media, as an example of the dissemination of information

through the official website of the Bengkalis Regency Government, namely at www.bengkaliskab.go.id.

Based on observations, the local government also disseminates information through outdoor media, such as billboards and banners. For example, signposts read: “The Sea of Our Future”, in several fishing villages along the island. The local government, especially the SKPD of the Office of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, also makes unique films that are intended to increase community empowerment. This includes animated film created in collaboration with the Marine and Coastal Resources Management Project (MCRMP), one of which was titled: “The Adventure of the Children of the Land of Junjungan: Residents of the Sea”. This animated film is an animated film series, “Love the Environment as Early as Possible”, which is used to convey a message to the community to always protect the sea and its contents, preserve the environment of mangroves, and other ecological notes.

Considering the condition of the utilisation of communication facilities for the promotion of tourism, especially on Northern Rupa Island, there are still several aspects that have not been touched and require development. First, advertising is always focussed on marine tourism and has not yet reached cultural tourism. Researchers did find some videos uploaded by the local government on social media, such as YouTube, regarding cultural attractions in the Rupa, including the Zapin Fire Dance. However, it remained very limited in its spread and is not enough to promote all aspects of cultural tourism. Second, the form of communication carried out by the local government is entirely a one-way mode of communication, where only the Government is acting as a promoter. Third, the Government has not utilised the Internet and social media to the fullest, which allows the creation of two-way communication that enables the consumer to participate in the development of a destination-brand identity and/or image (Hipperson, 2010).

With a vacuum in the three aspects, this research offers the Government the opportunity to consider several forms of communication strategies for tourism promotion, which are outlined as follows.

Real-time Promotion Strategies through Social Media

A real-time promotion strategy is based on an actuality. Its difference to the conventional approach is the effort to always be up to date by promoting current events, which are accessible and relevant to the needs of visitors. Real-time marketing aims to connect consumers with the product or service that they need now, in the moment. (Kaplan, 2012). This strategy is implemented through social media due to its advantages. Social media represents various forms and functions of social networks, including: photo sharing sites (Instagram, Flickr, and Photobucket), video creation sites (YouTube, and Ustream), online community sites and microblogging (Twitter), social tagging (Digg), news sites (Google Reader), to provide public

Internet boards and forums, and review and rating websites (TripAdvisor), among many other functions. The ability to accommodate various forms of content, such as texts, photos, and videos (Kang & Schuett, 2013), makes a complete promotional site with an extremely high level of actuality. With social media, the Government can continue to do real-time promotions. Therefore, it needs to consider to create various accounts on social media and actively continue to update posts following issues that are currently popular regarding the tourism potential they possess.

Word of Mouth Strategy

Word of mouth (WOM) is a communication strategy that focusses on ‘word of mouth’ advertising among visitors. The results of this strategy are usually different and surprising, although sometimes they are not always positive. To be sure, a two-way conversation is possible with the consumer participating in the development of a destination brand identity and/or image (Hipperson, 2010). This strategy can only succeed if the Government has actively run its social media accounts; the more active the Government, the more intense the word of mouth among tourists.

At present, word of mouth promotion is considered by many experts to be the most effective. It is conceivable, that a tourist who is fascinated by Rupert Island will share his experience on social media and very quickly it may be seen by other potential tourists. Moreover, this two-way communication also allows tourists to communicate directly with the Government, stakeholders (Mangold & Faulds, 2009) or even local people who host tourism activities on Rupert Island. With this possibility, the evaluation and aspirations of tourists can be directly conveyed, and the development of aspects of tourism, both natural and cultural, can be carried out quickly and accurately.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Based on the study, field studies, and analysis of the primary and secondary sources, the researchers concluded that several aspects need to be considered in the framework of governance of the branded tourism destination on Rupert Island, especially regarding cultural tourism.

1. The level of awareness of local community tourism to support the tourism destination branding programme on Northern Rupert Island is quite high, as evidenced by the activities carried out by the tourism awareness group (POKDARWIS). However, the infrastructure to support the activities of the POKDARWIS remains minimal. Likewise, the active role of local communities, especially from the Akit ethnic group, has not been maximised.

2. Cultural tourism programmes have not been arranged as comprehensively as nature has done. The scope of cultural tourism also remains minimal.
3. There is limited evidence of significant promotions in various media related to the programmes. To date, the Government has only implemented a communication strategy for direct and indirect development through print media.
4. Promotion through digital media is still minimal with only a few documentaries made concerning nature tourism, and none yet for cultural tourism on Rupal Island.

This research poses the following recommendations to the local government:

1. The local government needs to recognise the Akit people as part of the local community and involve them as active parties in various tourist destination branding programmes on Rupal Island.
2. The local government needs to prioritise cultural tourism products as the main image of this destination branding programme. In addition to maximising the existing programmes, namely cultural tourism that are festivals or events, the local government needs to seriously handle other types of cultural tourism, such as heritage tourism, ethnic-based tourism, creative tourism, and culinary tourism.
3. The local government needs to increase the promotion of existing tourism, both direct and indirect, and in terms of qualitative and quantitative methods, including combining it with digital media and the Internet.
4. To organise the management of destination branding programmes, especially both natural and cultural tourism, is also directed at improving communication and promotion strategies in general. Several of the communication and promotion strategies offered by this research need to be followed up by the Government, including through real-time promotions, and word of mouth (WOM) promotions on social media.



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