

***The Prominence of Smart in Smart Tourism Experience:
A Netnographic Examination of Online Reviews***

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to investigate Jakarta's potential as a smart tourism city from the viewpoint of visitors, specifically from their post-trip experience through online reviews. The study uses a netnography approach and content analysis to examine online reviews. Data were collected based on Google Review from 25 attractions in Jakarta to understand how tourists perceive those aspects and assess the relevance of smart tourism city from tourists' perspectives. All the included reviews were coded using the software ATLAS.ti. The coding process involved three steps: identification of preliminary codes, categorization of code groups, and identification of other categories to develop key themes. Six major themes emerged from the data analysis: experience, facilities, attraction, environment, staff, and accessibility. These themes represent the attributes most frequently identified in the 2500 reviews of 25 attractions included in the study. The findings of this study are anticipated to advance the literature by offering empirical data to demonstrate the significance of smart tourism city traits, particularly in determining tourist experience.

Keywords: Smart Tourism Experience, Smart Tourism Cities, Online Reviews, Tourist Experiences, Jakarta

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Introduction

Globalization and the development of digital technology have caused changes in the management of the public and private sectors to emphasize real time, connected transportation systems and the use of technology to compete and survive in a globalized world (Mursitama & Lee, 2018). In the last two decades, cities in the world have carried out digital transformation and managed cities with a Smart City approach. A smart city is defined as an urban area that uses electronic data collection sensors located in infrastructure, buildings, vehicles, institutions, and devices (IoT, Internet of Things) to provide real-time information about key city operating systems including energy, transportation, water supply, waste, waste, law enforcement, and information and communications. All censored data is integrated into an information and communications technology (ICT) platform that enables city managers and decision makers to optimize the efficiency, resilience of city operations and services by connecting and managing these systems remotely. The main goal of a smart city is to optimize city functions and encourage economic growth while improving the quality of life of citizens by using smart technology and data analysis. The level of intelligence of a city is usually determined by the availability of technology-based infrastructure, initiatives in environmental management and preservation, progressive city planning, and the ability of people to live and work in the city by utilizing the city's resources. Smart cities create systems that connect urban areas that provide many benefits for world citizens in terms of improving quality of life, ensuring sustainability, and utilizing resources efficiently (Moura & de Abreu e Silva, 2021).

Massive initiatives on smart cities all over the world, makes smart tourism development becomes part of urban and rural development. It is also considered as destination's panacea to gain competitiveness (Pranita, 2023). Digital technology-based smart tourism co-creates experience trough stakeholders' collaborations in the digital platform. Thus, smart tourism becomes a new buzzword to describe the increasing reliance of tourism destinations, their industries and their tourists on emerging forms of ICT that allow for huge amounts of data to be transformed into value propositions (Gretzel et al., 2015). In short, to make destinations smart, experience infostructure and tourist experience platform that improve interconnectivity and interoperability of tourism offerings, as well as digital transformation that directed to process reengineering and data analytics system are employed to optimize all stakeholders' value through service, products, procedures and business model innovation (Pranita et al., 2023).

As the industry is forced to adopt the new and massive smart technologies, somehow the distinctive aspects of tourism experience, unique resources and sense of place, as the most important source of competitive advantage and basis of differentiation, are overlooked (Pranita, 2023). This situation is even more significant in cities and urban areas that have positioned tourim as one of their development focus, the smart tourism cities, but are too busy to pursuit the adoption and transformation of smart technologies for their city governance and tourism value chain connectivity. Smart tourism cities according to Gretzel & Koo (2021) are cities that are able to respond more effectively and dynamically to the needs and desires of both residents and tourists. Optimizing the infrastructure, resources, and spaces shared in everyday life and tourism, and designing and operating the city to create a highly engaging living and playing field, so that the cities accountable to the public who live and work there, rather than focus on the technology alone (Gretzel, U. & Koo, 2021).

Jakarta is currently the capital city of Indonesia, that will soon release its attribute as capital city. While it has already become the barometer for its infrastructure in national level, however Jakarta must reposition and brand itself to be able to maintain and improve its position in global cities. After a long discussion and consideration, Jakarta has determined itself to become a global city that highlight tourism to ensure the attractiveness, convenience and livability of the city. Thus, smart tourism city concept will be relevant with the future development of Jakarta.

As resources to develop smart tourism city are limited, cities must prioritize and pilotage its development. It can start with the most valued tourist attractions and tourism sites by tourists. One of the easiest, ready to use, and available data is through the examination of online reviews to identify the readiness of tourism attraction in term of experience, facilities, attraction, environment, staff, and accessibility. Therefore, this study will focus on the investigation of Jakarta's potential as a smart tourism city from the viewpoint of visitors from their post-trip experience through online reviews. Based on the findings, Jakarta will be able to identify which attractions and tourism sites are ready for initial integrated smart tourism city development in order to strengthen its position in the global markets, while preparing the next development focus as a road map to a global level smart tourism city.

Literature Review

As tourism industry changes, then massive utilization of digital technology becomes the determinant strategy and the source of competitiveness for either tourism organizations or destinations (Panyadee, 2023). Consequently, smart tourism destination is now become the target of destination mentioned that smart destination can be categorized and assessed by four dimensions: attractiveness, sustainability, accessibility and digitalization readiness (Namho Chung, Juyeon Ham & Chulmo Koo, 2021). Smart tourism destinations "ultimately aim to revolutionizing the creation of tourism experiences as well as tourism business and marketing of the destination (Boes et al., 2016).

Memorable experiences, in this study, refer to enjoyable, unforgettable experiences at smart tourism destinations that are remembered and recall positively (Jeong & Shin, 2019). the experience is built from the traveller's interaction with the destination and its elements (Muniz et al., 2021). An experience must be built to be memorable, therefore, it's reasonable to argue that only when their experiences are much better than their expectation, can they show positive sentiments in their online reviews (Wei et al., 2023). To create the experience of tourists, some factors in destination marketing and tourism management should be focused to manage, the tourists' satisfaction is largely related to their evaluation of attractions (Shaykh-Baygloo, 2021) supported with the accessibility to tourists 'spots is an indicator for tourists to revisit a destination (Mansouri & Ujang, 2016), display environment (Lv et al., 2022), facility service quality is an important service-related attribute linked to amenities, A dirty and poorly maintained room has a negative impact on facility service quality, Some recent studies have indicated that poor facility service quality leads to a negative experience (Sthapit et al., 2022) and for all the management of tourist attraction have to take a good customer engagement have varying effects on customer experience and identification, which in turn affects customer loyalty toward tourist destinations (Kaushal & Yadav, 2023). With the development of the internet and communication technologies, online information from social networks, opinion portals, and independent blogs especially user-generated content (UGC), has become one of the most important sources influencing consumer choice, As

electronic word of mouth, online reviews delivered by past customers contribute information relevant to an item's perceived value (Sun et al., 2023).

As ICT and digital technology becomes an imperative improvement focus, however, there is a tendency that smart tourism initiatives sometimes overlooked destination's unique resources and sense of place, as basic distinctive aspects of tourism experience and the source of competitive advantage (Pranita, 2023).

The current study employed netnography to analyze the internet reviews of post-purchase visitors at 25 attractions in Jakarta. Netnography is a qualitative research method that focuses on observing and analyzing the online behavior and data created by consumers or study participants in an online setting (Mkono, 2012). Netnography is a methodology that shares similarities with ethnography. However, instead of physically observing the subjects of the research, netnography relies on internet data, typically in the form of reviews from online forums and social networking sites that focus on travel and tourism experiences. For this research, we utilize Google to retrieve online reviews as our data source, as it is the predominant review platform among Indonesian residents. All the included reviews were coded using the software ATLAS.ti. The coding process involved three steps: identification of preliminary codes, categorization of code groups, and identification of other categories to develop key themes. Six major themes emerged from the data analysis: experience, facilities, attraction, environment, staff, and accessibility.

Conclusion

Six major themes emerged from the data analysis: experience, facilities, attraction, environment, staff, and accessibility. These themes represent the attributes most frequently identified in the 2500 reviews of 25 attractions included in the study.

Experience

The first theme, the most frequently discussed amongst the reviews, was about the visitors' experience at the attractions. Most of the reviews are mainly related to the satisfaction that the visitors receive by visiting an attraction, which is in the form of positive feedback or recommendations regarding the visited attractions. The satisfaction of visitors' experience is sometimes also followed by their references to educational or learning experiences encountered during a visit and memorable experiences they get from their visits, which they had expressed through positive emotions such as feeling nostalgic, joy, love and excitement when visiting attractions.

Facilities

The second most frequently mentioned theme was the facilities. Most of the reviews in this theme focused on the quality of the attraction's facilities, explicitly referring to the description and assessment of facilities' condition and quality on cleanliness, comfort, spaciousness, maintenance and adequacy of facilities provided. Most reviews under this theme often include lengthy descriptions and negative sentiments about particular facilities.

Attraction

'Attraction' was the next most frequently identified theme, with reviews coded under this theme often including lengthy descriptions about four main aspects of an attraction, which are its cultural and historical values, attractiveness, activities and price. The first aspect regarding the attraction's cultural and historical values often comes with lengthy descriptive comments such as the background story of the attraction. Other reviews related to this theme also mentioned the attraction's appealing qualities, such as its uniqueness, diversity of collections or products, or its visually pleasant design or appearance. References to activities that the attraction offers, such as art activities, events, shopping, and leisure activities, also appeared often. The last one was regarding the description and assessment of the attraction's price, which is sometimes followed by whether the price is reasonable given the value of the experience that visitors receive.

Environment

This theme shows that the reviews indicated that the ambience of the surrounding environment and the level of the crowd at the attraction are important to determine their experience. Comments relating to weather were also included under this theme, as many visitors tended to evaluate their experience of the attraction based on the impacts of the weather.

Staff

The interaction with staff was the fifth theme that came up from our analysis. It discussed the friendliness, helpfulness, knowledge and attitudes of the attraction's staff. As tourism encounters more broadly, the influence of staff is pivotal to the overall satisfaction with the experience.

Accessibility

The last theme that frequently mentioned was the description and assessment of public transport access to the attraction as well as the attraction's location, whether it is strategic or not.

It is evident from the findings that none of the themes are related to the digital components of the attractions. While many reviewers discuss the components of the smart tourism city, these characteristics are only linked to the intrinsic values of the attraction, such as facilities, attractiveness, service, and (physical) accessibility. The findings also show that most reviews serve as a platform for visitors to reflect on their experiences at the attractions. It has the most significant influence on visitors' post-purchase reflections. This satisfaction is shown through their positive feedback and recommendations, sometimes followed by their statement on what components of the attraction determine their satisfaction. Most positive experience is also found regarding the attraction's capacity to provide visitors with learning and memorable experiences. To conclude, while the study's findings encompass part of the 'smart' experience, the experience is limited to the essential tourism components, such as attraction and accessibility, rather than the digitalization and sustainability aspects.

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