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Building Strategy to Promote Tourism Destination Attractiveness and Competitiveness in Developing Area: A Case of Bojonegoro Regency, East Java, Indonesia

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Abstract: Bojonegoro, which is literally one of the regencies in East Java – Indonesia, has established tourism attractions in the country. The present paper aims to assess the relative attractiveness of tourist destination competitiveness on the basis of tourism strategy in Bojonegoro. It presents our efforts to develop a tourism way that integrates the natural, cultural and art, culinary and artificial tourism in Bojonegoro. The practical implications are both for tourist operators and policy makers. The value of alternate tourism strategies based on the tourist’s impact upon the host culture becomes increasingly critical. There are three major implications for both the public and private sectors to achieve long-term sustainability, i.e., ensuring sustainable use of natural environment, enhancing the reliability of access modes to the destination, and improving the quality of lodging facilities and catering services. Conclusions are provided with a discussion of the specific insights gained from technical experiences that may serve others in addressing similar issues.

Keywords: Tourism Destination Attractiveness, Tourism Destination Competitiveness, Tourism Strategy.

Introduction

Tourism planning has undergone several paradigm-shifts in the past as it has evolved. In many case, sustainable tourism development has become focus of attention amongst tourism stakeholders, theorists and practitioners alike (Sharpley, 2000). Therefore, many obstacles must be overcome in the development of tourism sectors, particularly, provided that it is not supported by the surrounding community. This implies on the importance of regulations and awareness of local governments that concern to develop tourism in their areas. The tourism sector requires a strategy with the basis pattern of tourism development that is planned, arranged and developed optimally. In developing country such as Indonesia, the role of local

government is crucial as a driving force and then gives full authority to the Regional Department of Tourism and Culture in determining and implementing the tourism development strategies.

East Java Province, as one of the provinces in Indonesia, has a lot of good tourism destinations and it is not inferior if compared to other provinces. Bojonegoro as one of the regencies in East Java province has offered a lot of tourism potentials which are very promising to attract tourist or visitors as many as possible. The development of tourism objects initiated by the Regional Department of Tourism and Culture of Bojonegoro Regency are Kedung Maor Waterfall, Clebung Waterfall, Kayangan Api, Pacal Reservoir, Go-Fun Theme Park and many more. However, the lack of local government role that has not been maximized in promoting the possible tourism objects to enhance their potentials makes it less developed optimally.

Dwyer & Kim (2003) argued that in order to achieve competitive advantage, any tourism destination must ensure that its overall "appeal" and positive tourist experience offered must be superior to that of the alternative destinations. This will lead to attract greater number of potential visitors and successful tourism destination which is more influenced by their relative competitiveness (Enright & Newton, 2004). The attractiveness of a tourism destination has a tremendous effect in determining a person's destination choice, expectations of satisfaction, intentions to revisit (Lee, Huang & Yeh, 2010).

Concept of tourism is both desired and required by developed and by many developing nations to enable them in fostering their development and to achieve sustainability (economic, social, and environmental) growth (Font & McCabe, 2017). Tourism is often emphasized as a "green" industry, and rightly so in the context of extraction-based alternatives. For this reason, it has received tremendous attention in previous studies. Tourism offers many advantages that we have pointed out, including the attraction of a tourist (Shunnaq, Schwab, & Reid, 2008) who is usually well-educated, wealthier than the average tourist and eager to learn about the region. Font & McCabe (2017) argued that tourism is most often conceived as a "want" rather than a "need", a luxury or a reward, as a non essential, hedonic, aspirational consumption activity (reflected in advertising messages).

The common understanding about evaluation method of tourism attractiveness is from visitors' or tourists' perspectives (Cracolici & Nijkamp, 2008; Formica, 2002; Meng, 2006). Building solid knowledge and experiences of the entire portfolio of existing tourism resources and attractions is important in evaluating destination competitiveness and attractiveness. Frequently, a vacation trip is more often voluntarily and willingly performed to meet personal and hedonic needs; not because the tourists have to, but because they want to (Prebensen, Chen, & Uysal, 2014). For tourists, experiences and their meanings usually appeal to their high-order needs, such as novelty, excitement and enjoyment, prestige, socialization and learning, and contribute to the enhancement of a sense of well-being. As Formica (2002) noted earlier that rather than using visitors' perspectives, the use of tourism experts such as tourism stakeholders have potential benefits and advantages. Particularly, long-term community observations, interactions with tourists, and the professional planning involvement and experiences are also reliable sources of assessing tourism attractiveness and competitiveness.

Given the fact that, if any, there is a limited number of empirical studies on tourism destination competitiveness and attractiveness, this study will bring new perspective to explore them in tourism strategy in developing area. Above all the description explained before, the purpose of this research is about to examine strategies undertaken by the Regional Department of Tourism

and Culture of Bojonegoro Regency in conducting tourism development in the region as well as supporting and inhibiting factors in the development of the tourist attraction. This paper is started with a discussion analysis of community-based tourism development strategies that form the foundation of government tourism project. Furthermore, this paper serves to examine the status of Bojonegoro in the context of tourism planning and development in Indonesia. It will also analyze the present constraints that may hinder or obstruct the progress of Bojonegoro regency in the tourism industry and discuss the prospect of Bojonegoro as a prospective tourist destination to attract visitors. Particularly, as discussed in the research findings in this study, it will bring valuable contributions to the understanding and insights about tourism destination competitive strategies.

Literature Review

Leiper (1995) argued: “destinations are places towards which people travel and where they choose to stay for a while in order to experience certain features or characteristics, a perceived attraction of some sort” (p. 87). Managing and marketing tourism destinations are also challenging because of the variety of stakeholders involved in the development and production of tourism products. The attractiveness of a travel destination reflects the feelings, beliefs, and opinions that an individual has about a destination’s perceived ability to provide satisfaction in relation to his or her special vacation needs (Formica, 2002).

In context of tourism, destinations are some of the most difficult entities to manage, due to the complexity and difficulty in harmonizing the relationships of local stakeholders (Sautter & Leisen, 1999). A successful site attraction or destination requires a significant mass of compatible products or service which have market viability and appeal. As Meng (2006) stated that theoretical basis and empirical studies on tourism destination competitiveness are derived from multiple disciplines and knowledge. The existing competition among tourism destinations is one of the specific aspects of the broader phenomenon of today’s competitive market environment.

Oftenly, the concept of “competitiveness” is built in international economics and discuss the competitiveness among different countries, which was reinforced by Dwyer & Kim (2003) that framework development of tourism destination competitiveness should be consistent with the international competitiveness literature. The broaden literature of “competitiveness” led to useful insights in examining the various determinants of “firm” or “national” level of competitiveness issues (Porter, 1980; Ritchie & Crouch, 2000). Focusing on tourism destination, the discussion of competitiveness bring to concept of competitive advantage and comparative advantage (Porter, 1990), in which implies to the need of special considerations related to the competitiveness in service sector (Porter, 1990; Ritchie & Crouch, 2000).

Comparative advantage in tourism destination would relate to inherited or endowed resources such as flora, fauna, scenery, and climate (Prentice, Witt, & Hamer, 1998; Ritchie & Crouch, 2000). While in tourism competitive advantage would relate to created items such as the tourism infrastructure (Go, Pine, & Yu, 1994), government policy, festivals and events, and the quality of management, and so on. Investigating different interpretations of strategy, including those within tourism generally, is a necessary starting point to this investigation (Stokes, 2008). Many governments realize that tourism will remains as a viable source of income only if economic, cultural, and ecological goals are held in balance (Hillery, Nancarrow, Griffin, & Smeets,

2001). Furthermore, developing areas for recreation and tourism attraction is usually considered as a way of ensuring sustainable resources management (Hassan, 2000; Ritchie & Crouch, 2000).

Pearce, Strickland-Munro, & Moore, (2016) have explained five distinct facets contributing to tourists' awe-inspiring experiences: marine fauna, aesthetics, ecological phenomena, vast geological landscapes and reflective or perspective moments. Kozak & Rimmington (1998) also described lists show components of tourist destination attractiveness, namely: (1) attractions, (2) facilities and services, (3) infrastructure, (4) hospitality, and (5) cost. As this explanation is built upon reviews regarding tourist destination choice, image and tourist satisfaction, it will play an active role in providing almost all the tangible and intangible components of attractiveness identified in the lists shown above.

Competitiveness would be seen with different perspectives. For instance, economists have emphasized on price and the country-specific economic characteristics of competitiveness, while management and strategy researchers emphasized on the firm-specific characteristics. From a macro perspective, competitiveness is a national concern and the ultimate goal is to improve the real income of the community (Dwyer & Kim, 2003). On this perspective, competitiveness is a very broad construct encompassing all social, cultural, and economic variables which affect the performance of a nation in international markets.

The experience on the implementation of tourism strategies suggests that there are considerable variations across countries and regions. Thus, despite the extensive literature on competitiveness, Dwyer & Kim (2003) explained that there is no clear definition or model which has been developed yet. It is a complex concept because a whole range of factors account for it.

Methodology

This research is a descriptive research using qualitative approach method. The purpose of this study is to describe the analysis of development strategies in building competitiveness and attractiveness in the tourism sector in the Bojonegoro Regency and also identifying its obstacles.

The focuses of this research consist of:

1. Strategies undertaken by the Regional Department of Tourism and Culture of Bojonegoro Regency in developing regional tourism, which includes:
 - a. Tourism facilities and infrastructure provided by government;
 - b. Development of tourism object
 - c. Enhancing community participation
 - d. Increasing the participation of private parties
2. Factors affecting the development of regional tourism in Bojonegoro Regency, which includes:
 - a. Supporting factors; and
 - b. Obstacles and/or constraints.

This study was conducted in Bojonegoro Regency and Regional Department of Tourism and Culture of Bojonegoro Regency as its unit of analysis. Data collection was carried out through observation and documentation. Data analysis was performed by using descriptive analysis model developed by Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña (2014) which suggests that there are three groups of analysis namely: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion.

Tourism Destination Competitiveness and Attractiveness in Bojonegoro

Tourist destinations are the central elements of the tourism systems, and a considerable variation occurs throughout Bojonegoro and East Java Province in the perspectives of organizational and inter-organizational framework for destination management. There are many attributes associated with a specific destination, in which some attributes may become more attractive to tourists, but others may be not (Lee, Ou, & Huang, 2009). As a range of natural and man-made tourism attractions and resources has always been a necessary complement each other, there is a need to identify what attributes lead tourists to choose one destination over another, or even return to the same destination over and over again.

Bojonegoro Regency has a lot of tourism potentials that offer a diversity of tourist attractions. The type and object of tourism are:

- a) Natural tourism: Kedung Maor Waterfall, Clebung Bubulan Waterfall, Kayangan Api, Pacal Reservoir;
- b) Cultural or artistic tourism: Semar Batu Tourism, Hok Swie Bio Temple Pagoda, Rejekwesi Museum;
- c) Culinary: Ledre, Salak Wedi, Putu Bamboo, Tempe Tripik, Wedang Tape, Serabi, Gethuk;
- d) Artificial tourism: Agro Belimbing Ngringinrejo, Taman Wisata Sariyo, Go-Fun Theme Park

The researchers must have visited many tourism destinations to explore the dimensions of destination attractiveness (Lee et al., 2009), one popular way of which is to examine the attributes associated with the destination.

Among the type of tourism objects situated in Bojonegoro, the Regional Department of Tourism and Culture focuses on some attractions of destinations that need more focused development on its attributes.

1. Local Government Strategies in Developing Regional Tourism.

As its authority functions and roles in the developing regional tourism, local governments must conduct various efforts in the development of facilities and infrastructures. Planning for recreation and tourism in such developing area in Indonesia has already helped stimulate the construction and/or renovation of safe, sanitary, socially acceptable and environmentally sound facilities and structures. The facilities provided by government are built to maximize services to the tourists, either directly or indirectly. Tourism facilities are divided into three important parts, among them:

- a) Main Tourism Facilities (Main Tourism Superstructures)
- b) Tourism Supplementary Facilities (Supplementing Tourism Superstructures).
- c) Tourism Supports Facilities (Supporting Tourism Superstructures)

The role of Regional Department of Tourism and Culture of Bojonegoro Regency is to provide tourism facilities and infrastructure such as:

- a) 21 hotels or inns existing in Bojonegoro Regency;
- b) 18 restaurants or food corners that have already had a business license;
- c) Transportation facilities, in Bojonegoro Regency already available in the form of public transportation such as: mini bus, bus, and rural transportation (“becak” and “delman”);
- d) Souvenir shops, there are many souvenir shops selling typical souvenirs of Bojonegoro;
- e) Regional utilities, good internet networks for communications, electricity and availability of clean water.

Tourism development is treated as strategic implementation of local government to develop and manage objects and attractions. In each area, there must have been different and beautiful natural scenery and diversity of art and cultural traditions as well as relics and different artifacts. Therefore, the Regional Department of Tourism and Culture of Bojonegoro Regency is the authorized institution to manage and develop the existing tourist attraction in Bojonegoro regency.

Tourism development in a tourist destination or object will always be taken into consideration with the benefits for the surrounding community. Tourism development must be in line with the local government's strategic planning. As a result, it will bring benefits both in terms of economic, social and cultural to the community. In conducting tourism development, local government of Bojonegoro Regency gives responsibility to the Department of Tourism and Culture to continue developing tourism destination to attract more tourists to visit Bojonegoro. Tourism development is generated according to the needs of each tourism object. Cracolici & Nijkamp (2008) emphasized that the needs of tourists to impose destinations will constantly reconfigure, gain, and dispose attractive resource in order to be able to meet the demand of a shifting market.

In such developing countries with a rich resource base of pristine natural and cultural treasures, it holds a significant comparative advantage in their potential to attract tourists in search of authentic experiences. As competitive tourism industry is increasing recently, a key challenge for destination marketers (such as Regional Department of Tourism and Culture) is to "cut through" the noise of competing and substitute products to attract the attention of the consumer-traveler. Developing a marketing strategy and mixing it for destinations are complex process, mainly because there are many independent stakeholders and principals involved. Destinations cannot be managed or marketed as enterprises, due to the dynamics of interests and benefits sought by stakeholders.

Various strategic efforts to promote tourism in Bojonegoro are:

- a) First, identifying and exploring the potential of Tourism Object's Attraction. This step should be done carefully in order to figure out the overall strength, potential and attraction owned by such tourism object. This would be followed by data collection of various tourism support facilities such as accommodation, transportation, restaurants, art market, people's crafts and others.
- b) Second, establishing partnerships with various parties. The development of tourist area is one of the concepts of network development. The pattern of tourism development requires cooperation between local government and private sector. Partial tourism management by a region for reasons of regional authority and interest would be insulating to the development of tourism object.
- c) Third, promoting such tourism object in various media, both print and electronic as well as brochures or leaflets that provide information on tourism potential attractions and safety conditions of these areas. Promotion is one part of the tourism marketing mix that cannot run independently and apart from other tourism marketing mix indicators.
- d) Fourth, determining the target and market segment. Effective marketing includes an estimate of the number of visits and potential travelers. The appropriate and reliable marketing communications strategies will help bring together the components of tourism supply with its demand components (i.e. the number of tourists visiting, length of stay, and

budget spending). The integrated plan will also provide a signal and direction to all tourism industry actors in running their business.

In developing the tourism sector in Bojonegoro, it is needed an active role from the surrounding community since regional tourism development will have an impact on the welfare improvement of the surrounding communities. To increase the participation of the community, the Regional Department of Tourism and Culture of Bojonegoro Regency must undertake several steps aimed at increasing the participation of surrounding communities which consist of:

- a) Providing guidance, counseling to the community around the object of tourism to create a tourism-conscious society;
- b) Participation of the community in preserving the nature and forests in particular;
- c) Inviting surrounding communities to maintain cleanliness at tourist sites by perhaps holding joint work together;
- d) Preserving the culture of the customs around the tourism object, culinary culture, and others; and invites the public to take part in creating successful preservation, consisting of: safety, cleanliness, order, beauty, and hospitality to visitors.

2. Factors affecting the development of regional tourism in Bojonegoro Regency.

Bojonegoro tourism has the potential to be further developed, and there are a number of supporting factors, challenges and threats that had been identified. The importance according to panelists is to deal with supporting factors and constraints related to tourism development which are clearly indicated as the following;

a) Supporting factors

1) The famous tourist attraction and known by the public.

All existing attractions such as natural attractions, arts and culture, food to specialty drinks and even artificial tourism begin to increasingly known by tourists who visit Bojonegoro because each attraction has its own charm.

2) The role of government and surrounding communities.

The existence of the direct role of the Department of Tourism and Culture in fostering and involving into the effort to attract tourist and cooperate with surrounding communities is one of the supporting factors in the development of regional tourism. In some cases, government will involve the local community in the tourism development in Bojonegoro through exhibitions, dance and cultural performances, and cuisine. This will make the people of Bojonegoro identify and understand their culture and tradition that have not been practiced before, and as a result, it will foster their sense of belonging on tourism values.

3) Easy coordination among stakeholders.

The existence of good relationship between the department of tourism and culture and other stakeholder will implies on basis of tourist attraction in Bojonegoro regency. If there is a direct damage to report, the agency can immediately receive criticism and suggestions provided by the coordinator of each tourist attraction.

4) Government Law No. 10 of 2009 on tourism.

The existence of the law and regulation encourages the government to explore the tourism potentials in Bojonegoro regency. From the description, it can be seen that the community around the tourism area also support the program conducted by the Department of Culture and Tourism District of Bojonegoro.

b) Obstacles and/or constraints

Although tourism has the potential to be further developed in Bojonegoro, there are a number of challenges and threats that are needed to take into account, among them:

1) Limited Budget

One of the Factors that affects the development of tourism in Bojonegoro is limited funds. The tourism sector is a sector of non-sector choice that must be preceded by local government. The municipal government of Bojonegoro should also maximize the budget in the field of tourism because the regional tourism is an asset that is owned and can increase the Regional Revenue of Bojonegoro regency.

2) River Pollution

Similar with many places in East Java, the problem of waste disposal has been an on-going in Bojonegoro, and despite several initiatives introduced by the authorities to minimize it, removing wastes and rubbish entirely from Bojonegoro River has not been completely effective. Ahmad (2013) also stated that "indiscriminate dumping of wastes produces a burden on the environment and can provide barriers to the flow of water and river, which may result in flooding". This happen exactly in Bojonegoro, in which the pollution along the river in Bojonegoro may create a bad image of the areas.

Discussion

Furthermore, in the context of the development of sustainable tourism, the important expectation about outcome is how it can encourage the development of Bojonegoro regency by giving a positive impact toward the improvement of society. The pros and cons of developing tourism in the economic and community have provoked a lively debate both in the media and in academic research. In order to balance tourism development and community satisfaction, the government should involve surrounding community to develop their master plans.

As stated by many previous studies (Hassan, 2000; Kozak, 2001; Ritchie & Crouch, 1993), how effectively and efficiently destination competitiveness can be improved to respond to escalating market competition. Furthermore, creating or integrating value-added destination products and services is a basic step in enhancing tourism attractiveness. It is clear from the above discussion that the attractiveness of a tourism destination in Bojonegoro is determined by its unique attributes. It has been underlined that tourists' perception of destination competitiveness is related with quality of tourism experience (Meng, 2006). The long run region with a bad qualitative and quantitative performance can make its competitive market position threatened. This will happen if suitable tourist strategies have not been well-designed in order to improve the tourists' satisfaction (Cracolici & Nijkamp, 2008). On the contrary, a good qualitative performance can represent a region an opportunity and a basis for improving its competitive market position. Distribution or marketing channels are defined as sets of interdependent organizations involved in the process of making a product or service available for use or consumption.

The research also reveals areas where improvements should be made to boost Bojonegoro tourism as well as Indonesian tourism competitiveness and where tourism managers or internal stakeholder in government should add value in order to improve competitive position of tourism destination. Competitive strategy should be aimed at increasing the competitiveness of the weakest elements of Indonesian tourism, which are, as research shows, participatory budget and stakeholder involvement. Perhaps one additional complication to tourism marketing is that, in most cases, destinations which have already had a rich history and legacy development need to be taken into consideration when developing tourism marketing strategies. As far as concerned, destination attractiveness in Bojonegoro tourism object can be increased by appropriate and stronger quality of managerial efforts and also can be enhanced through marketing activities. Tourism promotion should boost the awareness of Bojonegoro as a destination in tourism markets.

Taking advantage of new technologies and the Internet also enables destinations to enhance their competitiveness by increasing their visibility, reducing costs and enhancing local cooperation. The marketing of the tourism destination must lead to the optimization of tourism impacts and the achievement of the strategic objectives for all stakeholders. In addition, this implies to greater need of local community involvement where it will enable knowledge learning and sharing about the elements of tourism destination.

Conclusion

This study was designed to explore and describe the destination competitiveness in tourism object in Bojonegoro regency. Bojonegoro is well known to have an attractive tourist destination for visitors to East Java, Indonesia. Bojonegoro offers the charm and beauty of culture, natural scenery, history, traditions, customs, belief and life of the country which are unique to attract domestic and foreign visitors. As part of the East Java Province, Bojonegoro possesses tourism potential in which all of these serve as economic leverage of the society. This study demonstrates the ongoing efforts of the Bojonegoro municipal government to capitalize its potential to insulate its economy from the vagaries of its geopolitical location. We have discussed the need to reexamine traditional approaches to tourism development.

The findings of the study demonstrate the importance of analyzing a destination competitive strategic positioning, from the government or internal stakeholder perspective. Further research should analyze destination's competitiveness from the perspective demand, in a travel context; and then the value of comparing this 'ideal' position with that projected by the local government. From the results, this study may conclude that in successful tourism development and management for destination competitiveness and attractiveness, as key players in tourism destination competitiveness, their preferences about tourism attractions or competitiveness and support for destination competitive strategies should be understood so that more competitive destination environments and positions can be achieved. It is expected that the information produced and the implications of the study may be of help to tourism planners, policy-makers, and marketers to build more competitive tourism destination environments and positions in Bojonegoro regency.

Further analysis in assessing the impact of different level of attractions and competitiveness to the relationship of tourism development is recommended. Finally, this study was only conducted in Bojonegoro, East Java, Indonesia. The study may not be generalized with regard to

other urban or sub-urban destinations. Further studies in other perspective and unit analysis are recommended. More impact factors such as community attachment and social identity can be considered in further studies to enrich our knowledge in the tourism development. Therefore, additional research will be necessary to test the results with other unit analysis and perspectives to provide more validity of the research result.

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