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## Public Understanding of Tourism Communication in the Coastal Region of Southeast Sulawesi

Harnina Ridwan<sup>1</sup>, Marsuki Iswandi<sup>2</sup>, Jamaluddin Hos<sup>3</sup>, Muh. Najib Husain<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1,4</sup>Department of Communication Science, Halu Oleo University, Indonesia

<sup>2</sup>Faculty of Agricultural, Halu Oleo University, Indonesia

<sup>3</sup>Department of Sociology, Halu Oleo University, Indonesia

**Corresponding Author:** Harnina Ridwan; Email: [ninaridwansept@uho.ac.id](mailto:ninaridwansept@uho.ac.id)

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### ABSTRACT

Known as a coastal area, Southeast Sulawesi saving potential coastal tourism-oriented by the local community but has not been utilized fully, because people in coastal areas do not have the financial capacity and expertise to manage or involved in nature-based tourism activities directly. Research was done by qualitative approach to describe, formulate and analyze the phenomenon of tourism communications in coastal areas of Southeast Sulawesi. The location of research was done in Southeast Sulawesi province in 2019 on coastal of Pantai Toronipa, coastal of Pantai Nirvana, and the coastal of Pantai Nambo. Research's Informants consisted of the local community, business tourism services, and tourism activist groups. Data collection techniques are done by observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. The research's results showed the coastal area in Southeast Sulawesi has been formed the society's understandings of tourism by itself. There are three groups of society, First group are the ordinary people who understand that tourism only a part of recreation, leisurely stroll, traveling, etc; The second group also consists of (a) intelligent tourism consumer group, and (b) the group of exploration and exploitation destinations for business purposes. The third group is a group of activists who know tourism significantly, guide destinations, human resources, and traditional institutions to strengthen community substance as excellent destinations sustainably.

### INTRODUCTION

Tourists visiting Southeast Sulawesi are still dominated by domestic tourists. Of the 2.5 million tourists, only about 0.5 percent of foreign tourists or around 17 thousand people from the target of 4.5 million tourists each year. In the last three years (2017-2019) the number of tourists in Kendari City has increased from 19,684 people in 2017 to 88,265 people in 2019. This also happened in Bau-Bau City, from the number of visitors of 23,654 people in 2017, which increased to 30,545 people in 2019. As for Konawe Regency, in 2019 the number of visitors/ tourists was 83,663 people. Even though there is an increase in the number of tourists, on the other hand, tourist objects in the coastal areas of Southeast Sulawesi Province have several problems related to ecology, socio-economy, and institutions

including problems in tourism communication with main components such as marketing, destinations, human resource and institutional accessibility. thus becoming a social phenomenon that causes an object the development of tourism in coastal areas of Southeast Sulawesi province seems still far behind other regions in Indonesia.

So far, the government's efforts in each region in developing tourism in coastal regions have only touched on factors that are infrastructure and tourism supporting facilities, such as roads, hotels and the development of potential areas as recreational areas and so on, however, the government of Southeast Sulawesi has been unable motivated and looking for a new pattern for the development of tourism that can address the challenges that exist, for example, the government

of Kendari on coastal regions Nambo and local government Konawe in coastal regions Toronipa not maximally paid attention to the value-based environmental conservation, have not been concentrated on the socio-economic and cultural side of the community, have not fully involved the role of local communities in tourism development, while community participation is absolutely necessary to mobilize communities in tourism development.

The growth and development of community participation in tourism is largely determined by three main elements, those are the opportunity given to the public to participate in tourism, the willingness of the community to participate in tourism development, and the ability of the community to participate in tourism progress.

The need for the efforts of related institutions, in this case, the local government and related parties, to increase the active participation of the community to be good hosts, provide the best things according to their abilities, participate in maintaining security, tranquility, beauty and cleanliness of the environment, providing good memories and impressions for tourists who visit, the community needs to increase support for local government programs in developing tourism in coastal regions, besides that there is a need for efforts by the regional provincial government to instill public awareness in the context of developing tourism in coastal regions through the implementation of appropriate tourism communication through harmonious community understanding.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

This research was conducted in Southeast Sulawesi. This type of research is qualitative research; is a form of research that aimed to describe, formulate and analyze the phenomena related to tourism communication problems in coastal regions. This study seeks to describe, interpret and analyze both primary and secondary data concerning the tourism communication issues in coastal regions. By the results of the interpretation and the results of the analysis that has been carried out, this study constructed and produced a model to provide recommendations as an alternative solution to problems in tourism communication in coastal regions.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

General provisions in the tourism law describe that tourism is all activities related to tourism and is multidimensional and multi-disciplinary appear as a manifestation of the needs of each person and the state as well as the interaction between tourists and the community, tourists and tourists, government, local governments and entrepreneurs (Bappenas, 2004)

Based on the results of research on the reality of tourism communication, it is seen that the community is the main actor. The tourism communication process is running fully involves the community. All elements of tourism communication ranging from marketing activities, activities to disseminate information, and the accessibility of destinations and activities to convey the availability of HR and supporting institutions that could only be known by the public through a communication process that is roled by the community.

Tourism is one of the major sectors that could provide opportunities for economic growth in an area, including coastal regions. Tourism opportunities in this sector continue to make the community the main base. Local communities who are in tourist areas are one of the hearts of managing tourism assets but are very dependent on people's understanding of the substance of tourism itself (Pitana, 2002)

Important comments that frame the formation of public understanding of tourism communication in the coastal regions of Southeast Sulawesi consist of descriptions of the substance of tourism, namely marketing, destinations, accessibility, and human resources. Public understanding of the scope of tourism communication will affect the tourism marketing system, destination recognition system, accessibility information systems, and communication patterns of human and institutional resources to become the basis for tourism development including in the coastal region of Southeast Sulawesi.

Public understanding of tourism communication in the coastal regions of Southeast Sulawesi is formed on: (a) **Ordinary society**, understanding of the lay group on tourism communications who are not interested in marketing, institutional issues, and so on. This understanding is formed because the community as having a job outside of tourism activities. The

understanding of this lay group is formed by the weak factor of the communication network by local authorities with coastal communities so that people have a stagnant understanding of the problems of tourism; (b) **Smart society**. This smart society makes tourism communication elements an important thing for them. The formation of this visible understanding of their tendency to understand the concept of tourism. Smart society understands that one of the things that support tourism marketing activities in the coastal regions of Southeast Sulawesi is in the form of promotion, their desire to know and understand all the elements that frame tourism communication, this smart society group tries to dig up information in fulfilling their information needs about tourism.

The search uses the available media. Smart society is very supportive of this form of marketing through the use of advertising which is useful for disseminating wide information to the public, smart exploration, and exploitation to support coastal tourism through tourism marketing-based business to benefit or profit. Interpretation smart society lead to their knowledge of the importance of varied communication processes to achieve tourism marketing communication objectives, including in coastal regions. For the communication process, the intelligent community recommends that one of the objectives of the various forms of communication that must be created is to provide information, information to tourists or potential tourists, including regarding transportation facilities and road infrastructure to the destination of the tourist destination. This smart society strongly indicates communication technology as a support in marketing communication activities. Smart society is like the owners of tourism products. They do tourism marketing communication based on their understanding to be able to take advantage of tourism. Technological developments helped to contribute to shaping people's understanding of tourism.

The intelligent community has the concept that the communication process carried out by the command agency with the community related to tourism in coastal regions is maximized, but efforts are still needed to stimulate the community to be sensitive in utilizing tourism through the use of appropriate communication techniques. One of the main supporters of tourism development are those

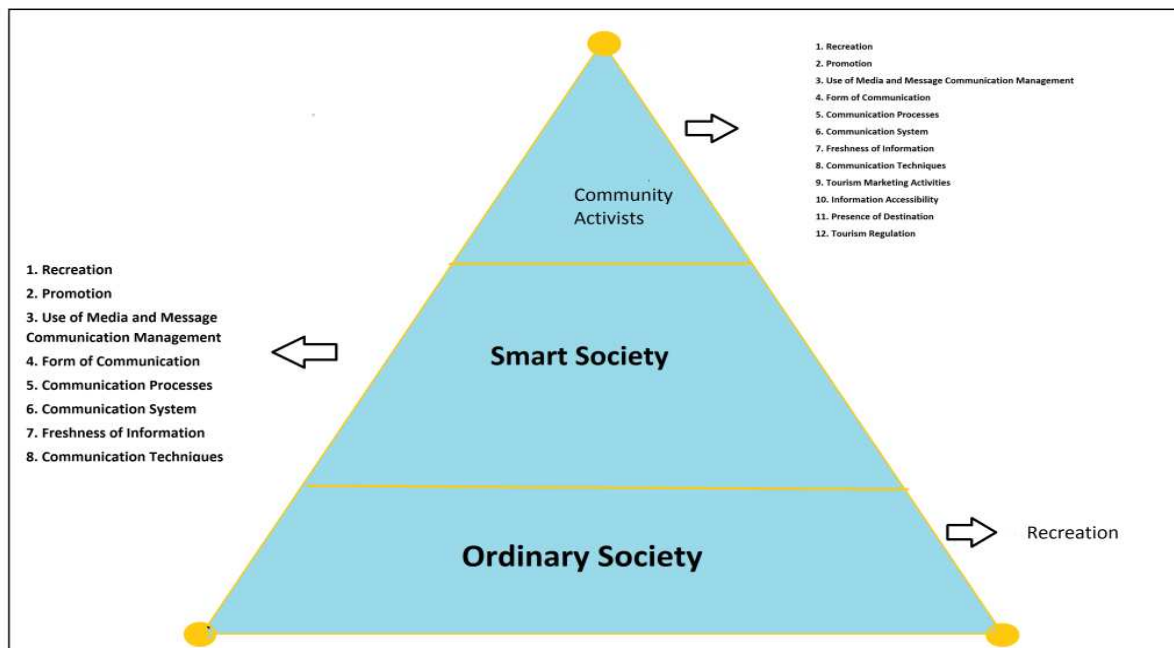
who are; (c) **Community activists**. Community activists have had a good concept in marketing tourism coastal region of Southeast Sulawesi and give hope for the development of tourism in the Coastal region. The understanding of community activists on tourism marketing in the coastal regions of Southeast Sulawesi could be one of the supporters of tourism development because they understand that marketing as a whole, not only focuses on operational activities but also must have a strong strategy and tactics management by relying on elements of marketing communication right. Besides, these community activists understand that tourism is becoming one of the leading sectors in the government as well as increase revenue-generating areas, because the government of Southeast Sulawesi undertakes special measures in handling tourism, especially in the tourism marketing concept that they have.

Recommendations from the community activists could be seen from their response that the use of information technology-based communication media simultaneously supports tourism activities whose aim is for the welfare of the local community. The government in providing information about the accessibility of coastal regions is realized through activities that lead to tourism communications that do seek synergy communication between the central government and local governments with the goal of public welfare Southeast Sulawesi. The existence of this smart society destination offers that the existence of a destination needs to be considered in detail by the Southeast Sulawesi Provincial Government, especially related institutions for how to create a character of tourist interest in visiting a destination area through a tourism communication.

Concerning the regulation of public holidays activists assume that regulation of tourism that should not be separated from communication. Through tourism communications, all existing regulations in the activities traveled could be known by the public at large, so that the current location to destinate the tourists are ready to follow all regulations set by the local government. Besides the tourism product business owners could work, make a profit, to keep the existing regulations through the information that has been presented. Based on these descriptions, if it is illustrated in a picture, the map

of people's understanding could be seen in the following pyramid image:

Image 1. Pyramid Map of the Reality of Activist Community Understanding on Tourism Communication in the Coastal Region of Southeast Sulawesi.



The pyramid map is in line with the phenomenological approach that will be used to understand the symptoms or phenomena in society. This research finds out how the understanding of community tourism communication in the coastal regions of Southeast Sulawesi.

Various results of the analysis conducted by the authors then theoretically in line with the social phenomenology of Alfred Schutz that people's actions could not be separated from any situation that framed his thinking, the meaning of each interaction awakened from that produced by the person is also a frame of thinking. The process of a person's meaning forms a system that is relevant to their environment and will become the goal-forming element of each of their social actions.

If it is related to people's understanding of community tourism communication in the coastal regions of Southeast Sulawesi, it is increasingly clear that the understanding presented is the understanding of social actors in tourism communication in coastal regions where this role runs simultaneously from ordinary society, smart society and community activists. The role of these actors was presented produces a social value in its environment.

The results showed the public's understanding of tourism communications communities in coastal regions of Southeast Sulawesi vary depending on their understanding of the substance of the communication is based on tourism. Lay groups looked at tourism as part of recreation, sightseeing, pleasure, and such, lay groups have looked at tourism as an activity traveled without understanding all the elements of tourism and so on, while a group of intelligent tend to be a lot of things, among others understand that marketing activities are already quite a role, their print media, various social media broadcasting media, although still weak in managing messages that seem less persuasive to the public with a more strategic communication process.

This group also hopes that the cooperation between the community, business owners and tourism services and the government could work together to work on an appropriate communication process in the development of tourism in coastal regions. The communication they build is inter-dependent, however the obstacles they face have not yet made the tourism communication system they created truly beneficial for the development of tourism in coastal regions.

The results of further research are reflected in the understanding of community activist that has a concept that is in harmony with the marketing management seeking good management on sales activities, supply and benefit that could be utilized for the general public, this community activist has understood that tourism is becoming one of the leading sectors of government in generating at the same time increasing regional revenue, therefore the Southeast Sulawesi government took special steps in handling tourism, especially in their tourism marketing concept.

Social phenomenology Schutz (1972) focuses on process improvement of public understanding of the living world (lifeworld). Schutz's Social Phenomenology is a simultaneous part of the phenomenological theory developed by Edmund Husserl. Alfred Schutz's phenomenology becomes the pillar for gaining a better understanding of society. This social phenomenology finds that every actor in society uses typifications (standard assumptions) in organizing general knowledge from their world of life, furthermore the phenomenology developed by Husserl (1982) found a difference. Daily knowledge and scientific knowledge in society, the packaging generated from the phenomenology developed by Edmund Husserl is a research on differences in forms of knowledge and understanding which become social actions based on standard assumptions that exist in society.

Phenomenology Schutz (1972) resting on the stock of knowledge which is owned by each individual in the society of the whole rules, norms, concepts of proper behavior, and others, all of which provide a frame of reference or orientation to someone in their interpretation of everything that happened around before acting.

The connection with the community's understanding of tourism communication is that the reality of understanding experienced by people in the coastal regions of Southeast Sulawesi is a stock of knowledge for what is in their environment, patterns. The rules and roles of people in communication activities produce a stock of knowledge that is accepted by society so that it becomes an understanding that is continually presented.

The results showed that the coastal regions in Southeast Sulawesi have been formed understandings of society on tourism. Society does

not realize that they have formed by themselves based on the stock of knowledge. Furthermore, a special emphasis on the theory of phenomenology Schutz (1972) which leads to the reality that members of the community who has a stock of knowledge and shaping their understanding becomes a reality prolonged will be a social event. If it is related to the understanding of tourism communication that is formed in the community in the coastal region of Southeast Sulawesi, it could be concluded that the common people, the smart society, and community activists understand the substance of tourism communication based on the stock of knowledge.

The results showed that the process of understanding the communities in coastal regions on the substance of tourism communications formed from a reality of tourism communications as well, where the reality of tourism communication in this coastal region still shows a weak reality in the concept of communication patterns, communication techniques, communication strategies, and the weak role of the people involved to produce independent elements without affecting the reality of tourism communication which is prolonged and has become a social event. The effects of the tourism communication process have made understanding society is formed into a picture with the shape of a pyramid.

Picture a pyramid on the public's understanding showed that the bottom space occupied by people with an understanding of the substance of which still lay community tourism is not interested in the issue of marketing, institutional and so on. The main factor that shapes the understanding of this lay group is the lack of a communication network established by the local government with coastal communities in general and broadly so that the community has a stagnant understanding of tourism issues. Furthermore, the pyramid picture-filled by people who entered the smart category.

Alfred Schutz's social phenomenology (1972) with the concept of the stock of knowledge is closely related to the tourism communication process which rotates in the community environment in the coastal regions of Southeast Sulawesi. The author analogizes that the stock referred to by social phenomenology Schutz refers to the tourism substance possessed by each

individual in society which is shaped like a pyramid. In the smart society, they are a mode of knowledge of the whole rules, norms, the concept of tourism communications where the concept was more may lead to the development of tourism in comparison with ordinary society. Smart society is more able to interpret the substance of tourism in an action so that they could get the benefits of tourism. It could be formed for a smart society to give a better frame of reference.

That assumption is aligned with the findings that the actors who play a role in community activists, smart society, and the general public to experience the reality of their knowledge based on those stocks. They are directed in taking care and/or do not care about the substance of tourism communication, all social events they carry out use the stock of tourism communication knowledge which consists of tools such as: (1) Recreation, (2) Promotion (3) Use of Media and Message Communications Management (4) Forms of Communication (5) Communication Processes (6) Communication Systems (7) Freshness of Information (8) Communication Techniques (9) Tourism Marketing Activities (10) Information Accessibility (11) Presence of Destinations and (12) Tourism Regulation.

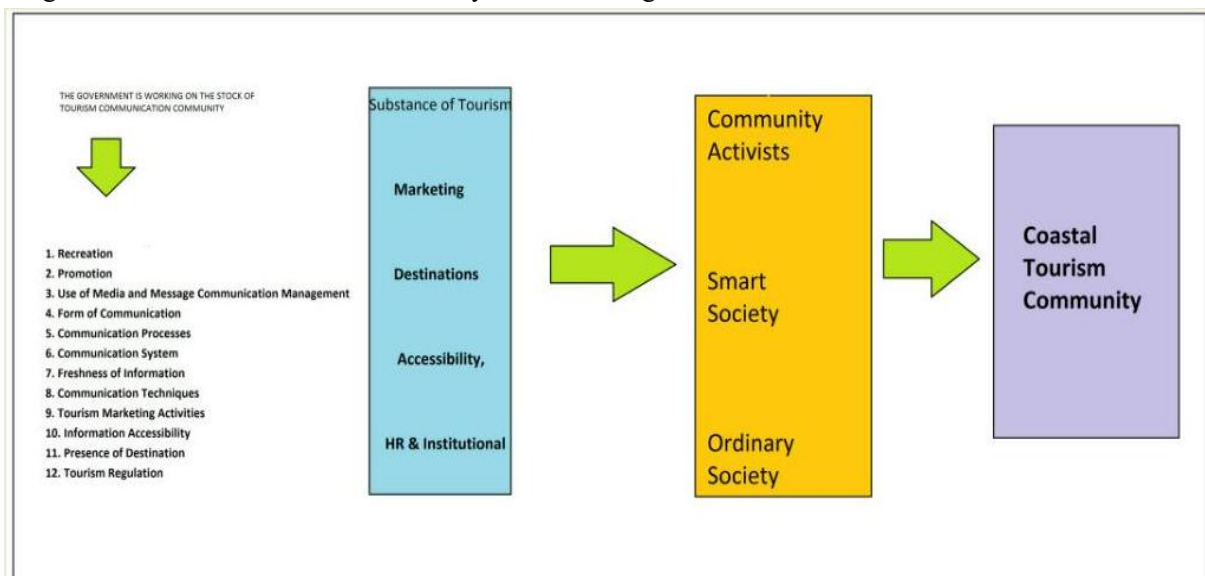
Furthermore, Alfred Schutz's theory of social phenomenology (1972) is very much in line with the results of his research that the formation of an understanding of activists, smart society, and ordinary society in carrying out social actions in

their environment using tools from their stock of knowledge when they make contact with the people around them. A set of shared knowledge regarding tourism in the coastal region is communicated by rests on their respective assumptions on the same meaning which then takes place in negotiations to be able to create the same understanding of tourism communication to get the same understanding of tourism communication and comprehensive agreement to form a common understanding continuously.

Based on the author's analysis, the continuous formation of their mutual understanding forms a pyramid, within the pyramid it portrays an understanding which is forming action in each community that has a role. The role shown consists of a meaning and a motive. The meaning created by each community group in the coastal region is created from internal and external factors in their social environment. Meanwhile, the motives that shape their understanding could be seen from each community actor in their role having their own reasons why the attitudes and actions that lead to their position are in the pyramid of community understanding.

Here groove formation of public understanding on tourism communications that could be used as one of the solutions in the achievement of the development of tourism in the region of Southeast Sulawesi and could be a reference for other regions that have similar problems.

Image 2. Flow of Formation of Community Understanding in Tourism Communication



Pictured above explains that to create a tourism aimed at the welfare of society, it is the necessary leading role of the government to strengthen the stock of knowledge society toward more useful. All elements of tourism need to be communicated, to create an understanding of the community that is no longer divided and occupies each other's space. Ideally, all elements of tourism communications is known by the community activists and intelligent society should also be known by the common people who were in the area.

## CONCLUSION

The existence of public understanding of the substance of ordinary tourism will affect the development of tourism in general, so there is a need for a combination of understanding between smart society and community activists to attract the common people to a more useful understanding so that what is created is no longer a pyramid map that containing ordinary society, smart society, and community activists. However, it also needs to attempt to make a unified whole in the system of community-based tourism development as Coastal Tourism Community (CTC).

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