

Optimizing Sustainable Tourism at Cekungan Bandung: The Role of Generation Z

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to measure the behavior of Generation Z towards sustainable tourism in the Cekungan Bandung area, which is facing alarming conditions such as increasing temperatures, decreasing reserves of clean and healthy water, and increasing levels of environmental pollution. The research method applied is a qualitative approach with in-depth interviews involving respondents from Generation Z. This research focuses on the Cekungan Bandung area, a popular tourist destination in Indonesia. The study results indicate that Generation Z has shown awareness of the importance of implementing sustainable tourism. Even so, it was found that there was a need for further coaching to strengthen their attitudes and behavior in supporting sustainable tourism. The implications of this research are expected to support sustainable tourism goals by optimizing economic, environmental, and social benefits while effectively reducing the negative impacts that may arise.

Keywords: Generation Z; Sustainable Tourism; Behavior; Cekungan Bandung

INTRODUCTION

The Cekungan Bandung Urban Area, or Bandung Raya, is a strategic urban area in Indonesia. This area has been designated as a National Strategic Area (KSN) based on Presidential Regulation (Perpres) Number 45 of 2018 concerning Spatial Plans for the Cekungan Bandung Urban Area (Indonesia, 2018). The Cekungan Bandung Urban Area consists of two main parts, namely the Core Area, which includes the City of Bandung and the City of Cimahi, as well as the surrounding area, which includes Bandung Regency, West Bandung Regency, and five sub-districts in Sumedang Regency (West Java Government, 2022). This area, located in West Java Province, is an attractive tourism destination because it has geological resources that are considered the main attraction for tourists. The diversity of existing geological processes and forms, supported by biological and cultural richness, provides significant added value to tourism development in Cekungan Bandung tourist destinations (Rama et al., 2021).

However, extensive tourist visits must be seen as "honey" and "poison" if not planned properly. Therefore, planning in development is essential, and one of the

approaches used is the principles of sustainable tourism (Yoeti & Gunadi, 2013). Sustainable tourism emerges as a solution to deal with the negative impacts of tourism development. The principle is to build the tourism sector by considering the needs of all parties involved in the tourism industry while maintaining environmental sustainability, economic aspects, and socio-cultural sustainability (Nugraheni et al., 2019).

In sustainable tourism, Generation Z, individuals born between 1995 and 2012 (Stillman & Stillman, 2018), plays an important role. They are one group of tourists significantly impacting tourism development (Nugraheni et al., 2019). Therefore, this paper aims to dig deeper into the role and contribution of Generation Z in realizing sustainable tourism in the Cekungan Bandung region. It is hoped that this research can provide valuable insights for stakeholders in elaborating sustainable and responsible future tourism development, particularly regarding Generation Z's contribution to pursuing sustainable tourism development in the Cekungan Bandung region.

LITERATURE REVIEWS

Previous Related Study

Factor Analysis of Sustainable Tourism in the City of Bandung (Pratama et al., 2016) analyzes the factors contributing to sustainable tourism in Bandung. This study provides insight into the factors contributing to sustainable tourism and can be helpful for policymakers and tourism industry stakeholders in developing sustainable tourism practices. Analysis of the management of the Pakaya Tower tourist attraction in the administrative area of Gorontalo based on institutional indicators of the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC). (Ariscasari et al., 2017) Based on an analysis of the GSTC institutional criteria, Menara Pakaya still needs to improve overall. On the other hand, studying the institutional aspects of the GSTC can provide information for the development of Menara Pakaya to meet the requirements of sustainable tourism destinations directly related to attractions, services, and accessibility. Sustainable Tourism Development in Indonesia (Musaddad et al., 2019). This article discusses sustainable tourism development in Indonesia using the Community Based Tourism (CBT) pattern and three approaches: the Local Wisdom Tourism development approach, the Tourism Village development approach, and the Sociopreneurship development approach. This article provides an overview of efforts to develop sustainable tourism in Indonesia and the challenges faced in its implementation.

The tourism industry is considered the mother industry because it can influence and involve various other industrial sectors involved in the tourism industry (Rahmat, 2021). Therefore, the government focuses on developing tourism to improve the welfare and economy of the community through the development of tourist destinations in each region (Tangian et al., 2020). However, tourism activities also directly interact with and involve the community to bring various impacts on the

local community. Even tourism has a strong influence that causes significant changes in various aspects of local people's lives (Suwena & Widyatmaja, 2017).

Although tourism is believed to have provided positive benefits for the community's economy in tourist destinations and has the potential to support the preservation of tourism resources in a destination, it cannot be ignored that there are negative impacts that the community may experience as a consequence of tourism development (Junaid, 2014). Therefore, effective management is needed so that tourism has positive economic, socio-cultural, and environmental benefits. If public policies, implementation, and management resources are inadequate, tourism can also cause negative impacts (Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy of the Republic of Indonesia, 2012)

In order to achieve socially inclusive development and conserve natural resources, it is essential to promote the sustainable growth of the tourism industry. By focusing on environmental and social sustainability, tourism can be better prepared to face competitive market competition (Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy of the Republic of Indonesia, 2012). Sustainable tourism is a development process that focuses on preserving resources for future tourism development (Rahmat, 2021). UNWTO defines sustainable tourism as "Tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities" (United et al. Organization, 2005)

This research focuses on Generation Z, who were born between 1995 and 2012 (Stillman & Stillman, 2018). This generation was chosen because it has grown up with an awareness of a higher sense of responsibility towards the global community and environment than its predecessors. It is characterized by Generation Z, who cares about climate change and the global economy. Generation Z is often described as a generation that is adaptable, intelligent, and tolerant. They are also deeply connected and growing with challenges related to environmental sustainability, terrorism (European Travel Commission., 2020), etc. In addition, this generation has a high level of curiosity because of their close attachment to digital technology and the internet (Darmansa et al., 2019). These characteristics open up great opportunities for Generation Z to drive innovation in the responsible tourism industry.

METHODS

Design and Samples

This research uses a qualitative approach with the case study method to understand the role of Generation Z in developing sustainable tourism in the Cekungan Bandung Urban Area profoundly and holistically. This research focuses on the Cekungan Bandung area, a National Strategic Area.

Instruments and Procedures

The research instruments used were interviews and observations of Generation Z behavior related to sustainable tourism in various tourist destinations in the Cekungan Bandung Urban Area. Interviews will be conducted with 10 Generation Z respondents who have visited tourist destinations in the Cekungan Bandung area. The interview questions will be designed to explore their perceptions, attitudes, and actions regarding sustainable tourism and the factors that influence their contribution to a responsible tourism industry.

Data Analysis

Data obtained from interviews and observations will be analyzed using a thematic approach. This qualitative data analysis aims to identify thematic patterns and critical issues arising from interviews and observations. Data from interviews and observations will be reduced, analyzed, and interpreted to describe the role of Generation Z in developing sustainable tourism in the Cekungan Bandung region. The analysis results will be presented narratively and supported by direct quotations from interviews and observations to strengthen research findings.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study involved Generation Z as respondents to explore their perceptions of sustainable tourism. The interview results show that most respondents have just heard about sustainable tourism and need an in-depth understanding of this concept. They agree that the need for more access to information and outreach about sustainable tourism is the root of their ignorance. As Ersalia said (2023)

" Because of the lack of education from the tourist attractions themselves and the government ."

On the other hand, some respondents know and strongly support sustainable tourism. Vera (2023) expressed his view that.

" Sustainable tourism is responsible travel practices that minimize the negative impacts of tourism on the environment, socio-culture and the economy of local communities ."

Meanwhile, Cinta (2023) said they knew the concept of sustainable tourism but focused more on the entertainment aspects and holiday moments when traveling. Even so, they comply with the prohibitions and regulations that apply.

The results of this study indicate that a large proportion of respondents still need a deeper understanding of sustainable tourism. Therefore, to develop the tourism sector, the role of tourism managers and entrepreneurs in the tourism industry must demonstrate a commitment to working with various parties. The involvement of various stakeholders from various circles is indispensable in ensuring the development of the tourism sector in a sustainable manner (Berliandaldo et al., 2021).

The sustainability of tourism in Indonesia is threatened by the problem of plastic waste (Qodriyatun, 2018). However, the results of the interviews found that most of them prefer to buy bottled water rather than bringing water bottles from home, mainly because of convenience and practicality. However, there are two different respondents. Shafa (2023) prefers to bring water bottles from home.

"Let's not pay any more."

Meanwhile, Kanna (2023) chooses to bring a water bottle from home because

"I brought drinks from home because I don't know whether the drinks being sold are hygienic or not."

Although most respondents choose to buy bottled water, they still support environmental protection practices by complying with regulations, sorting waste independently, and not damaging the environment. As Sindi said (2023)

"I bought bottled water, but I still throw the bottle in the trash anyway."

Transportation is one of the essential things in tourism activities. Good governance in the tourism and transportation sectors will create a harmonious balance between economic, social, and environmental aspects in tourist destinations. Tourists can explore tourist destinations easily with a reliable public transportation system. This approach also allows optimal utilization of limited road space while reducing the negative impact of transport on natural diversity and environmental beauty in tourism areas (Setiawan et al., 2019). One of the negative impacts of the relatively high increase in the number of motorized vehicles is congestion (Sugiyama et al., 2021). However, the interviews found that a small proportion of respondents sometimes used public transportation and sometimes used private vehicles, depending on the tourist destination's location. As Humaira (2023) says

".....depending on what the tourist site is like, if it's wide and requires high mobility it's better to use public transportation."

Meanwhile, Ryan (2023) states, "It depends if the tourist destination has access to public transportation. I usually use public transportation."

Moreover, most of the respondents chose to use private transportation. The reasons vary, such as less comfort, practicality, more accessible and faster mobility, flexibility in arranging travel schedules, and complete control over routes and travel times. It is in line with the findings of a study conducted by Sugiyanto and his colleagues in 2021, which stated that people may be reluctant to use public transportation because they see that the comfort and cleanliness factors of public vehicles are inadequate, with most public transportation looking unmaintained and drivers do not have sufficient skills. In addition, the lack of regular public transport routes covering all areas has also resulted in difficulties for the community in reaching their destination, so many decide to use private vehicles (sugiyanto et al., 2021).

One of the crucial elements in efforts to develop the tourism sector is the socio-cultural aspect (Waani, 2016) because tourism is not just a business or commercial

aspect but also a means to rejuvenate historical heritage, natural environment, and culture. Therefore, the development of tourism based on cultural wisdom aims to obtain economic benefits and provide benefits for the preservation of local culture and environment (Dwi et al., 2021). The interview results show that all respondents are aware of the importance of maintaining, preserving, and respecting socio-cultural diversity around tourist destinations, as said by Faiz (2023)

"It is very important to maintain the culture in tourist destinations because it is inherited from the ancestors, so the area's identity is also a tourist attraction in itself."

They agree that following the rules and restrictions set and respecting the local community's way of life and traditions is an essential step to maintaining a destination's harmony and cultural identity. In addition, vandalism must be avoided entirely because it can damage the cultural heritage passed down from generation to generation. As Kanna said (2023)

"Yes, keep your manners when you are a guest, just like the saying goes. Where the earth is stepped on there the sky is upheld."

Linda (2023) adds the importance of respecting people practicing culture, providing space and opportunities for them to express their identity and local wisdom without interference, and not commenting on existing culture in a demeaning or detrimental way.

All respondents agreed with an appreciative attitude and learning from each other to enrich their understanding of the cultural diversity around tourist destinations. They also hope that tourists and local communities can mingle and interact with each other with respect, create an inclusive, harmonious environment, and continue to preserve the socio-cultural wealth that is an integral part of the identity of a tourist destination.

The tourism industry is a sector that plays a role in development (Remus et al., 2021). Tourism is a driving force for the local community's economy (Huda, 2020). In line with that, the results of the interviews found that all respondents agreed that support for local businesses is a significant step in helping the economy of residents in tourist destinations. Love (2023) says

".....by supporting the local economy it can reduce unemployment, then it can help the economy of the local community."

Many businesses can help the local community's economy, as stated by several respondents.

" I usually go on vacation to restaurants, lodgings that are managed directly by residents around the tour " Ersalia (2023)

Shafa (2023) "just buy souvenirs from the residents."

Faiz (2023): "If tourist spots offer products or services, I usually try them."

These actions provide concrete ways for communities to contribute to local economic growth, creating a more sustainable and profitable environment.

CONCLUSION

This study analyzes Generation Z's perceptions of sustainable tourism in the Cekungan Bandung area. Based on the research results, although several respondents understand and support sustainable tourism, most still need a deeper understanding. Limited information and lack of socialization were identified as the main factors of ignorance. Therefore, a broad approach and more intensive educational efforts are needed to increase public awareness and participation in supporting sustainable tourism practices.

Awareness of the importance of sustainable tourism shows the potential to change tourism behavior and practices. However, the findings also highlight specific behavioral patterns, such as the tendency to buy bottled water over bottled drinking from home, and most respondents prefer private transport over public transport. Policy recommendations must focus on efforts to increase public awareness of the negative impacts of these practices and encourage adopting more environmentally friendly and sustainable practices.

The hope is that the government will be able to develop the dissemination of information about sustainable tourism through educational campaigns and outreach in the future. In addition, the role of tourism managers and social media platforms is also expected to convey messages regarding the significance of sustainable tourism to the public. To support this, strengthening the support of local businesses in tourist destinations also needs to be increased by encouraging tourists to prefer restaurants, accommodations, products, and services originating from the local community, thereby making a significant contribution to the local economy.

Actual follow-up actions in developing educational programs and socialization campaigns that are right on target about sustainable tourism must be implemented. Education on sustainable tourism can be incorporated into the school curriculum to ensure that future generations understand this concept better. In addition, social media and digital platforms can be utilized effectively to disseminate information about sustainable tourism to a broader audience.

Tourism policies, in general, need to be directed at efforts to preserve socio-cultural diversity around tourist destinations. Increased awareness and respect for local culture will help create a more inclusive and harmonious environment for tourists and local communities. Through these steps, sustainable tourism can become a driving force for sustainable economic development and protect the cultural and natural heritage that is the wealth of a tourist destination.

In facing the challenge of climate change and increasing awareness about environmental protection, all related parties need to work together in implementing sustainable tourism practices. Only with cooperation and shared commitment can sustainable tourism become a reality, providing environmental, socio-cultural, and

economic benefits to local communities while providing tourists with a valuable tourism experience.

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