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MANAGEMENT OF THE PROMOTION OF KULIKI PARAGLIDING KARO AS SPORTS TOURISM THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

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Abstract

This research aims to find out the use of social media carried out by the Kuliki Paragliding Karo in its tourism promotion. The researcher uses a qualitative research method with a phenomenological approach. The results of this study show that Kuliki Paragliding Karo uses Instagram as a promotional medium by uploading or uploading the latest photos and videos processed in an Instagramable manner so that those who see the post are interested in visiting the tourist attraction. The Instagram of Kuliki Paralayang Karo also reposted photos or videos of visitors who had visited the tourist attraction using the hashtag or hashtag Kuliki Paralading Karo. The Karo Paragliding Kuliki also made a highlight on their Instagram account so that those who see can find out in advance what is in the tourist attraction. The Kuliki Paragliding Karo promotes through social media Instagram is said to be successful with the increase in the number of visitors to the Kuliki Paragliding Karo tour and the increasing number of followers on the Kuliki Paragliding Karo Instagram account.

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INTRODUCTION

Indonesia has a very beautiful nature starting from Sabang to Merauke. Many areas in Indonesia are tourist locations according to the natural potential of each region, including diverse natural beauty, unique culture, and historical heritage sites. The tourism sector is one of the supports for the regional economic sector which certainly has a great influence on economic growth. One of the tourism industries in Indonesia's sports sector is in Tongging Village, Karo Regency, North Sumatra Province which is named Kuliki Paragliding Karo. The view offered is different from other areas, Kuliki Paragliding offers a view of Lake Toba which makes local and foreign tourists respond well (Soleha et al., 2023). Paragliding is one of the mainstays of adventure tourism in Indonesia, so many regions are interested and involved in developing it because it has a unique attraction as a means of promoting the local area to tourists who come (Ika Sintia et al., 2022).

The development of the reputation of a sports tourism destination today cannot be separated from the participation of technology (Harmawan et al., 2024). There are various interesting tourist attraction search sites in Indonesia, social media is also diverse which provides many benefits for its users, especially to find the place they want to go (Sepdanius & Winata, 2024). Searching for something through search sites and social media facilitates and accelerates access by users of the technology. Technological developments require every tourist attraction manager to keep up with technological developments (Jiwa Permana & Wirayani, 2021).

The ever-increasing development of technology, information, and communication makes the number of internet users also higher every year, in 2024 188.6 million people are active on social media, the high number of internet users makes Indonesia a potential market for online business activities (Lalu Hulfian Encep Farlan Sutarza Ade Evriansyah Lubis, 2024). In addition to Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp and YouTube, but becoming a favorite social media is Instagram with 88.86 million users (Mafulla & Kholik, 2021).

Instagram comes from the sense of the overall functionality of this application. The word "insta" comes from the word "instant", like the polaroid camera which in its time was better known as "instant photo". Instagram can also display photos instantly, such as polaroids in its display (Karmila & Salsabila, n.d.). As for the word "gram" comes from the word "telegram" which works to send information to others quickly. It is the same with Instagram which can upload photos using the Internet network, so that the information you want to convey can be received quickly. That's why Instagram is a combination of instant words and telegram. The friend system on Instagram uses the terms Following and followers. which means follow means following the user, and followers means other users who follow the account. Every user can interact by commenting and giving feedback by liking the photos shared. In Instagram, there is one feature, namely advertising. Instagram ads is an advertising service on Instagram social media that allows users to display their content by paying a fee for its views. These ads can appear through feeds and stories (Martoyo et al., 2022).

The strategy of promoting domestic tourism using Instagram media is interesting and does not cost a lot of money (Rahmat & Winata, 2023). With an internet connection, everything can happen in a short time. The use of social media marketing, especially Instagram, can further reduce *costs* in marketing financing. Paragliding kuliki sports tourism is currently increasingly in demand by tourists, not only local tourists but also internationally. Now the paragliding kuliki tour has an Instagram account [@kuliki_paralayang_karo](#) with several 5096 followers. This Instagram account contains tandem flight schedules, training schedules, photos of pilots, documentation of match events that have been held, as well as photo and video documentation of tandem flying reels from all visitors. The online promotion strategy of tourist attractions has not focused on the production of content that can attract consumer interest. The content contained in the Instagram account can focus on photos.

Of course, photos that can attract tourists to come are not photos that are only interesting to display but must be supported by various information. Because currently digital media is the

main gateway for foreign tourists to know about Indonesia. In addition to providing many opportunities and advantages, digital content is also likely to be faced with various risks (Noya et al., 2021). The more opportunities, the more competitors. Account managers must have creative innovations to realize the main goal of the paragliding sports tourism online promotion strategy, which is to attract as many tourists as possible (Gulo & Halawa, 2023). So that the effectiveness of Instagram social media is fulfilled.

Tongging Village, which is still in the Lake Toba area, which is an icon of tourism in North Sumatra and Indonesia, offers a beautiful scenery that is different from other paragliding places. The promotional strategy carried out by the Karo Paragliding Kuliki Club is the right step to explore the uniqueness of each tourist destination owned.

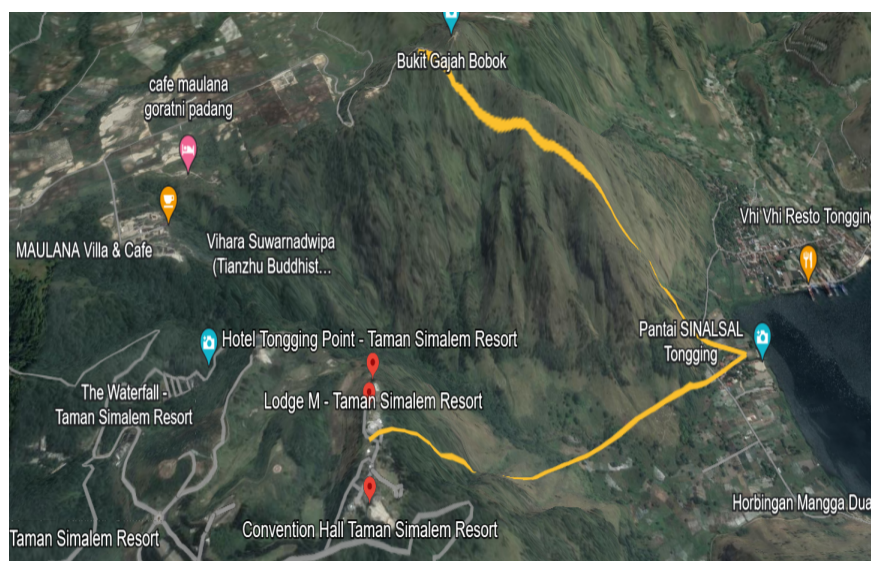


Figure 1. Google earth results of the tongging village area and the paragliding kuliki landing area
Source: www.google-earth.com

However, the number of tourist visits in each destination at a certain time has fluctuated in the number of visits. Based on the explanation above, this study aims to find out how to manage the promotion strategy of Kuliki Paragliding Karo as Sports Tourism Through social media.

METHODS

This type of research is qualitative descriptive by conducting direct interviews with informants and data obtained directly in the field. The phenomenological approach aims to describe the meaning of life experiences experienced by several individuals. Phenomenology seeks to uncover and study a phenomenon, and its distinctive and unique context experienced by individuals to the level of belief of the individual concerned. Phenomenology is research in which researchers explore a certain phenomenon (case) in a time and activity (program, event, process, institution or social group) and collect information in detail and depth using various data collection procedures over a certain period.

This method analyzes, describes, and summarizes various conditions and situations from various data collected in the form of interviews or observations about the problems being researched that occur in the field. The study describes how the promotion strategy of Kuliki Paragliding Karo as Sports Tourism through social media. Based on the data source, the collection of data for this thesis is made with Primary and Secondary data. The data collection technique uses the triangulation method (combined) with the analysis being inductive or qualitative based on positive beliefs, perceptions, certain criteria, behaviors, and relationships between variables. In the technique of collecting primary sources in this study with interview and observation

techniques. Furthermore, the secondary data in this study is through literature studies and documentation.

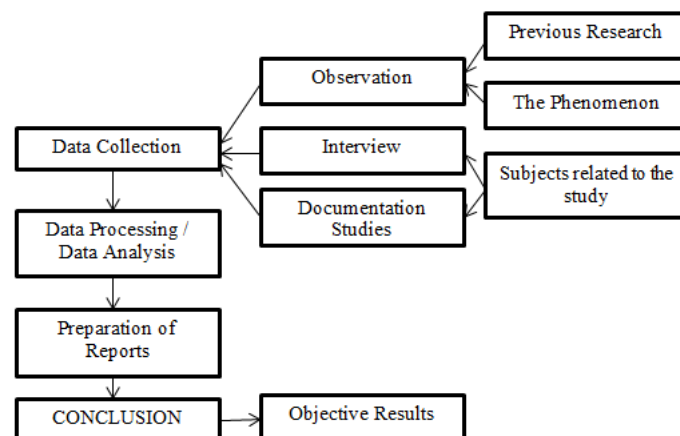


Figure 2. Qualitative Descriptive Method
Source: Author

The determination of informants is not based on strata, guideline position or region but is based on certain objectives and considerations that are still related to this research problem. In accordance with the needs of researchers related to the promotion strategy of tourist attractions to increase tourist visits to the karo paragliding kuliki. This research emphasizes more on the effectiveness of Instagram. So that later the researcher will analyze how much Instagram is used as an online marketing strategy for kuliki paragliding sports tourism in Karo. Regarding the influence of the promotion strategy that will be used to increase tourist visits, then draw conclusions and verify related to the promotion strategy that will be used in increasing visits to the Karo paragliding kuliki destination in Tongging Village. This study also describes in depth, explains, and provides appropriate answers to problems through observation, interviews or listening to presentations by decision-makers and other relevant literacy assessments.

RESULTS & DISCUSSIONS

Results

One of the goals of tourism marketing is to increase the flow of tourist visits to the intended tourist destinations. The development of tourist areas is marked by an increasing number of visitors from time to time. Based on the presentation of Mr. Munarta Ginting as the head of the Karo Regency Culture, Youth, and Sports and Tourism Office, currently the Tongging Village Area, which is the place where paragliding takes place, requires digitization of creative products created by the community and business managers in the Lake Toba tourist area. Digitalization is a key component in a competitive advantage-based marketing strategy, considering that not all tourist areas have comprehensive management with digital platforms.

There are investors and trainings to business managers and the community in general are expected to increase the competitiveness of tourism services and community-managed businesses which can be seen from the increase in the number of visitors to Lake Toba, Karo Regency, precisely in Tongging Village. Success in tourism marketing is influenced by the performance of tourism service managers in informing the uniqueness of their resources through the right marketing communication strategy by utilizing information technology through digital media, social media, sales media, distribution media, and other supporting online media. In addition, the involvement of the surrounding community is also a supporting force in communicating tourism services through the *Integrated Marketing Communication* (IMC) strategy.

Based on the analysis of the marketing situation in Tongging Tourism Village through observation activities, in-depth interviews, and information presentations from decision-making officials at the Village, District, and Regency levels, it is known that several ways to communicate tourism services using social media are as follows.

Advertising

Advertising for Tongging Tourism Village has been carried out using Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok accounts belonging to the Karo Regency Culture, Youth and Sports and Tourism Office. The tourism service products advertised on this joint social media account consist of 3 groups, namely attractions, education, and culinary. Attraction products consist of natural tourism, cultural tourism, and artificial tourism. The advertised educational products consist of educational tours. While culinary tourism has traditional culinary. Besides that, there are *other websites* made by the public, hotel, *cottage* & restaurant business actors, and observers of the Tongging tourism village of Karo Regency.

Direct Selling

Direct sales using digital media are carried out through social media, including Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok. The Karo Regency Government also promotes the Tongging Tourism Village through the Tourism and Culture Office website on the page: <https://disbudporapar.karo.go.id/> Then the manager of the Tongging Tourism Village uses Official CBT (*Community Based Tourism*) as a community forum for Tourism Villages located throughout the Indonesia area. A promotion and marketing website based on Information and Technology that can be accessed on [the https://official.cbtindonesia.com/desa/3481](https://official.cbtindonesia.com/desa/3481) page.

The following is an example of the cover page of Kuliki Paralayang Karo's facebook and instagram accounts to promote and market products using digital *platforms* by utilizing online social media without paying. Youtube as the most visited social media by young people is also used as a means of promotion and marketing in addition to Facebook, the promotion and marketing of Tanjungjaya Tourism Village through Instagram such as the account below:

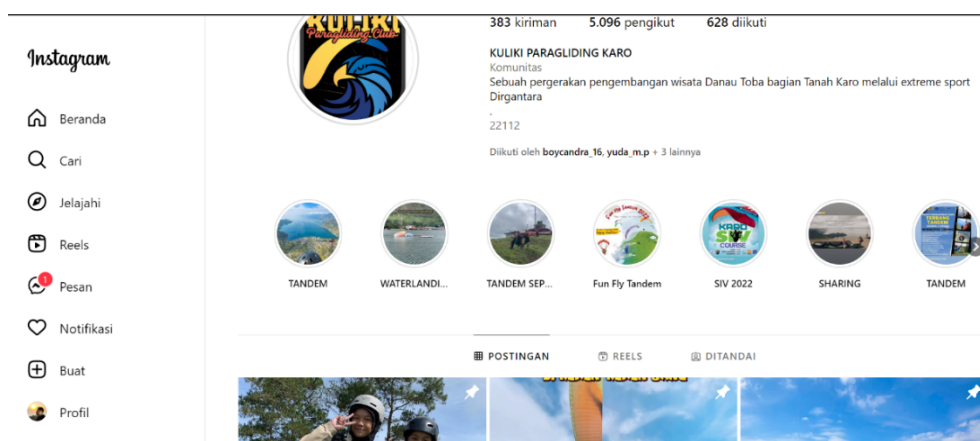


Figure 3. Instagram account kuliki paragliding with
Source: https://www.instagram.com/kuliki_paralayang_karo/

We can also see directly that in the past, the hill in the paragliding takes off area was just an ordinary hill overgrown with many wild plants, especially weeds and animals that can be dangerous. Because of so much encouragement from tourists, road facilities and several stalls and photo spots were made so that many people began to know about the karo paragliding kuliki and many people who were curious wanted to come just to take pictures at the ride.

In addition to *facebook* and *instagram*, the promotion and marketing of Kuliki Paragliding karo through *tiktok* such as the account below:



Figure 4. Tiktok account kuliki paragliding with
Source: https://www.tiktok.com/kuliki_paralayang_karo/

IMC Involves Business Actors

Promotion and marketing of *Integrated Marketing Communication* (IMC) by involving business actors and the people of Tongging Village. Business actors who have lodging services (hotels, cottages) and restaurants (restaurants) in the Kuliki Paragliding area are used to using marketplaces, such as *planethotels*, *traveloka*, *agoda*, *tickets*, *tripadvisor*, and others. In the use of marketing communication that is generally used by producers is to apply a marketing mix. The marketing mix is that there are four components in marketing consisting of 4, namely: product, price, place, promotion.

Discussions

Integrated community involvement in supporting promotional activities can be done by supporting and implementing the promotion strategy that has been set by the Tourism Village manager, either directly or indirectly, then participating in maintaining the authenticity and sustainability of natural resources, traditions, culture, and other uniqueness of the village. The people of tourist villages can take advantage of business opportunities in tourist villages by opening businesses both handicraft products, fashion, culinary, souvenirs, and creative service products to tourists. Unique products and services opened by the community that are carried out using *platform* digital through *social media*, *marketplace*, *website*, or applications *Online* (Mafulla & Kholik, 2021) others can be used as a promotional medium for the Tending tourism village.

The use of the Internet as a digital marketing tool today is a must to be done to get a target that suits the market segment, in this case the positive response of tourists in responding to information about the vacation destination they want to go to is a must that must be pursued by the community and the local tourism government (Putra et al., 2021) . Because the use of digital technology, such as social media, is considered to connect people through the form of interfaces, and at the same time it is an important ease of interaction.

In maximizing the use of digital marketing, the strategy applied is the creation of an Instagram account to create the all-digital branding of Tongging Village, prospective tourists tend to rely on the internet to find information about tourist attractions to be visited. The results of the creation of Instagram social media accounts are expected to increase tourist visitors to Tongging Village.

The promotional strategy carried out by using Instagram here is also by reposting posts from visitors on Instagram social media who have used the hashtag kuliki paragliding karo so that the kuliki paragliding karo social media account also remains updated with new visitors. The uploaded photos are also instagramable which is certainly interesting to see on Instagram kuliki paragliding karo. The Karo paragliding kuliki is also currently uploading videos for its promotion using Instagram. Because if you look at the video, the audience will be curious about the next video, different from just looking at the video. Then the kuliki paragliding karo also made a highlight on the Instagram account for videos or photos that became instastories and were not uploaded to the kuliki paragliding karo post could be seen by Instagram users who wanted to visit. The rides or icons that are most in demand by tourists are heart-shaped photo spot rides. The heart-shaped ride is also an icon for the Karo paragliding kuliki tour.

Based on the results of searches and observations about the marketing strategy of kuliki paragliding karo, it turns out that the kuliki paragliding karo promotion strategy has been implemented in the use of digital platforms both through websites, social media, marketplaces, and through *Integrated Marketing Communication* (IMC) (Mathory & Syahna, 2022) that involve the general public or business actors either personally or through their business institutions (Talalu et al., 2021). Request (*demand*) tourism services are increasing due to government support and private investment in developing the Karo Kuliki Paragliding Area.

Business actors who open lodging and restaurant businesses in the Tongging Village area in their promotion have used digital *platforms* through marketplace applications to communicate their products and services. The increase in tourist visits, both local and foreign, is allegedly due to a promotional strategy through digital platforms, where information is easily obtained from *online* media, be it through *websites*, *social media*, and *marketplaces* in addition to government policies by reopening visits to Lake Toba tourist destinations. In addition to optimizing the use of *e-commerce* & social media, promotional strategies that can be applied in Tonggin tourism village to increase the number of visitors and develop the surrounding tourist area are by providing excellent service to visitors, creating a brand image through natural uniqueness and excellent service, and building trust in visitors by improving services consistently. If a positive *brand image* has been formed and the services provided by the tour manager are memorable in the hearts of visitors, it is hoped that they will revisit or provide recommendations to relatives, colleagues, friends, and the community in general to visit the Karo paragliding kuliki sports tour.

CONCLUSION

The promotional media used to promote the Karo paragliding kuliki is in the form of videos, photos and reels. The results of the media test produced very good scores, and the content test obtained good scores. The media developed is suitable to be used to help promote the kuliki paragliding tourism area in Karo as a tourist village destination. The media developed is very effective because it can be easily spread through social media such as youtube and is easier to share through Facebook and Instagram accounts to promote tourist villages in the East Bali area. The use of Instagram social media as a medium to promote kuliki paragliding tourism is said to be effective and successful. And the Karo Paragliding Kuliki Tour also always uploads positive and interesting content using clear image resolution and is comfortable to see. By promoting through Instagram social media, Kuliki Paragliding Karo said that more and more tourists came from various regions and knew about Kuliki Paragliding Karo tourism from Instagram social media and followers on the Kuliki Paragliding Karo Instagram social media account was also

increasing because many were interested in photo or video uploads on the Kuliki Paragliding Karo account.

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