

Ponggok Tourism Village Branding Innovation in the Covid-19 Pandemic Period : From Quantity to Quality

Rika Apriyanti¹, Andre Rahmanto², Ign Agung Satyawan³

^aStudent of Magister Communication Department, Sebelas Maret University, Indonesia.

^bLecture of Magister Communication Department, Sebelas Maret University, Indonesia.

³Lecture of Magister Communication Department, Sebelas Maret University, Indonesia.

Abstract: This research aims to explain branding innovation during the Covid-19 pandemic in Ponggok Village, Klaten Regency, Central Java Indonesia as an effort to recover from the tourism crisis. This research is a qualitative research with a case study approach. The resource persons are supervisor of Ponggok Creative Hub and the Ponggok Village Government as well as content analysis from official social media accounts managed by PonggokKreatifHub as primary data sources. Data collection methods used in this study are content analysis, interview and documentation. Data analysis techniques in this study is divided into three stages: data reduction, data presentation and conclusion drawing. Data verification using source triangulation. The results of this study indicate that the branding practice carried out by Ponggok Village has a different focus and strategy before the pandemic and during the Covid-19 pandemic. The branding carried out by Ponggok Village during the Covid-19 pandemic underwent a transformation from previously focusing on quantity to quality. Content analysis from Ponggok Village's official Instagram social media account shows Ponggok Village's efforts to communicate its program to become a more qualified Tourism Village. However, the results of this branding cannot be felt optimally because of the frequent changes in regulations from the Regional Government during the Covid-19 pandemic and the uncertainty of when this crisis will end.

Keywords: Innovation, Covid-19 Pandemic, Village Branding, Social Media

1. Introduction

The Covid-19 pandemic has changed the behavior and branding strategies of tourism actors, one of them is the tourism village manager. Branding is a process of designing, planning and communicating a name, identity with the aim of building and managing reputation (Anholt, 2005). During the Covid-19 pandemic, the concept of branding has changed from the previous period (Mogaji, 2020). Branding is not only used to attract visitors but also to maintain reputation, communicate image and limit the negative impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. Changes in lifestyle by implementing health protocols such as maintaining distance, not crowding, wearing masks and reducing mobility require tourism managers to think innovatively to review branding strategies. One strategy that can be used is to maximize digital marketing. The Indonesian Minister of Communication and Information, Johnny G Plate said that there is another side to the Covid-19 pandemic, namely the acceleration of digital transformation that is able to encourage people to enter Digital Society 5.0 (Okezone.com, 2021). The concept of Society 5.0 creates a smart society, where the

integration of the virtual world and the real world uses technology. Occurs to achieve sustainable development goals (Shiroishi, 2019). Society 5.0 is a modern concept from Japan which aims to assist the implementation of the 17 sustainable goals or SDGs which are the 2030 agenda of UN member states (Beata Hysa, 2021). The UN's big agenda was later reduced to a national agenda. In Indonesia, one of the efforts to achieve the SDGs that have been transformed into the Sustainable Development Goals is to localize development which is then localized to the village level in the Village SDGs (Kemendes.go.id, 2021). Ponggok Village, located in Polanharjo District, Klaten Regency, Central Java Province, is one of the tourist village affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. As a Tourism village that has made 17 Village SDGs programs as guidelines for sustainable development, Ponggok Village is required to continue to innovate in an effort to maintain its reputation, communicate its image and limit the negative impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic. The development of the internet in the 21st century has changed the branding practice of tourism manager, especially during this Covid-19 pandemic. One of them is maximizing digital marketing through social media. Social media is very important in the context of restoring the image of sustainable tourism during the Covid-19 pandemic, which requires restoration of trust through communication (UNWTO, 2020). From the background above, this research will examine and make studies related to branding innovations in Ponggok Tourism Village, Polanharjo District, Klaten Regency through social media during the Covid-19 Pandemic Period.

2. Methods

This research is a qualitative research with case studies (Yin Rk, 2011) conducted intensively and in depth about branding innovation in Ponggok Village, Polanharjo District, Klaten Regency during the Covid-19 pandemic. Data collection methods used in this study was content analysis, interviews, and documentation. The data analysis technique in this study is divided into three stages, namely data reduction, data presentation and conclusion drawing. Data verification using source triangulation. In this study, the researchers chose two main sources; they are the Supervisor of Ponggok Kreatif Hub and Public Relations of the Ponggok Village Government who also served as Head of Administrative Affairs of the Ponggok Village Government. The resource persons were chosen because they are considered to be an important part in the implementation of the Ponggok Village Branding during the Covid-19 pandemic. Observations were also made by researchers by observing content uploads on the official Instagram Social Media of Ponggok Village managed by the Ponggok Kreatif Hub Team during the Covid-19 pandemic (March 2020 - March 2021). The research was conducted in Ponggok Village, Polanharjo District, Klaten Regency, Central Java, Indonesia. Ponggok Village was chosen as the research location because currently Ponggok Village is often a reference village for *Comparative Studies* of other villages in Indonesia through the Village Study Center activities, so that many things can be explored and researched in Ponggok Village, therefore researcher is interested in making Ponggok Village Ponggok as a research location to see branding innovation in the Covid-19 Pandemic Period. This study aims to determine the innovation of branding practices carried out by Ponggok Village during the covid-19 pandemic and the transformation towards society 5.0.

Results and discussion

Tourism Destination Policy during the Covid-19

Pandemic covid-19 has hit tourism sector hardly (Japutra, 2021). One of the affected tourist destinations is Ponggok Tourism Village in Polanharjo District, Klaten Regency, Central Java Province. During one year of the Covid-19 pandemic in Indonesia starting from

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March 2020 to March 2021, policies related to the operation of tourism destinations in Klaten Regency have changed many times. In March 2020, the Klaten Regency Tourism Office gave an appeal to tourist destination manager to temporarily close as an effort to prevent the spread of the Covid-19 Virus. In response to this, the Ponggok Village tourism manager decided to temporarily close the Ponggok Umbul tourist attraction and other tours in Ponggok Village from March 10, 2020 to March 29, 2020 (**Tribunnews.com, 2020**). The regulation was extended until the Eid holiday, tourist attractions have not been allowed to reopen. In August 2020, tourist attractions in Klaten Regency have been allowed to open based on SE No 443.1/477/13 Regent of Klaten, but water attractions have not been allowed (**Solopos.com, 2020**). Finally, all water tourism objects in Klaten Regency have been allowed to reopen starting October 26, 2020 including water tourism with a visitor limit of 20-50% of capacity and implementing health protocols according to the Circular Letter (SE) of the Klaten Regent Number 443.1/629/13 regarding the Opening of Water Tourism Destination During the Covid-19 Pandemic in Klaten Regency. Just opened a few days, the water tourism destination in Ponggok Village had to be closed again due to the discovery of visitors who were positive for Covid-19 (**Jawapos.com, 2020**).

In the 2020 Christmas holiday and the New Year 2021, all attractions in Klaten regency which was closed during the pandemic are allowed to reopen unless water attractions. This is in accordance with the Klaten Regent's Circular No. 443.11788/13 regarding the re-closure of the water tourist attraction during the pandemic. The Head of the Ponggok Village Rural Tourism Division admitted that the Water Tourism Sites in Ponggok Village had implemented the Health Protocol, but they were still not allowed to be opened. On January 11-25 2021, the Klaten Regency Government again issued a policy of temporarily closing all tourism objects in Klaten Regency through Circular the Klaten Regent Number 36/016/32 of 2021 concerning the Enforcement of Activity Restrictions to Control the Spread of Covid-19 in Klaten (**Jatengprov.go.id, 2021**). On January 27, 2021, the entire attraction in Klaten regency began to reopen in the future Enforcement Community Activity Limitation (PPKM) which is valid until February 8, 2021 with a visitor capacity of 30% (**Tribunjogja.com, 2021**). Until March 2021, all tourist attractions in Ponggok Village have been reopened with visitor restriction during the implementation of micro-based Community Activity Limitation (PPKM). This policy that often changes makes Ponggok Tourism Village no longer focus on promoting tourism destinations and products, but focuses more on communicating sustainable development and innovation, and the preparation of Ponggok Village in welcoming the New Normal.

Formation of Ponggok Kreatif Hub

From the results of interview with supervisors of Ponggok Kreatif Hub, the real effort made by the Ponggok Village Government to maintain the image of Ponggok Tourism Village during the Covid-19 pandemic is to maximize Ponggok Kreatif Hub. In early 2019, the Ponggok Village Head formed the Ponggok Kreatif Hub, a community that serves as a forum for children and youth to express ideas for the progress of Ponggok Village. At the beginning of the formation, youth in Ponggok Village who have expertise such as photography, vlog and video editing were gathered. Furthermore, the Ponggok Kreatif Hub activity roadmap was compiled for 2020. However, in early 2020 the Corona virus came and demanded that all crowding activities be stopped. This caused the activities of Ponggok Kreatif Hub to temporarily stop. The implementation of the Large-Scale Social Restrictions (PSBB) regulation from the Government of Indonesia caused Ponggok Village's Original Village Income (PAD) to be zero. This made the Ponggok Village Government rethink the branding strategy. Changes seem to focus on the vision of sustainability.

PonggokKreatif Hub is required to pioneer the digitalization of marketing to communicate the vision of sustainability. Ponggok Village product marketing, which previously focused on offline, which was marketed to visitors, turned into digital marketing. The Covid-19 pandemic requires the Ponggok Village Government and BUMDes Tirta Mandiri to make an MoU to remodel the PonggokKreatif Hub which consists of 4 members in charge of managing 7 social media belonging to Ponggok Village, namely Instagram, Twitter and Facebook Ponggok Village and BUMDes Tirta Mandiri and 1 Ponggok Village website .Before 2020, many people outside Ponggok Village used their digital marketing to sell Ponggok Village tourism products. Although Ponggok benefits from visitor arrivals, Ponggok did not get benefit from digital marketing. Finally, after the formation of the PonggokKreatif Hub to date consisting of 2 Ponggok youths and 2 content expert creator and publisher who were recruited and paid professionally by the Village Government and Bumdes of Ponggok Village, the digital marketing began to work.

Social Media and PonggokKreatif Hub

PonggokKreatif Hub manages 7 social media owned by the Ponggok Village Government and BUMDes of TirtaMandiri. From the seven social media, PonggokKreatif Hub focuses more on Facebook and Instagram. Facebook is used as a platform to convey the concepts and programs of the Ponggok Village Head to residents. Before the pandemic, the Ponggok Village Head had a 'jagongan' routine, namely activities to convey his work program to the community, but during this Covid-19 pandemic, crowding activities were prohibited and demanded the Ponggok Village Government to make innovations in communicating its activities. Another target of the Ponggok Village branding innovation during the Covid-19 pandemic is Instagram users. Before the Covid-19 pandemic, the Ponggok Village Government focused on marketing the PonggokUmbul tourist destination. The underwater beauty of UmbulPonggok has become a mainstay promotion object and fulfills uploads on Instagram. During the Covid-19 pandemic with the temporary closure of tourist attractions, the Ponggok Village Government made branding innovation through uploading content on Instagram. The content prepared by PonggokKreatif Hub is always mapped in what monitoring and evaluation activities (Monev) need to be highlighted by PonggokKreatif Hub for one month. The focus of content during this pandemic is to communicate sustainable village programs and reduce the negative impacts of the Covid Pandemic. -19.

Use of Hashtag

Hashtag are keywords that begin with the symbol (#) that is used to group the same information quickly and attract attention collectively (Ma Zongyang, 2012). The results of observations on uploading content on social media Instagram @ponggok_village, it appears that certain hashtags have been used consistently. Following are the results of the researcher's analysis on @ponggok_village's Instagram upload from the beginning (2018 before the pandemic) to March 2021 (during the Covid-19 pandemic).

Table 1. showing the number of instagram post @ponggok_village in 2017

| Month | Number of Post |
|----------|----------------|
| February | 5 posts |
| November | 1 post |
| December | 4 posts |

Source: author's data

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In 2017, there is no consistent use of hashtags. The uploaded content only conveys photos of the activities of the Ponggok Village head.

Table 2. showing the number of instagram post @ponggok_village in 2018

| Month | Number of Post |
|----------|----------------|
| March | 1 post |
| August | 1 post |
| October | 16 posts |
| November | 4 posts |
| December | 4 posts |

Source: author's data

Content uploads in 2018 it appears that hashtags have been used for each post, namely the hashtags #desaponggoklaten and #desauntukindonesia individually consistent. However, there is no innovation for content, only conveying photos of activities.

Table 3. showing the number of instagram post @ponggok_village in 2019

| Month | Number of Post |
|----------|----------------|
| January | 2 posts |
| March | 1 post |
| April | 1 post |
| June | 8 Posts |
| December | 14 posts |

Source: author's data

On June, there is a green literacy camp activity. Since June 2019 the hashtags #ponggokwanisinau and #menujuPonggokMakmurLestari2025 have been used in the upload caption.

Table 4. showing the number of instagram post @ponggok_village in 2020

| Month | Number of Post |
|-----------|----------------|
| January | 8 posts |
| February | 7 posts |
| April | 1 post |
| June | 1 post |
| July | 74 posts |
| August | 54 posts |
| September | 47 posts |

| | |
|----------|----------|
| October | 56 Posts |
| November | 35 post |
| December | 39 post |

Source: author's data

On October, the highlight tourist info was Ponggok village reopened after being temporarily closed for several months.

Table 5. showing the number of instagram post @pongkok_village in 2021

| Month | Number of Post |
|----------|----------------|
| January | 63 posts |
| February | 41 posts |
| March | 42 Post |

Source: author's data

July 2020 is the beginning of Ponggok branding with the PonggokKreatif Hub team, the hashtags used is #semangatberdesa, #berkaryauntukdesa #demoponggokmakmurlestari to communicate the Ponggok Village program in the Covid-19 Pandemic Period.

The transformation of Quantity to Quality

The establishment of PonggokKreatif Hub during the Covid-19 pandemic is the initiation of upgrading human resources. The current Ponggok Village Government is no longer focused on targeting visitors and income (money). But transforming its focus to developing good quality of human resources and services in existing tourist destinations. This is in accordance with the vision and mission of the Village Head in the third period. In the first and second periods, village head of Ponggok still sold Ponggok Village as a Water Tourism Village to attract people to visit and contribute to Village Original Income. However, in his third term of leadership, he introduced more sustainability and the spirit of sustainable prosperous ponggok (prosperous ponggok residents, sustainable nature).It's no longer a matter of 'Selling yourself' here and there in pursuit of profit, but must increase creative and collaborative work with many parties to increase benefit for residents and their natural resources. Ponggok Village residents are considered too comfortable so far because without a big promotion many visitors have come to Ponggok, education and health facilities have been provided free of charge. This COVID-19 pandemic provides an opportunity for the Ponggok Village government to improve the quality of Human Resources to further develop and initiate digital marketing.The transformation of Ponggok Village's focus from quantity to quality can be seen from content uploads on Ponggok Village's Instagram social media. Through social media, Ponggok Village invites people to change tourist behavior when visiting Ponggok Village. If you used to go to UmbulPonggok to pay for a ticket to get food wrapped in plastic, now you can't, at this time the culinary arts at UmbulPonggok are also incorporated into a small business container named 'PawonePonggok', this aims to reduce waste. This campaign is communicated through uploads on social media, it is hoped that when they return to Ponggok Village, new tourist behavior can be implemented properly.

The data shows that before the pandemic, Ponggok village could produce up to 1 ton of waste, 90% of which was plastic waste from tourists. During this pandemic, Ponggok began to change the concept of tourism and the concept of sales service.All of that are branded by

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the PonggokKreatif Hub Team and distributed to the entire community through uploaded content on social media. Commitment to transforming towards quality with the vision of Ponggok prospering sustainably caring for nature, at the village meeting each participant is asked to bring a tumbler for drinking this was conveyed through an Instagram upload on July 11, 2020. The government really uses Instagram to maintain the existence of Ponggok Village. The following are the results of the researcher's observations on the information submitted through the content uploaded to Instagram @ponggok_village from July 2020 to March 2021.

Table 6. showing the instagram post @ponggok_village information

| Date | Information |
|---|---|
| July 11, 2020 | Use of tumblers during meetings, as a form of waste reduction campaign in Ponggok Village |
| July 12 | Utilizing vacant land for gardening during the pandemic, as a form of environmental sustainability campaign from the family. |
| July 22 | Ponggok Village Commitment to implement village SDGs |
| August 24 | New Ponggok commitment and appeal for tourists to comply with health protocols |
| September 16 | Introducing the meaning of The New Ponggok |
| September 18 | Echoing the warning 'Don't litter in Ponggokya' |
| October 7 | Echoing #Ponggokwanisinau and #PonggokMakmurLestari2025 |
| October 11 | Introducing the 'Pongchips' product as a realization of the 1 village 1 product program as a manifestation of the SDGs Desa (1,2,3,5,8) |
| December 3 | Introducing ecotourism 'UmbulBesuki' |
| December 14 | Introduction of Ponggok Green Library (Ponggy), the spirit of literacy for children |
| December 24 | Socialization of improving the quality of Ponggok Village based on the 18 SDG's Village Program |
| January 17, 2021 | Informing the rearrangement of the UmbulBesuki tourist destination |
| 20,21,22,25,26,27 January and 11,19 February 2021 | Supporting the achievement SDG's Village Sustainable Development Goals |
| March 10 | Inauguration of Ponggok Village as a CANDI Tourism Village (Smart, Anticipatory), Checking, Dedicated and Integrity) which is expected to be a pilot village related to the prevention and control of Covid-19 in the tourist area of Klaten Regency. |
| March 17 | Communicating that all tourist destinations in Ponggok Village are safe to visit because sterilization is routinely carried out for the convenience of visitors. |

Source : author's content analysis on Ponggok Village Instagram post period July 2020 until March 2021.

The New Ponggok

Momentum of the COVID-19 pandemic was used by the Head of Ponggok Village, Junaedhi Mulyono to introduce the new Ponggok. According to him, The New Ponggok means tourists and residents of Ponggok 'calm, peaceful and success', Ponggok dress village as well as residents and visitors together to create sustainable prosperous Ponggok. 18 SDGs village programs have been designed and implemented step by step in Ponggok Village over the past decade.

1. A village without poverty

Since its establishment in 2009, BUMDes Tirta Mandiri has become one of the largest PAD contributors to Ponggok Village. Its existence is able to create multidimensional effects including employment and local economic empowerment in Ponggok Village.

2. Starving village without

As a village blessed with landscapes and fertile agricultural land, the village remains committed Ponggok maintain food availability, increase production, utilization of vacant land and increase production of the leading sectors, namely fisheries. There is a big harvest and an invitation from the village head to plant on vacant land.

3. Healthy and prosperous

The existence of a posyandu and complete immunization for infants and services for pregnant women, the existence of a Tirta Mandiri BUMDes rescue car, the establishment of a COVID task force Quality.

4. Village education

Implementation of the 1 house 1 bachelor program to increase awareness of Ponggok villagers on the importance of education

5. Involvement of village women

The existence of Pawone SMEs Ponggok and Nila Murni Ponggok managed by women in Ponggok Village. The representation of women in the Village Consultative Body (BPD)

6. Rural water and sanitation worthy

Existence of Water Supply program (PAB)

7. Village energized clean and renewable

Micro hydro will be built (2021) in 'Umbul Besuki'

8. Equitable village economic growth

This has been achieved through the BUMDes Tirta Mandiri program, Ecotourism and others that are able to absorb the workforce.

9. Village infrastructure and innovation as needed.

Infrastructure development in Ponggok Village is focused on supporting economic growth and village innovation.

10. Villages without inequality.

Ponggok Village has succeeded in reducing inequality between regions that previously occurred through development planning based on area mapping.

11. Safe and Comfortable

Village Residential Areas Ponggok Village has good governance adequate space to create inclusive, safe, strong and sustainable villages. As well as structuring the village area using 4 simple references, namely complete, easy access, growing and adaptive and tepa selira or mutual support.

12. Consumption and production Environmentally aware village

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Instructions for recycling and reducing waste

13. Climate change response village

Ponggok forest Gayam and initiation of water defender as a step to play a role in reducing the impact of global climate change.

14. Village cares for the marine environment

Ponggok Village always takes care of the river as a form of awareness to protect the ecosystem that will lead to the sea.

15. Village cares for the terrestrial environment

This is manifested through routine community service,

16. Peaceful Justice

Village, Ponggok village security with linmas, bhabinkamtibmas and babinsa

17. Partnership for Village Development

Establish partnerships strategic with the government, SKPD, investors, banks, universities, businesses, and professional associations/NGOs.

18. Dynamic village institutions and adaptive village culture

It has been implemented in all institutions in Ponggok Village

Conclusion

The branding carried out by the Ponggok Village Government during the Covid-19 pandemic was focused on efforts to communicate 'New Ponggok', namely Ponggok who cares more about the environment and implements sustainable development village goals. From the analysis of Ponggok Village's Instagram social media content, it was found that there was a change in the use of hashtags that better described the village's focus on improving quality. This can be seen from the use of the hastag *newpongkok*, *pongkokwanisanau*, *pongkokmakmurlestari*.

Limitations and Future

This study focuses on branding practices in Ponggok Village within a period of one year during the pandemic period, namely March 2020 to March 2021. To overcome the limitations of this study, a more detailed analysis is needed. Further information is needed from various aspects. The empirical weakness of this study can be overcome by extending the year of observation and the area of observation and by developing a quantitative analysis to provide generalizable results, outside of the case studies of this study. In fact, the practice of branding tourist villages continues during this pandemic.

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