Beyond digital international tourism communication network for tourism quality improvement

Maya Diah Nirwana[1], Ali Maksum[2], Fitria Avicenna[3], Ratu Aulia Fidarijanthi[4]
[1,2,3,4]Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Universitas Brawijaya, Malang, Indonesia

ABSTRACT

Collaboration is essential for any tourism location to be successful in solving difficulties. The study aims to explore the motivations behind the collaboration of Malang Raya (Greater Malang), Indonesia. We focus on the prerequisites organizations must meet to participate in collaborative international tourism initiatives. We applied the qualitative technique. There are 30 informants from public relations, governments, scholars, media, international tourists, travel agents, communities, and tourism associations. We conducted semi-structured interviews and observations. The results demonstrate that the digital network of international tourism communication collaboration in Malang Raya is not optimal yet. The efforts made by the Destination Management Organization (DMO) in Malang Raya in the future will become a 'diamond' for improving the quality of tourism. International tourism will be brilliant, valuable, and of good quality. The international tourism communication collaboration digital network implemented: a) the digital collaboration between tourism departments at some universities in Malang Raya with some hotel companies and the Association of the Indonesian Tours and Travel Agencies; b) the digitalization of small and medium enterprises collaboration in Malang Raya, Indonesia such Batu Local Guide; c) online taxi which operated in Malang Raya destinations namely Grab and Uber to facilitate international tourists reach the destinations; d) for improving digital tourism communication network, Malang Raya has Malang Tourism Information Centre; e) Malang Raya destinations collaborated with smartphone sim card providers in tourism information services; f) Malang Raya has ngalam.co, and gumebyar.malangkab.go.id to integrate destination information and accommodations.

Keywords: Collaboration; communication; tourism; digital; international

Melampaui jaringan komunikasi pariwisata internasional digital untuk peningkatan kualitas pariwisata

ABSTRAK

Agar lokasi pariwisata manapun berhasil memecahkan kesulitan, kolaborasi sangatlah penting. Penelitian ini bertujuan mengeksplorasi motivasi di balik kolaborasi digital pariwisata internasional di Malang Raya yang melibatkan pemangku kepentingan di Indonesia. Fokus penelitian ini pada prasyarat yang harus dipenuhi oleh organisasi untuk mengambil bagian dalam inisiatif pariwisata internasional kolaboratif. Dalam penelitian ini, teknik kualitatif diterapkan. Informan dalam penelitian ini berjumlah 30 orang berasal dari Humas, pemerintah, akademisi, media, wisatawan mancanegara, agen perjalanan, komunitas, dan asosiasi pariwisata. Wawancara semi terstruktur dan observasi dilakukan dalam penelitian ini. Hasil analisis penelitian ini menunjukkan terdapat jaringan digital kolaborasi komunikasi pariwisata internasional di Malang Raya, namun belum optimal. Upaya yang telah dilakukan oleh Destination Management Organization (DMO) di Malang Raya diharapkan ke depan menjadi 'berlian' bagi peningkatan kualitas pariwisata. Artinya peningkatan kualitas pariwisata di masa mendatang diharapkan mendapatkan hasil yang cemerlang, memiliki nilai, dan kualitas yang baik. Jaringan digital kolaborasi komunikasi pariwisata internasional yang telah dilakukan berupa: a) kolaborasi digital antara departemen pariwisata di beberapa universitas di Malang Raya dengan beberapa perusahaan perhotelan dan Asosiasi Biro Perjalanan Wisata Indonesia; b) digitalisasi kolaborasi usaha kecil dan menengah di Malang Raya, Indonesia seperti Local Guide Batu; c) taksi online yang beroperasi di destinasi Malang Raya yaitu Grab dan Uber untuk memudahkan wisatawan internasional mencapai destinasi tersebut; d) untuk meningkatkan jaringan komunikasi pariwisata digital, Malang Raya memiliki Pusat Informasi Pariwisata Malang Raya; e) Destinasi Malang Raya bekerjasama dengan penyedia simcard smartphone dalam layanan informasi pariwisata; f) Malang Raya mempunyai ngalam.co, dan gumebyar.malangkab.go.id untuk mengintegrasikan informasi destinasi dan akomodasi.

Kata-kata kunci: *Kolaborasi; komunikasi; pariwisata; digital; internasional*

Korespondensi: Maya Diah Nirwana, S.Sos., M.Si. Doctoral Student of Sociology and Lecturer in the Department of Communication Science, Building A, 3rd Floor, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Universitas Brawijaya, Malang, Indonesia, e-mail: maya_diah@ub.ac.id

INTRODUCTION

This research focuses on why stakeholders should collaborate within the digital international tourism communication network. What conditions for organizations to participate in international tourism collaborative efforts? These questions become crucial phenomena because collaboration supports the success of any tourism destination. Intense competition among tourist destinations raises interest in inter-destination collaboration as a tool for developing innovative inter-destination products (Vodeb et al., 2016). Choi et al. (2017) establish the critical role of enhancing relationship quality in integrated destination marketing. Designing and administrating tourism destinations through collaborative forms is a relatively young and developing research subject. To support the importance of collaboration, a famous metaphor for describing a more complex, more productive.

Collaboration can begin at the grassroots as process owners develop strong working relationships and accountability with each other. Convention and tourist bureaus should collaborate with nearby locations to improve product portfolio, cut costs, and increase efficiency. Collaboration can create advanced inclusive tourism as a finding of Nyanjom et al. (2018) argue that the goal of advanced inclusive

tourism is to equal access and inclusion for all organic, circulatory, and developmental approaches to stakeholder cooperation should be used when numerous and different stakeholders are at play. To do this, control and coordination, communication, role and responsibility clarity, and collaboration and integration are the four emerging connected themes.

Collaboration is the dialogue between the players who should represent these rightful interests, the issues addressed in cooperation, and the pertinent interests. Cooperation and collaboration could significantly contribute to designing, managing, and marketing services and experiences (Vodeb et al., 2016). The dynamics of inter-organizational domains have been the subject of another collaborative strategy described in keeping with this history regarding a collection of common issues that organizations face. As stated earlier, cooperation is an idea and a possible means of resolving problems and accomplishing goals. Cooperation between neighboring destinations might solve many challenges (Żemła, 2014). We propose a digital network of international tourism providers' collaboration and conditions for organizations to collaborate. We explore the digital collaboration forms in global tourism, especially in developing countries. We help readers understand a digital network of international tourism collaboration. The

explanation has discussed the gap in this study. Collaborative decision-making among significant stakeholders is crucial for achieving economically and socially responsible tourist growth. These studies highlight the need to improve protocols and include significant stakeholders in cooperative decision-making about destination planning and management issues in a community-based context. The prevalent network patterns and forms impact our personal, professional, organizational, and social lives.

Additionally, it looks for noteworthy network-related problems that demand further investigation. Another idea Popescu et al. (2017) declared that their scientific approach addresses issues of the economic collaboration of a community that respects the social economy enterprise. Therefore, the study addressed the gap.

Popescu et al. (2017) said that collaboration refers to the collection of elements associated with people's capability and aptitude to collaborate, work together, and actively pursue shared objectives. It covers social and economic endeavors, enabling people to define themselves as individuals and get recognition based on the outcomes. We can create a collaboration in a favorable condition. Achieving the three evaluation criterias of knowledge and comprehension, changing

personal viewpoints, and dedication to the professional practice outcomes in an conducive environment to collaborative research. We focus on cooperative marketing to pursue joint endeavors between destination stakeholders and those in related locations to create appealing packages or product offerings. Collaboration and effort coordination are essential to all facets of effective destination marketing.

Collaboration among international tourism providers, in line with a previous study from Farsari (2018), a core system that revolves around the packaging and sale of tourist products to an international market unites the representations of tourism players and is suggestive of a hegemonic representation. Working with outside businesses may assist a company in concentrating its efforts on raising earnings, increasing productivity, and lessening negative effects on the environment and society. One of the first US cities to create a full-time position devoted to advertising the city during conferences and gatherings of trade associations was Detroit, Michigan. In 1896, hotel owners banded together to fund the position, making Detroit a trailblazer in tourism social networks. Creating digital collaboration needs some effort. As a result, this study looks into the prerequisites organizations need to meet to engage in cooperative endeavors.

The three requirements that need to be

met for tourism providers to participate in collaborative activities are understanding interconnectedness, a belief that the cooperation would provide substantial advantages, and understanding the significance of the issue(s). To explain collaborative efforts, Zach & Hill (2017) stated the impact of relationships, knowledge, and networks on innovation in tourist locations. Kuwabara, Hildebrand, & Zou (2016) said that networking is a motivating challenge similar to exercising a viewpoint that differs from conventional conceptions of networking as a matter of rational choice, characteristics, and talents. Kuwabara et al. (2018) additionally characterize professional-instrumental networking, or just "networking," as deliberate and aggressive attempts to create, maintain, or utilize contacts to support professional objectives.

We integrate network theory and lay theory in this study. According to Newman (2014), network theory uses a structural explanation in which the emphasis is on locations and connections within an interconnected web or network and on the shape or overall pattern of the network. In this research, the lay theories of networking are expected to support the research questions. A structural explanation known as "network theory" emphasizes the locations and connections within an interconnected web or network, as well as the general form or structure of the network (Newman, 2014). In other words, Gubbins & Dooley (2014) said that the choice of network members was essential because a coalition of partner organizations needed to be formed, and each organization needed to have knowledge gaps that other partners' expertise could fill in addition to having knowledge that was beneficial to other network members. Second, participating organizations require the "absorptive capacity" not just to obtain new knowledge but also to appreciate its importance.

Some previous studies in tourism showed as below: (1) Liu & Suh (2017) named "Application of Network Analysis on Tourist Attractions: The Case of Xinjiang, China" was carried out. Informed by tourist flows, the study represents a unique use of network analysis to investigate the underlying mechanism of the network of tourist attractions. A structural explanation known as "network theory" emphasizes the locations and connections within an interconnected web or network, as well as the general form or structure of the network (Newman, 2014). In other words, Gubbins & Dooley (2014) said that the choice of network members was essential because a coalition of partner organizations needed to be formed, and each organization needed to have knowledge gaps that other partners' expertise could fill in addition to having knowledge that was beneficial to other network members. Second, participating organizations require the

"absorptive capacity" to obtain new knowledge and appreciate its importance.

Moreover, there are several concerns related to network theory and collaborative environment in the following explanation: (1) According to Viren et al. (2015), the relationships between the informants in a given network are the main focus of social network theory. An individual network's composition, size, and diversity can impact their success level. By analyzing the official and informal ties that bind firms together, social network analysis helps improve comprehension of the interactions that occur inside or amongst them in the tourist sector"; (2) Extended to research applying network analysis has focused on the evolution of collaborative networks, collaborative marketing, and stakeholders and sustainable tourism.

The perceived relationship between cooperation and competition was also vital concerning a destination's marketing (Żemła, 2014). Researchers in the tourism industry frequently utilize network analysis to examine research partnerships and pinpoint knowledge connections. In this research, the lay theories of networking are expected to support the research questions. Social network theory incorporates lay theories. Many socially important nodes connected by one or more relations make up a social network. While perceptual metrics

identify peer norms, social network analysis identifies social relationships (Jorgensen et al., 2018). Participation in membership organizations among tourist providers is a reasonable area to investigate the idea's relevance when examining social network theory in the context of tourism providers (Viren et al., 2015). This study will use actor-network theory and stakeholder collaboration to support lay theories. Action-network theory is a socio-philosophical method focusing on relationship components known as associations to understand complicated social circumstances in actor-network theory terminology. These diverse components are given equal weight under actor-network theory. They are viewed as components of ever-evolving, dynamic networks, in which their relationships are crucial to comprehending sociological events.

Additionally, actor-network theory has just been proposed as a cutting-edge method for tourist studies. The irony is that the collaborative structure that enhances generative creativity diminishes the likelihood of that creativity ever being used again. A structural explanation known as network theory focuses on the locations and connections within an interconnected web or network, as well as the overall shape or structure of the network (Newman, 2014). To close the gap, perceptions, and evaluations of the networks and linkages in

this study were examined.

Kuwabara et al. (2018) examine how ideas about networks influence attitudes toward and participation in networking; with subsequent implications for network structure, networking is revealed from a lay perspective. There are three main lay theories of networking: at the individual level, search is the main type of networking that focuses on isolated actors and their capacity and effort to establish connections; at the relationship level, networking involves maintenance or actions taken to confirm, maintain, or fortify connections by worries about leverage, or the ability to obtain or mobilize resources from outside parties and close structural gaps. Although they are connected, separate subdomains of networking, search, maintenance, and leverage have different objectives, reasoning, and modes of interaction.

Attitudes and participation in networking are influenced by ideas about networks, with subsequent implications for network structure; networking is revealed from a lay perspective (Kuwabara et al., 2018). Another idea from Popescu et al. (2017) declares that the scientific approach addresses the economic collaboration of a community in the social economy enterprise. As a result of the creation of new forms of cooperation like sustainable systems for production and consumption, crowdsourcing, cryptocurrency (or new "financial engineers"),

market sharing, alliances, and outsourcing-all bearing the same fingerprint-we are better able to comprehend and accept the necessity for modern humans to reinvent the collaborative economy (Popescu et al., 2017).

The study is located in Malang Raya, Indonesia. About 90 kilometers from Surabaya lies Malang Raya, Indonesia, which has a relaxed and pleasant ambiance. The city is renowned for its pleasant weather that welcomes visitors from all over the world, its clean, pure air, and its intriguing attractions, which include natural sightseeing, family activities, amusement parks, and fresh food. Malang Raya's digital network in international tourism communication collaboration could be better, although the destinations offer many outdoor activities and ancient heritages. Malang Raya's digital partnership provides foreign visitors with information about Malang Raya, including The Beautiful Malang App, which was created to give visitors from other countries a quick overview of Malang's images. Visitors from different countries can see the distinctiveness of each category with full photos and brief descriptions. A few extra facts are strongly added to enlighten foreign visitors further.

Therefore, the study has two research questions: 1) why should stakeholders collaborate within the digital international tourism communication network? and 2) What

prerequisites must be met for an organization to participate in cooperative international tourism initiatives? These two research questions: a digital network of international tourism providers collaborating in developing countries. The Malang Raya region in Indonesia's East Java Province, which is made up of the three areas of Malang Regency, Malang City, and Batu City, is the subject of this research. These regions are interlocked and related to economic activity traffic (tourism industry, agricultural production, and trade), social, cultural, and political (BPS, 2014). These regions are making some efforts to digital international tourism communication, although it is yet to be optimum.

RESEARCH METHOD

We use a qualitative method. The network research, less structured ways of gathering data, and interpretative techniques are used in qualitative data to describe and analyze social networks. Data on actor interpretations, individual systems of relevance, and action direction are especially well-suited for qualitative methods. In particular, this study uses social network orientation and assessments. Actors' views and evaluations of the interactions and networks they are a part of become more important in network research regarding social network orientation and evaluation. We expect to contribute to digital social network research in tourism communication studies. We investigate how digital networks among international tourism providers. We explore international tourism destinations in Malang Raya, East Java, Indonesia. We use qualitative semi-structured interviews by using some questions in the interview guide and developing them while asking the informant. The research methods in this study are observations and document diaries to explore the networks. We created observation guidelines and reports on daily activities (document diaries). We conducted direct observation notes (field research notes that attempt to include all details and specifics of what the researcher heard or saw in a field site written to permit multiple interpretations later) (Newman, 2014). Data on actor interpretations, individual systems of relevance, and action direction are especially well-suited for qualitative methods. In particular, this study uses lay theory and network theory.

Some informants of this study come from public relations; local governments (marketing section of cultural tourism, chief of the village, regional coordinating agency; scholars; local, national, and international media; international tourists who visit Malang Raya; travel agents; communities and associations of Malang Raya Tourism). Since we are mostly interested in how digital networks affect international tourism,

we focus most of our interviews on destination providers. We interviewed 30 informants who actively participated in Malang Raya's international tourism. The semi-structured interviews were conducted based on an interview guide containing detailed questions covering the most important topics. The interview guide aims to look retrospectively at how international tourism destination providers experienced managing the international tourism industry and to gain rich descriptive data on experiences of the function of networks among Malang Raya's international tourism providers.

We employ qualitative semi-structured interviews to explore the reasons international tourism providers engage in collaboration and the conditions necessary for organizations to participate in international tourism collaborative efforts. The researchers chose informants in the private and public sectors involved in international tourism. To ensure the research's validity, we utilized various sources of information, including personal interviews with representatives from international tourism providers, local authorities, and the local tourism industry. Leveraging connections established through previous collaborations with the local government, public relations, and marketing sections, we approached potential interviewees.

The interviews also highlight the providers' contribution to Malang Raya's growth as a global travel destination. Informants are questioned by the researcher on networks' contribution to the development of international travel. We extended previous research on the growth of collaborative networks, stakeholders, collaborative marketing, and sustainable tourism by using network analysis to our social network study in tourist studies. Consequently, we merge this cooperation in global tourism with the prerequisites for an entity to engage in cooperative endeavors.

We do observation to explore fostering collaboration in international tourism in Malang Raya. Additionally, another aspect of the observation involves stakeholders' activities aimed at presenting their conditions to participate in collaborative efforts for global tourism. We created an observation guideline about digital network collaboration of the international tourism industry in Malang Raya during 2022-2023. The secondary data utilized includes tourism annual report statistics and archival data. The analytical procedure used in this investigation adheres to the methodology suggested by Miles & Huberman (1994). The three simultaneous activity flows are data presentation, verification, and reduction. We view data analysis as a constant, continuing activity involving gathering and analyzing data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A digital network of international tourism communication collaboration in Malang Raya is explained in the following explanations. Some of the universities in Malang Raya have tourism departments. They collaborate with some hotel companies and the Association of Indonesian Tours and Travel Agencies (ASITA). The memorandum of understanding (MOU) signing is conducted online. "This cooperation and collaboration to improve the quality of tourism" (Interview, 2023).

Digitalization of small and medium enterprises collaboration in Malang Raya, Indonesia, such as Batu Local Guide, helps to promote small and medium enterprises to international tourists. This local guide was pioneered by Google in 2016. They became Google Map contributors. They do photo, video, and knowledge sharing of small and medium enterprises in Malang Raya to international tourists. Batu Local Guide also pioneered creating Meet Up Nusantara (MUN) to promote Indonesian destinations to potential international tourists. Batu Local Guide faces one challenge: not all Malang Raya destinations are detected by Google Maps. They will bring international tourists by conventional way to destinations without Google Maps. "Digitalization of small and medium enterprises collaboration in Malang Raya also appeared on Beautiful Malang App" (Interview, 2023).

The online taxis operated in Malang Raya destinations, namely Grab and Uber, facilitate international tourists to reach the destinations. Grab collaborates with booking.com to make international tourists visit quickly to Malang Raya. "Online transportation is an option because it is easily accessible, fast, affordable, and the identity of the service provider is available" (Interview, 2023).

Malang Raya has the Malang Tourism Information Centre (MTIC) to improve the digital tourism communication network. Unfortunately, their information is not robust enough to attract international tourists to visit Malang Raya due to transportation problems. "Modangan beach in Malang Raya offers paragliding attractions with beautiful sceneries, but this condition has problems because of badly damaged roads. The opportunity of Modangan beach also offers the second best location for paragliding after Australia" (Interview, 2023).

Malang Raya destinations collaborate with smartphone sim card providers in tourism information services. Malang Raya tourism providers also collaborate in monitoring social media destinations' content in Malangkab. Go.id, FB, Twitter, Instagram, and accounts @eventmalang, @infomalang, and @halomalang. The travel agency knows that infrastructure, natural resources, legislation, and enabling environments contribute to a destination's

success. "Therefore, collaboration efforts are highly needed to reach the goal to bring Malang Raya destinations to international level" (Interview, 2023). In this effort, the optimization of the online portal is also an opportunity for Malang Raya destinations to enter the global tourism market. The integration of intelligent governance in Malang Raya should be improved to reach the proper smart city and the best city branding. "Strategic management collaboration in Malang Raya is a comprehensive and sustainable management process aimed at formulating and implementing an effective strategy" (Interview, 2023).

Malang Raya has Ngalam.co, and Gumebyar.malangkab.go.id to integrate destination information and accommodations. The content in Gumebyar.malangkab.go.id

offers a video list of Malang Raya destinations. In the future, this video content is expected to provide bilingual information in both Indonesian and English to attract international tourists to visit Malang Raya destinations. "Although Malang Raya has made efforts in the digital network for international tourism communication collaboration, they still face a lack of coordination in the three regions in Malang Raya" (Interview, 2023). An initial step is needed in the form of an integrated approach to tourism planning followed by strategic planning, programs, activities, budgets, and schedules.

Currently, in Malang Raya, two destinations (Pujon Kidul and Poncokusumo villages) have achieved sustainable tourism village certification issued by the Ministry of Tourism
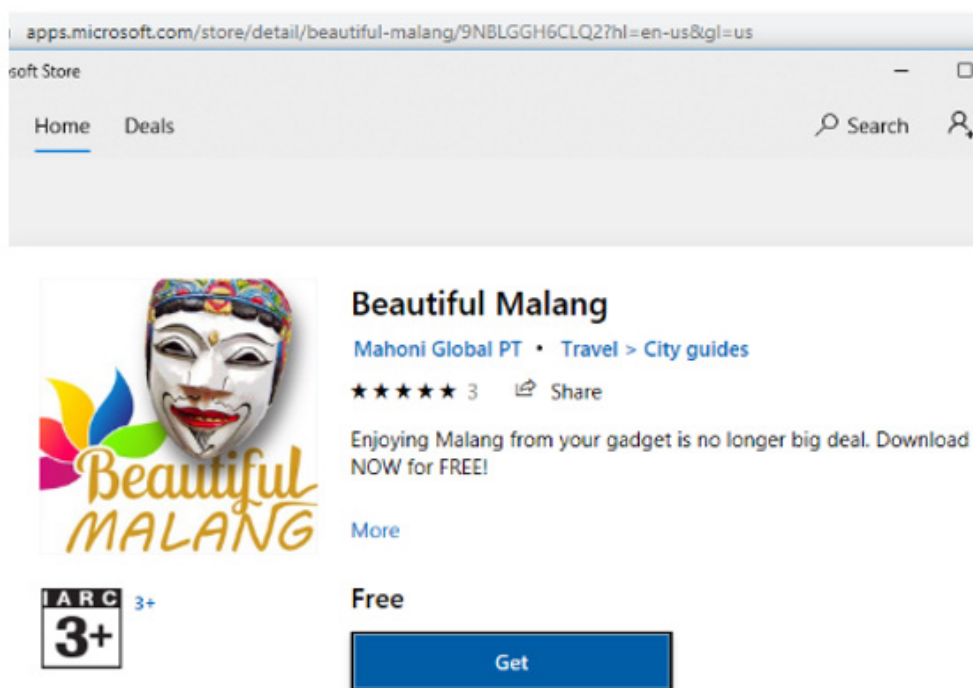
Source: malangtourism.mahoni.com, 2015

Figure 1 Beautiful Malang App.
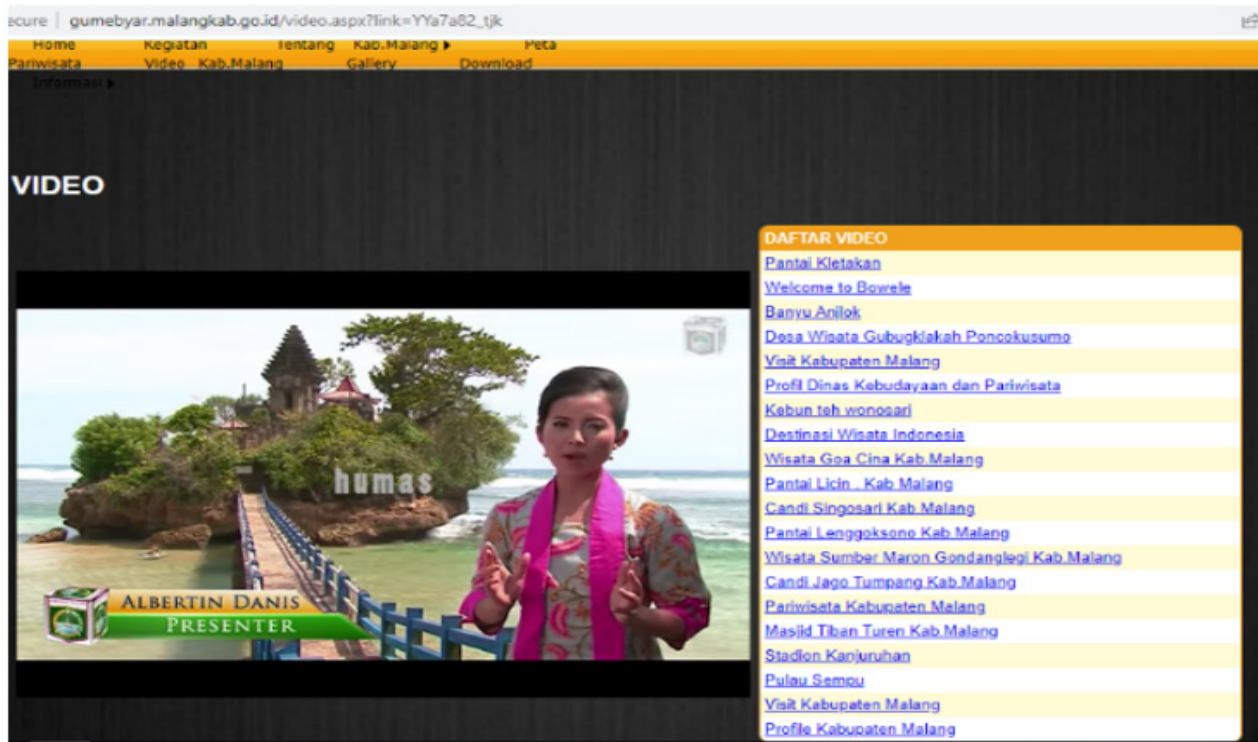
Source: gumebyar.malangkab.go.id, 2023

Figure 2 Danis Kirana, a communication science department alums majoring in public relations from Brawijaya University, introduces some destinations in Malang Raya

and Creative Economy, Republic of Indonesia. We discovered that every tourism association had participated in at least one environmental project. Environmental governance for sustainable tourism development: cooperative networks and the establishment of organizations in the groups have a critical role in supporting businesses, particularly smaller ones, in developing cooperative ecologically friendly initiatives.

Formed voluntary tourism associations (POKDARWIS or Tourism Awareness Group) are the ones working to encourage the growth of cooperative projects about environmental issues on all fronts—locally, nationally, and internationally. Tourism Awareness Group is one of the stakeholders who come from the community, and it certainly has a strategic role in developing and managing the potential of natural and cultural wealth owned by an area to become a tourist destination.

The FGD discussed destination evaluation in Malang Raya, a new idea of international tourism communication collaboration, and some strategies to attract international tourists to visit Malang Raya destinations. The FGD results describe the networks among international tourism destination providers in the following picture.

The explanation in Figure 3 is about the digital network analysis of international tourism communication collaboration, which shows that
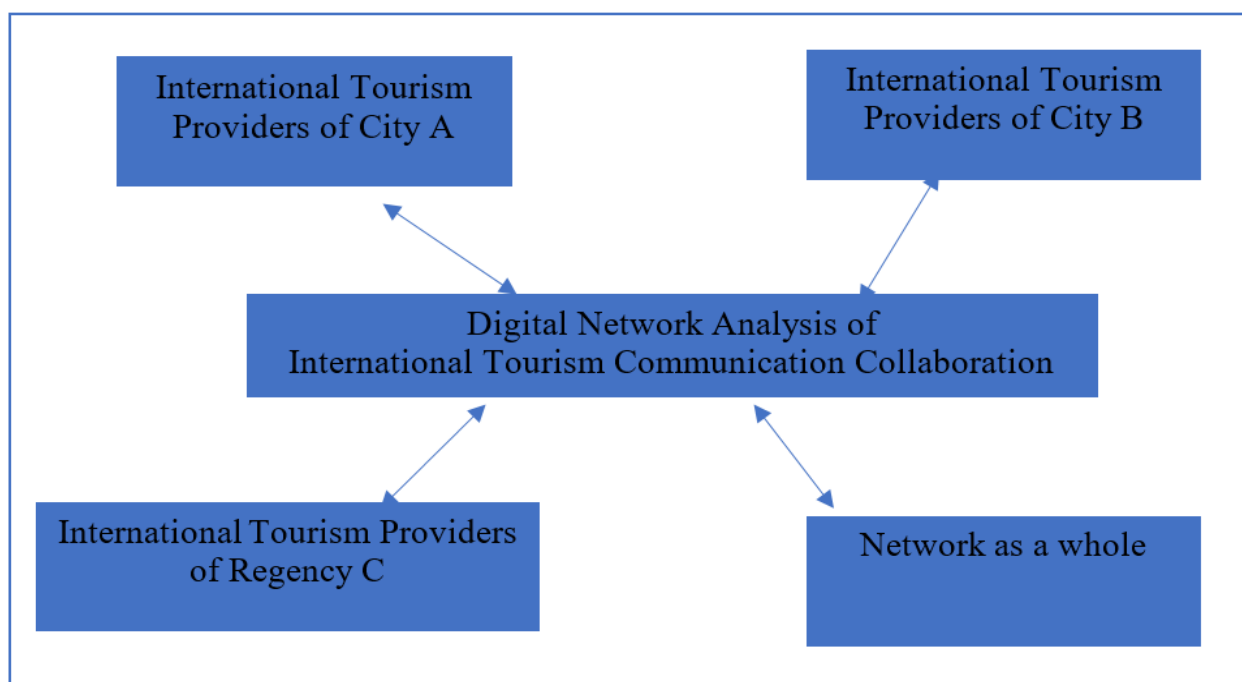
Source: Research FGD's result, 2023

Figure 3 Digital networks among international tourism providers

every region is connected to each other. As an example, international tourism providers of City A (in this research, Malang City), international tourism providers of City B (Batu City), and international tourism providers of Regency C (Malang Regency) called the network as a whole. All the providers collaborate within a digital international tourism communication network for tourism quality improvement. The collaboration efforts include a) the digital collaboration between tourism departments at some universities in Malang Raya with some hotel companies and the Association of the Indonesian Tours and Travel Agencies; b) the digitalization of small and medium enterprises collaboration in Malang Raya, Indonesia, such Batu Local Guide; c) online taxi which operated

in Malang Raya destinations namely Grab and Uber to facilitate international tourists reach the destinations; d) for improving digital tourism communication network, Malang Raya has Malang Tourism Information Centre; e) Malang Raya destinations collaborated with smartphone sim card providers in tourism information services; f) Malang Raya has Ngalam. Co, and Gumebyar.Malangkab.go.id to integrate destination information and accommodations.

This study highlights the concept of digital international tourism communication collaboration. The study results reveal few efforts in international tourism collaboration in Malang Raya. Destinations in Malang Raya have yet to be an integrated operational system, both in structure and supporters of the tourism

industry (e.g., transportation, accommodation, restaurant, tourism information, tourism guide, souvenirs, telecommunication, and other general facilities). For example, the lack of quality standards will be a crisis factor in access and convenience in tourism destinations. Besides, Malang Raya has problems in developing tourism marketing because there is the competitiveness of regional tourism destinations; Malang Raya's tourism branding is not optimum yet, and its marketing strategy still needs to be integrated. Therefore, Malang Raya needs an effective and digital international tourism communication collaboration strategy. All tourism industries should be synergizing to create products and excellent services for international tourists. Considering that, Malang Raya must prepare quality human resources for international tourists. Malang Raya also needs media penetration of their international tourism through the foremost media, such as The Business Week and The Economist, to improve their destination image. Marketing adaptation in Malang Raya advertisement can increase international tourists' potential to visit Malang Raya often. In the future, the digital collaborative efforts for international tourism communication in Malang Raya, Indonesia, will be a "diamond" for tourism quality improvement. This effort encourages all Malang Raya destinations to move to sustainable

tourism and endorse the wonderful Indonesia. Malang Raya can deliver the story of nature and cultural heritage beauty to the world. In so doing, many international tourists are willing to visit Malang Raya. The tourists will have experiences at authentic places in the region. In the future, Malang Raya should have one branding for international tourism. Currently, each area has its branding. "We offer the region the best digital network in international tourism communication collaboration. What is the best international tourism branding for Malang Raya? We still wait and see!" (Interview, 2023).

In the following explanation, we put some wishes from some informants, such as, "I believe the international tourism in Malang Raya in the future will be successful if any collaboration, especially between the international tourism providers at the region" (Interview, 2023).

The government in the three regions in Malang Raya, namely Malang City, Batu City, and Malang Regency, should consider meeting to discuss the collaboration more solid (Interview, 2023).

Malang Raya needs digital international tourism collaboration due to the most destinations in East Java, Indonesia, located in Malang Raya around 80% (Interview, 2023).

Digital international tourism communication in Malang Raya, Indonesia can use all channels, such online business platform, Website, Instagram, Youtube, Tik Tok, Facebook, and Line (Interview, 2023).

Source: Malang Raya, Indonesia Tourism Bureau, 2016

Figure 4 There are three different branding in each region in Malang Raya.

We investigate what kind of conditions must be present in organization to participate in collaborative efforts on international tourism in developing country, beside to explore the condition, this study offers the areas of collaboration in international tourism, namely: policy system for international tourism stakeholder; international tourism business (especially in marketing and partnership in destination supply program), communication strategy to develop international tourism; and developing nature, cultural heritage, man made, and sustainable tourism, and the kind of conditions must be present for organizations to participate in collaborative efforts. In the future, Malang Raya's government can consider to build international airport near with Malang Raya destinations especially in South Malang area. This strategy to solve the most international tourists problem to Malang Raya are transportation barrier. Current airport in Malang Raya only for domestic and the distance from the airport to the destinations

quite far. East Java governor and universities can consider to be facilitator in integrating the three areas in Malang Raya for international tourism improvement efforts.

Working together can help to be more creative and innovatively efficient. Formalized, institutionalized interactions between current networks of organizations, interests, or individual players constitute collaboration in the context of urban tourism in Malang Raya. Collaborating is an effort to increase the competitiveness of a destination management organization and its stakeholders. Through digital tourism communication network, Malang Raya can create an advance inclusion tourism aims to equal access and inclusion for all—an organic, circulatory, and developmental approach to stakeholder cooperation should be used when there are numerous and different stakeholders at play. To do this, control and coordination, communication, role and responsibility clarity, and cooperation and integration are the four emerging connected themes in Malang Raya,

Indonesia.

When everyone knows the potential benefits of cooperating, collaboration may be valuable for resolving conflicts and achieving shared objectives. The process by which significant stakeholders in a problem area work together to make choices about the future of that domain is referred to in this context as collaboration. In many developing countries, the economic flows from international tourism have emerged as crucial drivers of economic growth and global economic relations. Modern tourism has emerged as a significant force behind socioeconomic growth due to the opening of more locations and investments in tourist development. Tourism generates employment opportunities, infrastructural development, and export income.

In line with the above phenomenon, collaboration is relevant to partnerships. It may foster the development of group interaction and negotiation skills and learning about the other partners' work, abilities, and potential. In the end, it can result in the growth of positive connections. As a result, digital networks in the tourist industry have grown in importance for many developing nations as a source of employment and income. A significant portion of the foreign cash earned by tourism goes toward supporting developing nations' sustainable economic growth and development. Recent

scholarly writing has given the tourism industry much attention due to its growing significance in the global economy. In the export-led growth theory, foreign tourists would raise revenue in at least two ways. First, it can be increased by fostering competition between domestic businesses and catering to other foreign travel hotspots. Second, local businesses should be encouraged to realize scale economies.

By analyzing the connections between tourism, development, and conflict in some nations, we can see how tourism might contribute to peace and prosperity in emerging nations. Though it is frequently undervalued, the tourism industry may contribute to the peace and stability of developing countries by generating employment, diversifying the economy, protecting the environment, and promoting intercultural understanding. Nonetheless, it is the duty of developing country governments to ensure that tourism develops sustainably. The potential of developing countries may attract international tourists. Rich natural attractions may be found in many poor nations, and tourism can benefit from development centered around these attractions compared to other economic sectors. In addition to the benefit above, the tourist industry can increase and has a lower import content than other core economic sectors. Moreover, the industry is labor-intensive and has a stabilizing influence on exports. Even if

travel is now a significant economic activity, the availability of funding to build the required infrastructure and the capacity to meet visitor demands determine whether tourism can help the country's economy.

Collaboration is relevant to partnerships. It may foster the development of group interaction and negotiation skills and learn about the other partners' work, abilities, and potential. In the end, it can result in the growth of positive connections. As a result, digital networks in the tourist industry have grown in importance for many developing nations as a source of employment and income. A significant portion of the foreign cash earned by tourism goes toward supporting developing nations' sustainable economic growth and development. Recent scholarly writing has given the tourism industry much attention due to its growing significance in the global economy. In the export-led growth theory, foreign tourists would raise revenue in at least two ways. First, it can be increased by fostering competition between domestic businesses and catering to other foreign travel hotspots. Second, local businesses should be encouraged to realize scale economies.

Although 50% of tourism destinations in East Java province are located in Malang Raya, this area has a problem. The weaknesses of Malang Raya are infrastructure and access, disaster management, many problems in villages,

facility maintenance, human resources, public transportation, and corruption. The researcher's challenge is conducting digital social network research in tourism studies. Although this study has limitations, the researcher explores digital international tourism collaboration because Malang Raya has some tourism destinations for global tourists. Malang Raya is indeed a treasure trove of tourist attractions. Apart from the natural conditions, facilities also support it. The presence of the Trans-Java Toll Road, which has been around for four years, facilitates the mobility of travelers, in addition to the transportation modes that have existed before, such as buses, trains, and planes. Some netizens say, "Living in Malang is enjoyable because there are many tourist destinations and facilities." (Werdiono, 2023).

Our study's exploratory nature regarding teamwork as a component of worldwide tourism competitiveness is one of its limitations. The goal of more research is to boost foreign travel to these areas. Another drawback of this study is that it only includes data from a single location and a small number of informants. More examples will yield empirical data, which will lead to the discovery of new variables. Despite its limitations, our study drew a large number of academics who talked about collaboration. A formal cross-sectoral approach, cooperation entails several stakeholders engaging in

interactive work on a shared subject or "problem domain". The cooperation between businesses and destination management organizations (DMOs) in order to achieve advantages for both businesses and the DMO network setting. Collectivism is for the success of the individual in tourist locations. Cooperation in such a win-win scenario increases the players' competitiveness. A strong benefit to cooperation that arises from dyadic connections. The need for destination stakeholders to provide strategic advertising and promotional plans, efficient tourist information services, and events that cater to relevant visitor markets in order to support the destination brand and image. They also need to ensure consistent destination brand and image design and delivery.

Moreover, membership in a powerful network has frequently been mentioned as a means of giving people and companies a competitive edge. Network theory, network analysis, and social capital theory have become more prominent in organizational practice and study in the last several years. For instance, the advantages of these connections at the individual and group levels of analysis have been the subject of social capital theory, which is typically characterized by social networks. Networking enables a huge number of resource-poor small players to engage in the decision-making process. It is crucial for people who

cannot pursue sustainable development on their own. We focus on collaborative digital international tourist communication. As tourist enterprises integrate into the global market, the significance of local cooperative initiatives that yield benefits for the firms grows. Recognizing interconnectivity is a phenomenon because, sometimes, a single jurisdiction or unit of government is unable to handle its issues without help from other, occasionally globally based sources. However, there seems to be a newfound appreciation for the collaboration's major benefits in public decision-making at all levels of government. Acknowledging the significance of the challenges is similar to asking if cooperative methods can support local public decision-making. Yes, but with some qualifications. The behavioral theory of collaboration and intergovernmental problem-solving are affected by the insights learned from this case study. The success of a collaborative research project depends on creating a shared understanding of the values and principles that would enhance an organization's knowledge assets. When group members are unaware of the guiding principles and values of a learning organization, we observe that it becomes more difficult to implement this strategy. Thus, this ought to be where the joint research process begins. However, this study entails more than just informants understanding the guiding

ideals and ideas that go beyond fostering relationships and the time required to do this. Informants gain knowledge of how they and other group members navigate the fundamental ideals and guidelines of a collaborative research environment and the ensuing effects this has on fostering relationships.

The marketing section of tourism culture at Malang City says that in 2018, 12.000 international tourists visited Malang City. Their target is around 15.000 international tourists who will visit Malang City. The program supports Indonesia's Ministry of Tourism target of 65 percent of global tourists looking for culture and heritage (Kompas.com, 2014, Ministry of Tourism Optimistic about Target of Foreign Tourist Visits, www.malangkota.go.id). Data from Malang Tourism Bureau mentioned the number of international tourists who visited Malang Raya in 2017 until 50.000. 2018, approaching the number of 55.000 international tourists. Most tourists are from the Netherlands, France, Italy, Poland, Russia, India, and Malay. International tourists prefer culture and art. International tourists will stay in Malang City rather than other area. They will visit the tour object at Malang City (Ijen, Kajoe Tangan Heritage), and go to Bromo Mountain. The number of international tourists to Indonesia during Januari-November 2023 is 10.41 billion. International tourists origin in Indonesia come

from Malaysia (15.75%), Australia (12.44%), and Singapore (11.58%) (BPS 2023, Foreign tourists reached 10.41 million, https://www. instagram.com/kemenparekraf.ri).

The fourth-biggest sector of the world economy is tourism. Expanding the international tourist sector in developing nations has resulted in both gains and losses. For example, the enormous volume of visitors, the wide range of places from which they come, and the variety of tourist types have resulted in several unfavorable societal issues, including a rise in drug-related crimes and regional and economic inequalities. Due to modernization and industrialization processes that initially started in developed nations, tourism emerged. Tourism has become a leisure activity due to the industrialized countries' growing wage economies and more free time. Nonetheless, the response to demand from wealthier nations led to tourism growth in poor countries. The developed and developing worlds have different historical backgrounds for how tourism emerged as an economic force.

International travel suppliers collaborate when specific requirements are met for businesses to take part in joint ventures because collaboration for community-based tourism planning is the process of cooperative decision-making among independent, significant stakeholders in an inter-organizational, community tourism domain to handle planning

challenges or manage concerns about the planning and development of the domain. Tourism is trending toward collaborative activities, and the incentives and obstacles impact the capacity for collaboration among tourist groups. Using cooperation theory in community-based tourist planning holds promise for improving destination administration and planning. The prevalent network patterns and forms significantly impact our personal, professional, organizational, and social lives. Additionally, it looks for noteworthy network-related problems that demand further investigation.

All three networks are concentrated on new areas inside their respective fields of science where the necessary expertise or scanning capacity is due to a disruptive shift. Interviewees said that striking the right balance between mutual dependence and knowledge of integration was essential to establishing a successful knowledge network for innovation because it matched motivation with strategy. Informants discussed partnerships and collaborative work as a team effort. Stakeholders for collaborative solutions will not all agree with the final stance reached to the same extent. Collaborations frequently have conflicting value systems and have a maximum level of reconciliation. Understanding the significance of proficient emotion regulation in cooperative tourism research environments is necessary.

We demonstrate a digital social network review on international tourism collaboration in a developing country.

CONCLUSIONS

The study looks into the motivations for stakeholder collaboration within the digital global tourism network and the prerequisites that must be met for companies to participate in cooperative international tourism initiatives. The goals of this study support important stakeholders in making decisions together. The agreement achieves socially and economically responsible tourism growth. These studies demonstrate the importance of including important stakeholders and improving procedures for collaborative decision-making on destination planning and management matters in a community-based setting. Examining the prevalent network patterns and forms that influence our personal, professional, organizational, and social lives are important.

Theoretical contributions of this study are an earlier step to developing digital social network research in tourism communication studies more comprehensively in the future. Malang Raya, Indonesia, comprises three regions: Malang City, Batu City, and Malang Regency. These regions still need to be integrated. They have their branding of tourism destinations such as Malang City branding

is "Beautiful Malang", Batu City branding is "Shining Batu", and Malang Regency is "The Heart of East Java". The FGD result suggests Malang Raya will have only one destination branding in the future. Strong destination branding is crucial in today's highly competitive. Tourists will feel high involvement in Malang Raya's destinations if the destination brand can bring tourists to the brand's soul. The tourists will be loyal and revisit Malang Raya destinations in the future. Furthermore, besides strong brand destination branding, Malang Raya needs an appropriate tourist segment and target. Malang Raya needs to be concerned with the evolution of collaborative networks, collaborative marketing, stakeholders, and sustainable tourism. The other theoretical contribution of this study is developing a study in digital international tourism communication in economic growth and new emerging markets.

In the future the corpus of network analysis research in the travel literature has grown in the last several years. Studies based on visitor movements and behavioural patterns, tourism supply, destination and policy systems, and tourism research collaboration and knowledge production employ network analysis in tourism contexts. Researchers in the tourism sector widely use network analysis to assess research collaborations and identify knowledge links. Research using network analysis has concentrated on the collaborations and partnerships between tourist enterprises and stakeholders in a destination, according to the viewpoint of destination management and tourist supply. Studies on developing collaborative networks are added to this topic, such as cooperative marketing, stakeholders, and sustainable tourism.

The practical contribution of this study assists marketers or individuals engaged in the role of a marketer in enhancing their performance in digital international tourism communication collaboration. In this context, homophily refers to the tendency of actors to form connections with other actors who share similar values for a given attribute. A wide range of characteristics, including geographic characteristics like ethnicity, can exhibit homophily.

Further, this study highlights the concept of digital international tourism communication collaboration. The study result reveals few efforts in international tourism collaboration in Malang Raya. Destinations in Malang Raya have yet to be an integrated operational system, both in structure and supporters of the tourism industry (e.g. transportation, accommodation, restaurant, tourism information, tourism guide, souvenirs, telecommunication, and other general facilities). For example, the lack of quality standards will be a crisis factor in accessing convenience in tourism destinations.

Besides, Malang Raya has problems in developing tourism marketing because there is the competitiveness of regional tourism destinations; Malang Raya's tourism branding is not optimum yet, and its marketing strategy still needs to be integrated. Therefore, Malang Raya needs an effective and digital international tourism communication collaboration strategy. It means all tourism industries should synergize to create products and excellent services for international tourists. Considering that, Malang Raya must prepare quality human resources for international tourists. Malang Raya also needs media penetration of their international tourism through the foremost media, such as The Business Week and The Economist, to improve their destination image. Marketing adaptation in Malang Raya advertisement can increase international tourists' potential to visit Malang Raya often. In the future, the digital collaborative efforts for international tourism communication in Malang Raya, Indonesia, will be a "diamond" for tourism quality improvement. This effort encourages all Malang Raya destinations to move to sustainable tourism and endorse the wonderful Indonesia. Malang Raya can deliver the story of nature and cultural heritage beauty to the world. In so doing, many international tourists are willing to visit Malang Raya. The tourists will get experiences at the authentic places in the region.

REFERENCES

BPS. (2014). *Kota Malang dalam Angka (Malang City in Numbers) 2014*.

BPS. (2023). *Foreign tourists reached 10.41 million*.

Choi, S. H., & Cai, L. A. (2018). The role of relationship quality in integrated destination marketing. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 35(5), 541-552.

Farsari, I. (2018). A structural approach to social representations of destination collaboration in Idre, Sweden. *Annals of Tourism Research*, *71*, 1–12.

Gubbins, C., & Dooley, L. (2014). Exploring social network dynamics driving knowledge management for innovation. *Journal of Management Inquiry*, *23*(2), 162–185.

Jorgensen, T. D., Forney, K. J., Hall, J. A., & Giles, S. M. (2018). Using modern methods for missing data analysis with the social relations model: A bridge to social network analysis. *Social Networks*, *54*, 26–40.

Kompas.com. (2014). *Menpar optimistis target kunjungan wisman 2014 tercapai* (The Minister of Tourism is optimistic that the 2014 target of foreign tourist visits will be achieved).

Kuwabara, K., Hildebrand, C., & Zou, X. (2018). Lay theories of networking: How laypeople's beliefs about networks affect their attitudes and engagement toward instrumental networking. *Academy of Management Review*, *43*. https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2015.0076

Liu, R., & Suh, A. (2017). Self-branding on social media: An analysis of style bloggers on Instagram. *Procedia Computer Science*, *124*, 12–20. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.procs.2017.12.124

Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994).

Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook. Sage.

Newman. (2014). *Social research methods qualitative and quantitative approaches.* Pearson Education.

Newman, D. A. (2014). Missing data: Five practical guidelines. *Organizational Research Methods*, *17*(4), 372–411.

Nyanjom, J., Boxall, K., & Slaven, J. (2018). Towards inclusive tourism? Stakeholder collaboration in the development of accessible tourism. *Tourism Geographies*, 20(4), 675-697.

Popescu, D., Nicolae, V., Pavel, I.-M., & Dinu, A. (2017). Empirical study on identifying collaborative practices in local communities. *Economic Computation & Economic Cybernetics Studies & Research*, *51*(4).

Putri, N. E., Hakim, N., & Yamin, M. (2016). Ecologicall footprint and biocapacity analysis for flooding prevention in South Sumatera. *Jurnal Mimbar*, *32*(1), 58–64.

Viren, P. P., Vogt, C. A., Kline, C., Rummel, A. M., & Tsao, J. (2015). Social network participation and coverage by tourism industry sector. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, *4*(2), 110–119.

Vodeb, K., & Nemec Rudež, H. (2016). Possibilities for inter-destination collaboration in tourism in the case of Opatija and Portorož: A managerial perspective. *Revija za sociologiju*, 46(2), 205-227.

Werdiono, D. (2023). *Malang Raya, paradise of prima donna tourism destinations*. https://www.kompas.id/baca/english/2023/08/04/en-malang-raya-menawarkan-beragam-pesona-wisata

Zach, F. J., & Hill, T. L. (2017). Network, knowledge and relationship impacts on innovation in tourism destinations. *Tourism Management*, *62*, 196–207.

Żemła, M. (2014). Inter-destination cooperation: Forms, facilitators and inhibitors–The case of Poland. *Elsevier*. https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2212571X14000328