Dynamics of Local Culture-Based Tourism Policy in the Digital Era: A Case Study of Kajang District, Bulukumba Regency

Nasir

Department of Administrative Sciences, Faculty of Social Sciences and Law, Universitas Negeri Makassar, Indonesia
Email: nasir@unm.ac.id

Abstract

Tourism based on local culture is one of the important approaches in the management of the tourism sector in Bulukumba Regency, especially in Kajang District. This study aims to analyze the dynamics of local culture-based tourism policies in the digital era and their impact on cultural preservation and tourism development. The method used in this study is a qualitative approach with data collection techniques through observation, interviews, and documentation. The results of the study show that the local culture-based tourism policy in Kajang District has shown significant progress in cultural preservation, although it still faces challenges related to the acceptance of digital technology by indigenous peoples. The use of digital technology can accelerate the promotion of local culture, but it also risks leading to the commercialization of culture that is not in accordance with the original values. Therefore, wise policies are needed to integrate digital technology in tourism management without sacrificing cultural preservation. This research is important as a basis for developing more adaptive and inclusive policies in advancing culture-based tourism in the area.

Keywords: Tourism Policy, Local Culture, Digital Technology, Cultural Preservation, Kajang District

1. Introduction

Tourism based on local culture has a strategic role in strengthening cultural identity, preserving local wisdom, and making a significant contribution to the economy of the local community. In Indonesia, the culture-based tourism sector is one of the main components in the development of national tourism, considering the wealth of traditions and customs owned by various regions. One of the areas that has great potential in this sector is Kajang District in Bulukumba Regency, South Sulawesi. The indigenous community of Ammatoa in this region is known for its traditional values that are still strictly guarded, such as a lifestyle in harmony with nature and the prohibition of the use of certain modern technologies. This cultural wealth is a unique attraction for domestic and international tourists.

However, the development of the digital era presents new challenges in the management and promotion of culture-based tourism. Digital technology, which includes social media, tourism apps, and other internet-based platforms, provides a great opportunity to expand tourism market access and increase the competitiveness of tourist destinations. On the other hand, the application of this technology requires the readiness of infrastructure and the adaptability of local communities, including in Kajang District. In the context of the Ammatoa indigenous community, the application of technology must consider upheld cultural values so as not to damage traditional harmony.

PROJURNAL
Assist · Resist · Persist

Previous research has discussed the development of culture-based tourism in various regions. Putra, Siti Khadijah and Rakhman (2020) emphasized the importance of cultural preservation in tourism development, while Dewi and Kurniawan (2021) highlighted the role of digital technology in improving tourism promotion. In addition, Nurhaliza and Skawanti (2024) revealed that the limitations of digital literacy of local communities are often an obstacle in optimizing the potential of culture-based tourism. However, until now, there have not been many studies that specifically analyze how local policies in the digital era can accommodate the needs of cultural preservation while taking advantage of technological opportunities to support the sustainability of the tourism sector.

This research offers novelty by examining the dynamics of local culture-based tourism policies in Kajang District in the context of the digital era. This novelty is important because policies and regulations are fundamental elements in creating a balance between cultural preservation and the use of technology. Without the right policies, cultural preservation efforts can be neglected, or conversely, technological adaptation can create conflicts with local cultural values.

The purpose of this study is to analyze the implementation of local culture-based tourism policies in Kajang District, understand the opportunities and challenges faced in the digital era, and provide strategic recommendations to support the development of sustainable tourism in the region. This research is expected to make theoretical and practical contributions, both in the development of local culture-based tourism policies and in increasing the competitiveness of tourist destinations in the digital era.

2. Literature Review

Research on local culture-based tourism in the context of policies in the digital era requires a strong and relevant theoretical foundation. This literature review includes related theories, the results of previous research, and the analysis of novelties that are the basis for this research.

Tourism based on local culture is a form of tourism that has unique characteristics because it places culture and tradition as the main attraction. According to Smith (1989), cultural tourism focuses on the exploration of authentic traditional, artistic, and customary values. Culture-based tourism not only aims to increase tourist visits but also serves as a tool for cultural preservation, where local communities play an active role as the main actors. In the context of Kajang District, the tradition of the Ammatoa indigenous community is a symbol of cultural wealth that is still preserved today. Their traditions, such as all-black clothing, the prohibition of the use of modern technology, and the principle of living in harmony with nature, became a strong identity that attracted tourists.

However, the digital era presents new challenges. Digital technology allows for more effective and efficient promotion through various platforms, such as social media, tourism apps, and websites. Buhalis and Law (2008) explained that digital technology has become an integral part of the development of global tourism, because it is able to expand the reach of promotion to a wider market. Social media, for example, not only allows direct interaction with potential tourists but also facilitates the dissemination of information in real-time. However, this technology can also threaten cultural preservation if not used carefully, especially in communities like Ammatoa, which have strict rules against modern technological interventions.

In the management of culture-based tourism, local policies are one of the key factors that determine success. According to Dredge and Jenkins (2007), a good tourism policy must be based on the participation of local communities, so that they can feel belonging and participate in every stage of management. In the context of Kajang, policies must be designed to be inclusive to involve the Ammatoa indigenous community in planning and implementation, without violating their cultural

values. In addition, policies that are adaptive to technological changes are urgently needed to ensure sustainable management.

Previous research has provided important insights related to culture-based tourism. (Putra et al., 2020) examined the economic impact of culture-based tourism in Bali and found that people who are actively involved in cultural preservation tend to obtain greater economic benefits. Meanwhile, Dewi and Kurniawan (2021) emphasized the importance of using social media as a promotional tool to increase the visibility of culture-based tourist destinations. The study shows that digital promotion can increase the number of tourist visits, but it requires special training for local communities to make effective use of technology. Nurhaliza and Skawanti (2024) revealed that low digital literacy is a significant obstacle in tourism management in rural areas.

The context of Kajang District provides a unique case study because it involves indigenous communities with strict rules against modern technology. This research provides novelty by analyzing how local policies can be adapted to support tourism promotion in the digital era without ignoring cultural values. This is relevant considering that the right policies can create a balance between cultural preservation and adaptation to technology.

In addition, this research also contributes to the development of tourism policy theory, especially in integrating local culture-based approaches with the use of digital technology. By paying attention to challenges such as infrastructure limitations, digital literacy of local communities, and potential conflicts between technology and customs, this research provides strategic recommendations that can be implemented to support the development of sustainable tourism.

This literature review is the basis for research to delve deeper into the dynamics of local culture-based tourism policies in the digital era. By combining the theories and findings from previous research, this research is expected to make a significant practical and academic contribution in supporting the sustainability of cultural tourism in Kajang District.

3. Methods

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with the aim of analyzing the dynamics of local culture-based tourism policies in Kajang District, Bulukumba Regency, in the digital era. The qualitative approach was chosen because the focus of this research is to explore a deep understanding of how culture-based tourism policies are implemented as well as the challenges and opportunities that arise due to the development of digital technology. This research also aims to gain insight into the role of local communities and the government in maintaining a balance between cultural preservation and technological adaptation.

The location of this research is in Kajang District, Bulukumba Regency, which is known as an area with the Ammatoa indigenous community that is rich in culture and tradition. The research subjects consist of several relevant elements, namely local governments, local tourism actors, and the indigenous people of Ammatoa who are directly involved in the management of culture-based tourism. The selection of these subjects is based on their key role in decision-making and the implementation of tourism policies in the area.

The data collection technique is carried out through three main methods, namely observation, interview, and documentation. Observations were made to gain a direct understanding of field conditions related to policy implementation and community dynamics in dealing with digital technology. In-depth interviews were conducted with relevant parties, including local government officials, tourist destination managers, and Ammatoa indigenous leaders, to explore their views on

tourism policy and the impact of technology. Documentation techniques are used to collect secondary data in the form of policy documents, tourism management reports, and other relevant written sources.

The collected data will be analyzed using qualitative data analysis techniques that include three main stages: data reduction, data presentation, and verification/conclusion. Data reduction is carried out to filter relevant information and eliminate data that is not in accordance with the focus of the research. The presentation of data is carried out by compiling information that has been reduced in the form of a systematic narrative, making it easier to understand the research findings. At the verification stage, the researcher will draw conclusions based on the results of data analysis, as well as ensure the validity of the findings by comparing the data obtained through various data collection techniques. The results of this analysis are expected to provide a comprehensive overview of the dynamics of local culture-based tourism policies and the role of digital technology in its development in Kajang District.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Research Results

This study revealed several main findings related to the implementation of local culture-based tourism policies in Kajang District, Bulukumba Regency, as well as the impact of digital technology on tourism management and cultural preservation. Based on the results of observations, interviews, and documentation carried out, the findings include aspects of policy, community participation, and the influence of technology in introducing culture-based tourist destinations. The results found in this study are as follows:

4.1.1. Implementation of Tourism Policy Based on Local Culture

The local culture-based tourism policy in Kajang District has been implemented by the local government, although it is in the development stage. One of the main policies is to regulate the number of tourists entering the Ammatoa customary area. The local government works with traditional leaders to limit the number of visitors so as not to damage the social and cultural balance of the local community. The policy also includes restrictions on the use of modern technology, which in this case places more emphasis on controlling the use of social media in indigenous territories. The local government strives to preserve local culture by establishing rules that prioritize the traditional principles of the Ammatoa, but its implementation still faces challenges in supervision and monitoring.

However, there are differences in the implementation of these policies among various community groups. Some groups are more open to government policies and try to adapt to the times, while others are more conservative and reluctant to accept changes that lead to digitalization. These differences create tension in society, which is a major challenge in the management of culture-based tourism policies.

4.1.2. The Role of the Community in Culture-Based Tourism Management

The indigenous people of Ammatoa play an important role in the success of local culture-based tourism policies. The community has a strong social structure, with the customary chief holding the highest authority in all matters pertaining to local traditions and policies. Decisions regarding tourism policies are often made through customary deliberations, involving traditional leaders, youth, and other community groups. However, community involvement in tourism management is still limited to the local level and has not involved all elements of society equally.

Community participation in tourism management in Kajang District is highly dependent on their understanding of the importance of local culture as a tourist attraction. Some tourism actors, such as

homestay and food stall managers, have leveraged digital technology to promote their products and services, while older indigenous peoples tend to maintain traditional approaches that are less reliant on technology. However, there are efforts by local governments to provide training for local communities on the importance of digital literacy and how technology can be used to promote their culture without sacrificing traditional values.

4.1.3. The Impact of Digital Technology on Culture-Based Tourism Management

Digital technology has a significant impact on the management of culture-based tourism in Kajang District. Social media, such as Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube, has become a major means for local communities and tourism managers to introduce their culture and tourist destinations to a wider audience. However, although technology provides advantages in terms of promotion and marketing, its implementation is not without its challenges. One of the main challenges is the unpreparedness of most people in managing this technology wisely.

Most tourism managers have started utilizing digital platforms to market their products, such as lodging, specialty foods, and local souvenirs. However, while social media allows them to introduce their culture to a wider range of tourists, not all tourism managers are comfortable using digital technology to the fullest. Some of them prefer traditional ways, such as spreading information by word of mouth and through direct social networks. This unpreparedness is related to the lack of understanding of the potential of technology in expanding market reach.

In addition, there is anxiety from some indigenous peoples related to the possibility that the overopen use of technology could change their way of life which is closely related to traditions and customs. The use of technology is thought to disrupt their spiritual values and way of life that have been intertwined for centuries. This has led to tensions between those who are pro-tech and those who are more conservative about change.

4.1.4. Positive and Negative Impacts of Technology on the Preservation of Local Culture

Digital technology has a double impact on the preservation of local culture in Kajang District. On the positive side, the use of social media and digital platforms allows local cultures, such as Ammatoa traditions, dance, traditional clothing, and cultural rituals, to be more widely known by the global community. With digital content that shows a portrait of the traditional life of Ammatoa, the global community can understand and appreciate the diversity of Indonesian culture, which in turn can increase the number of tourists interested in visiting Kajang District.

However, on the downside, there are concerns that technology could lead to the commercialization of culture. With open promotion, there is a potential that cultural elements sold to attract tourists can lose their meaning and essence. Traditions that used to be held only for the benefit of the community can be turned into performances that are carried out solely for economic purposes. In addition, the influence of globalization brought by digital technology can also lead to cultural homogenization, where people begin to adopt modern lifestyles that are contrary to their traditional values.

4.1.5. Challenges in Integrating Technology with Local Policies

One of the biggest challenges found in this study is the lack of infrastructure readiness to support digital technology in the Ammatoa customary area. Although local governments have made efforts to provide internet access and training for the community, the existing infrastructure is still limited. In some areas, a stable internet network is difficult to reach, while some people still find it difficult to access technology to the fullest. This causes inequality in the application of technology in the tourism sector.

In addition, despite the government's efforts to involve the community in the management of culture-based tourism, there is still an imbalance in the level of understanding of the importance of technology. Existing policies are more focused on traditional cultural management, with no room for discussion on how technology can be used wisely. Therefore, it is important for local governments to be more intensive in providing training to the public on digital literacy, as well as creating policies that are able to balance cultural preservation with existing technological developments.

4.1.6. Obstacles in Policy Implementation and Community Participation

In the implementation of local culture-based tourism policies, there are major obstacles that arise, namely the difference in views between the younger generation and the older generation regarding the use of technology. The younger generation tends to be more receptive to technology as a tool to develop tourism potential, while the older generation feels that technology can threaten the preservation of their culture. Therefore, the involvement of the younger generation in the management of culture-based tourism is very important to overcome these differences of view.

Overall, the results of this study show that although digital technology provides many opportunities for the development of culture-based tourism, its application must be done carefully and with careful consideration so as not to damage existing local cultural values. Local governments need to work closely with indigenous peoples to ensure that the policies implemented can support tourism development without sacrificing the preservation of the culture that is their identity.

4.2. Discussion

The results of this study show that although the local culture-based tourism policy in Kajang District, Bulukumba Regency, has shown some progress, its implementation still faces various challenges that require further attention. This discussion will analyze the findings in more depth, connect relevant theories and discuss the implications of existing policies.

4.2.1. Implementation of Tourism Policy Based on Local Culture

The implementation of culture-based tourism policies in Kajang District so far still shows a gap between the planned policy and the reality on the ground. According to the public policy theory put forward by Sabatier (1988), policy implementation is often influenced by various factors, including stakeholder involvement, administrative capacity, and local political dynamics. In this context, although local government policies support the preservation of local culture, there are differences in views and understandings between pro-technology community groups and those who are more conservative about customs, which is a major obstacle. This shows that culture-based tourism policies must place more emphasis on dialogue and consensus between the government and indigenous peoples, so that these policies can be accepted and implemented properly.

On the other hand, policies that regulate the number of tourists entering the Ammatoa customary area as an effort to preserve culture, although quite effective, need to be balanced with the development of a more systematic monitoring system. As expressed by Vázquez, Magdalena, Amboage, and Pollán (2018), culture-based tourism policies must be able to maintain a balance between cultural preservation and tourism development, taking into account existing social and cultural factors.

4.2.2. The Role of the Community in Culture-Based Tourism Management

The role of the Ammatoa indigenous people in the management of culture-based tourism in Kajang District is one of the main forces that form the foundation of the policy. This is in line with the concept of community participation in tourism management expressed by Tosun (2000), who stated that the success of tourism management depends on the extent to which local communities are

involved in the decision-making process and policy implementation. The participation of indigenous peoples in formulating and supervising tourism policies shows the importance of customary values that must be maintained in every aspect of tourism management.

However, the problem that arises is inequality in community participation. Some groups of people who are more open to technological changes find it easier to adapt to existing policies, while others who are more conservative are reluctant to accept the changes. This causes tensions that not only hinder the implementation of policies, but also undermine social cohesion in society. Therefore, a more inclusive approach in decision-making and management of culture-based tourism must be strengthened so that all elements of society feel that they have the same responsibility for cultural preservation.

4.2.3. The Impact of Digital Technology on Culture-Based Tourism Management

The use of digital technology in culture-based tourism can provide great benefits, but it must be carefully considered so as not to damage the preservation of local culture. In this case, digital technology can be used to promote tourist destinations, improve information accessibility, and introduce local culture to a wider audience. According to Buhalis and Law (2008), digital technology can expand the tourism market and increase efficiency in destination marketing. Social media, such as Instagram and Facebook, has become a primary means for people and tourism managers to market their products and services. In fact, homestay and food stall managers in Kajang District have used these platforms to promote their services, so that they can attract more tourists.

However, the negative impact of digital technology on the preservation of local culture cannot be ignored. One of the main problems that has arisen is the commercialization of culture. Cultural content promoted on social media is often tailored to the needs of the market and the preferences of tourists, which can reduce the authentic value of the culture itself. As expressed by MacCannell (1973), cultural tourism often faces challenges related to commodification, where culture that was originally sacred or private turns into an object of consumption for economic purposes. In the case of Kajang District, there is a concern that with excessive promotion, traditions that were initially only carried out for the benefit of the community could turn into performances that are only carried out to meet the needs of the market.

However, digital technology can also provide solutions in terms of cultural preservation. For example, the digitization of cultural artifacts and the dissemination of cultural knowledge through digital platforms can help people and tourists to better understand existing cultural values. With the right approach, technology can serve as a bridge between tradition and modernity, allowing the two aspects to function side by side. Therefore, a more careful policy is needed in using technology to introduce local culture, so as not to reduce the spiritual value and authenticity of the culture

4.2.4. Challenges in Policy Integration with Digital Technology

One of the biggest challenges in this research is how to integrate culture-based tourism policies with digital technology that continues to develop rapidly. In many cases, there is a disparity between existing policies and the ability of local infrastructure to support the maximum application of technology. Although the local government has tried to provide digital literacy training for local communities, most of them still face difficulties in accessing and utilizing technology. This is not only limited to infrastructure issues, but also to understanding the potential of technology in developing tourism.

In addition, as revealed by Heeks (2008), there is a risk of inequality in the application of digital technology, which favors certain groups who are more technologically prepared. In this case, more conservative or older groups of society may feel marginalized because they cannot keep up with

technological developments, while younger and tech-open groups can take advantage of it to increase income and promote their culture. Therefore, it is important for governments to create more inclusive policies and ensure that all levels of society, regardless of age or level of education, can access and utilize technology in a way that benefits them.

4.2.5. Solutions to Challenges Faced

To overcome the challenges faced in the implementation of local culture-based tourism policies, several strategic steps are needed. First, local governments must be more intensive in providing training on digital literacy, not only to tourism actors, but also to indigenous peoples as a whole. This training must target all groups, both young and old generations, so that no one is left behind in the development of this culture-based tourism.

Second, supervision of policy implementation must be improved, especially related to limiting the number of tourists entering customary areas. Technology can be leveraged to make this monitoring system easier, by creating a digital platform that allows indigenous peoples to keep an eye on the number of visitors and ensure that they follow the agreed rules.

Third, local governments need to develop more flexible policies that allow for technological adaptation by taking into account the uniqueness and values of local culture. Conservative policies, while useful for protecting traditions, must be balanced with room for innovation and adaptation to the times, especially in terms of the use of technology for cultural promotion.

Overall, the success of integrating local culture-based tourism policies with digital technology in Kajang District is highly dependent on the ability of the government and the community to work together in achieving a common goal, which is to preserve culture while developing the tourism sector. With a thoughtful approach, technology can be an effective tool to advance culture-based tourism, without sacrificing the values that have been upheld for centuries by the indigenous people of Ammatoa.

5. Conclusion

Based on the results of this study, it can be concluded that the tourism policy based on local culture in Kajang District, Bulukumba Regency, although it has been implemented, still faces various challenges, especially related to public acceptance of changes and developments in digital technology. The implementation of this policy has had a positive impact on preserving local culture, but also faces obstacles related to the unpreparedness of some people in adopting technology. The use of digital technology has the potential to increase tourism promotion, but it can also lead to cultural commercialization that must be watched out for. In addition, the success of this policy is highly dependent on the active participation of indigenous peoples in its management and the efforts of local governments to integrate technology with existing policies, without sacrificing long-established cultural values.

However, this study has certain limitations. The research was limited to qualitative analysis within Kajang District, so the findings may not fully represent the broader context of tourism policies in other regions. Additionally, the study primarily focused on the perspectives of local communities and policymakers, without an in-depth analysis of tourists' perceptions or the economic impact of tourism development.

Based on these findings, some suggestions that can be given are: first, it is important for local governments to improve digital literacy training for all levels of society, not only tourism managers, but also indigenous peoples as a whole, so that they can use technology wisely in managing and promoting

local culture. Second, supervision of the implementation of policies needs to be strengthened, by utilizing technology to monitor the number of tourists and ensure that existing regulations are followed properly. Third, local governments should develop flexible policies, which allow the integration of digital technology with cultural preservation, so as to create a sustainable and balanced tourism ecosystem between modernity and tradition.

6. References

Buhalis, D., & Law, R. (2008). Progress in Information Technology and Tourism Management: 20 Years On and 10 Years After the Internet—The State of eTourism Research. Tourism Management, 29(4), 609–623.

Dewi, S. M., & Kurniawan, A. (2021). Pengaruh Kebijakan Pariwisata terhadap Pelestarian Budaya Lokal di Kabupaten Bulukumba. Jurnal Administrasi Pariwisata, 17(3), 123–135.

Dredge, D., & Jenkins, J. M. (2007). Tourism Planning and Policy. John Wiley & Sons.

Heeks, R. (2008). ICT4D 2.0: The Next Phase of Applying ICT for International Development. Computer, 41(6), 26–33.

MacCannell, D. (1973). Staged Authenticity: Arrangements of Social Space in Tourist Settings. American Journal of Sociology, 79(3), 589–603.

Nurhaliza, S., & Skawanti, J. R. (2024). Analisis Dampak Digitalisasi Media Sosial Instagram terhadap Peningkatan Potensi Wisata di Desa Wisata Krebet, Kabupaten Bantul. Jurnal Pariwisata Indonesia, 20(2), 45–55.

Putra, R. R., Siti Khadijah, U. L., & Rakhman, C. U. (2020). Pemanfaatan Teknologi Informasi dan Komunikasi dalam Penerapan Konsep Smart Tourism di Kabupaten Pangandaran. Jurnal Master Pariwisata (JUMPA), 7(1), 257–279.

Sabatier, P. A. (1988). An Advocacy Coalition Framework of Policy Change and the Role of Policy-Oriented Learning Therein. Policy Sciences, 21(2), 129–168.

Smith, V. L. (1989). Hosts and Guests: The Anthropology of Tourism. University of Pennsylvania Press.

Tosun, C. (2000). Limits To Community Participation In The Tourism Development Process In Developing Countries. Tourism Management, 21(6), 613–633.

Vázquez, C. R., Magdalena, R. F. M., Amboage, E. S., & Pollán, M. M. (2018). Sustainable Tourism and Inclusive Development. Applied Marketing Research Group (iMarka), University of A Coruña.