



Resilience of Tourism Conscious Group (POKDARWIS) Based on Post Covid-19 Cultural Transformation

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Abstract. A positive impact of the Covid-19 pandemic was the emergence of community cultural transformation. Social and physical distancing became a portal for travel movements that were responded and implemented Health Protocols (or Cleanliness, Health, Safety, Environment Sustainability) by tourism businesses. By the end of 2022, tourism industry started to revive, which was utilized by Tourism Conscious Group (POKDARWIS) to launch Bukit Mahoni tourist destination. This research aims to explore the resilience level of Tourism Conscious Group (POKDARWIS) catalyzed by post-pandemic cultural transformation. The research employed mixed methods, quantitative data were collected using surveys, while qualitative data were collected by interviewing visitors and POKDARWIS. Quantitative data was analyzed using Excel tabulation, followed by descriptive and simple coding for qualitative data. Our research is able to measure the resilience level of Tourism Conscious Group (POKDARWIS) towards Covid-19 pandemic impact. Furthermore, the research also resulted in an adaptive community cultural transformation model for post-pandemic new normalcy as an accelerator. Finally, it contributes to enhancing resilience in community-based group management. Furthermore, it contributes to enriching tourism literature by formulating a cultural transformation model.

Keywords: Tourism Resilience, Cultural Transformation, Bukit Mahoni, Tourism Conscious Group, POKDARWIS).

1 Introduction

Tourism is one of the sectors that is most affected and suspended due to the massive spread of Covid-19. Starting in early 2020 until early 2022, the tourism sector in Indonesia in the foreign tourist arrivals section decreased by 75.03% compared to 2019, as recorded in the EGSA UGM and BPS reports in 2021 [1], [2]. The imposition of restrictions on human spatial movement throughout Indonesia has a significant impact on the travel behavior of foreign and local tourists due to shifting needs towards health recovery as a super priority sector [3]. This prohibition is based on facts in the field from the Covid-19 Handling Task Force (Satgas), that until May 18, 2023 at 12.00 Western Indonesia Time (WIB) [4] (Fig. 1).



Fig. 1. Trend of Declining Foreign Tourist Visit 2018-2020

Source: [1], [2]

This regulation also automatically affects tourism activities in Indonesia, both inbound tourism and outbound tourism. The phenomenon of travel cancellations and bans, especially traveling abroad and outside the region, has become a recurring fact in 2019-2021, so it is said that the tourism industry is experiencing a long coma. As a result, according to the World Tourism Organization (WTO), international tourist arrivals globally have decreased by 20%-30% in 2020 alone, with a calculated loss of around 300-450 USD [3], [5].

At the local level, this impact was also felt by the Bukit Mahoni ecotourism destination in Bangun Rejo Village, which was just inaugurated in early 2023 by the Deputy Governor of East Kalimantan. Although new, Bukit Mahoni ecotourism has been preparing since early 2022 through assistance by lecturers at the Samarinda State Polytechnic Tourism Department. Changes in behavior patterns and patterns of interaction of the community around the destination and managers, are clearly felt to prioritize aspects of cleanliness, healthy, safe, environmentally sustainable (CHSE) as instructed by the Ministry of Tourism [6], [7].

After the pandemic, most people in Bangun Rejo Village realized the importance of maintaining health to strengthen endurance, as well as understanding that every tourism destination with various levels of actors (stakeholders) in it, must have crisis management and disaster mitigation capabilities [3]. This understanding is a progressive transformation of the resilience culture of the global community responding to the uncertainty before-during-after the pandemic, and the new normal to the growth of the tourism sector. Especially if the affected destination is an ecotourism area, then the social engineering model in the form of a resilience culture transformation is very important to accelerate the recovery of sustainable ecotourism in Indonesia [3].

Social and cultural transformation of resilience does not only occur after the new normal discourse is echoed by the government, as in Widyatwati's research [8]. However, since the end of 2019, the culture of community resilience has begun to transform due to internal and external factors. The urge to maintain the health and healthy diet of individuals and families is one of the internal factors, while the policy of implementing health protocols is an external factor to reduce travel activities and social interactions outside the home [8]. Several government policies that affect the transformation of the

culture of community resilience, namely large-scale social restrictions (PSBB), the imposition of restrictions on community activities (PPKM), work from home (WFH), and hybrid work and education systems (a blend of online and offline) [8].

According to the introduction above in the context of ecotourism in Bangun Rejo Village, researchers formulated problems related to the impact of the pandemic as a catalyst for cultural transformation in terms of community resilience and also as managers of ecotourism destinations. Furthermore, community resilience is a catalyst in strengthening sustainable ecotourism which is responsive and resilient to massive changes in disturbances, crises, and disasters. Hence, this research specifically aims to identify the cultural transformation model of Mentari Tourism Awareness Group (POKDARWIS) resilience in Bukit Mahoni ecotourism area, indicated by changes in behavior and social interaction patterns through concerns for environmental, social, and cultural conditions after the Covid-19 pandemic. Thus, it could be said that Covid-19 Pandemic has not only brought negative impacts, but also positive impacts that accelerate cultural transformation of the community and POKDARWIS in the context of resilience.

2 Methods

We use mixed methods as a way to accommodate quantitative and qualitative data [9]–[11]. Independently measured using tools appropriate to the research in the field to corroborate research data from various written sources as well as respondents and informants by considering less relevant views or condensing data [9], [10], [12], [13].

We directly interact by contributing to the construction of knowledge with the research subjects, namely tourists, wisatawan, and related stakeholders in Bangun Rejo Village and Kutai Kartanegara Regency. The research was conducted in Bukit Mahoni Tourism Area, Bangun Rejo Village, Tenggarong Seberang Subdistrict, Kutai Kartanegara Regency, East Kalimantan Province, from May to November 2023. The subjects of this research include tourists who travel in the Bukit Mahoni Tourism Area, the Tourism Conscious Group (POKDARWIS) who are employed in the tourism service sector, and stakeholders of the Village, District, and Kutai Kartanegara Regency. The research object in this study is the Cultural Transformation of POKDARWIS Resilience after the pandemic.

The research method consists of data collection and data analysis. The collection of research data will be carried out using the methods of literature study, observation, interview, and analysis [14] and survey (distribution of research questionnaires). Quantitative data collection was carried out simply by using tabulation and percentages of respondents' answers. The analysis method that will be used is qualitative data analysis of behavioral, text and knowledge (ideational) tourism phenomena that are closely related to cultural transformation and sustainable ecotourism based on community resilience culture. Researchers will also use the content analysis method, which is an approach that positions the researcher as the main role in the construction of the meaning of a text. Although using quantitative and qualitative data analysis methods, this research is more exploratory in nature [11], [15].

3 Results and Discussions

Bukit Mahoni is one of the tourist destinations located in Bangun Rejo Village, Tenggara Seberang District, Kutai Kartanegara Regency. The tourist attraction has now been actively managed by the Mentari Tourism Awareness Group (POKDARWIS). Based on the results of observations and interviews from six (6) POKDARWIS Mentari sources, the natural and environmental conditions in the 1980's were still in the form of wilderness overgrown with various trees, especially banyan trees which were once the habitat of orangutans. In the same year, road access and transportation were still very difficult, so residents had to clear land to plant crops, sahang and mahogany trees as steps.

A few years before the Covid-19 pandemic, a lot of agricultural land and a lot of mining activities in the surrounding area and the kelulut honey tourist spot used to be a chicken farm, which later turned into a melon farm. After Covid-19, the chicken farm was closed. Then the 3 hectares of land that was there was used to plant fruits such as water guava, crystal guava, durian. And then opened a kelulut honey farm and mushroom cultivation. At the time of covid, a joglo house was also built, the aim was to treat the longing of the surrounding community because they could not return to their hometowns due to Covid-19. After the Covid-19 pandemic, a children's swimming pool, therapy pool and fishing pond were built at the kelulut honey tourism site. And the surrounding environment becomes more beautiful because during covid the manager plants one tree every day.

By the time after the pandemic things have normalized and changed as usual, there is no longer any concern from local residents. Local residents have begun to get used to coexisting with the Covid-19 virus and consider it a common cold. At the time of Covid-19, residents who felt exposed to Covid-19 immediately isolated themselves and carried out health protocols in accordance with the recommendations, and sought treatment. No more going to smart people and the like, because Bangun Rejo residents have begun to progress and leave these habits. During the pandemic, many elderly people died.

Public health conditions after Covid-19 look healthier, because local residents are more aware and pay more attention to their health. Mahogany hill tourism was opened because of its potential natural beauty and educational tourism. Around mahogany hill tourism, there are also several other places that have the potential to become new tourist destinations, for example rice fields and orchards. The mahogany hill management provides assistance to the surrounding community as much as 5% of their total income from the tour.

After opening the mahogany hill tour, there was an internal conflict between the managers with one another. And the role of the village government in the conflict is to mediate and hold meetings to resolve these problems. But the problem continued until then the kelulut honey education tour separated itself from the mahogany hill tour, and a fence was built between the two tours. And for SOPs to deal with natural disasters and social disasters themselves have not been prepared by the management, but will

soon be prepared. And the plan is that the manager will prepare health protocols according to Covid-19 prevention standards, one of which is preparing a place to wash hands.

The economic condition of the people of Bangun Rejo Village during the pandemic was certainly very unstable because at the beginning of Covid-19 attacking local residents did not dare to carry out activities outside the home as a result for months many villagers did not work and were afraid to carry out activities outside the home, but over time when the government has provided vaccinations and the opening of licenses to travel outside the city with certain requirements, the people of Bangun Rejo Village felt a little less worried to start activities as usual before Covid-19 came.

Of course, the mahogany hill tour is very influential and helps the economy of the surrounding community because since the tour was opened the economy of the surrounding residents has been helped because of the large number of tourists visiting and also every week there is a PASTRA (Traditional Market) where the products they sell are typical food products from various regions that are processed by the surrounding community. For the main livelihoods of the Bangun Rejo Village community, some are in mining companies and also as a farmer.

The majority of the tribes there are 80% Javanese and 20% are a mixture of Sulawesi, Papua, Lombok, Toraja, Batak, Bugis, Kutai, Sunda, and others. in Bangun Rejo Village they still carry out traditions such as Islamic New Year celebrations, village birthday celebrations, one suro night, and others. But when Covid-19 attacked they still did it but it was not as busy as before covid came or you could say they did the tradition in their homes. The people of Bangun Rejo Village before the Covid-19 outbreak had a habit of conducting *nyadran* ceremonies, namely jointly going to the graves of the ancestors of Bangun Rejo and carrying out the *arak tumpeng* of crops.

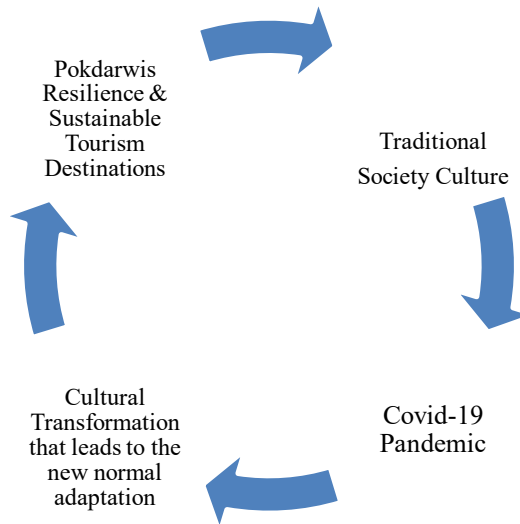


Fig. 2. Cultural Transformation Model

Source: Data processed

This activity is carried out routinely every year, but after Covid-19 this habit was temporarily stopped because it was prohibited to gather crowds and the activity was replaced with prayers together and *istighasah* by implementing health protocols, namely maintaining distance, and not crowding. after Covid-19 disappeared, the community began to carry out the *nyadran* and arak tumpeng habits again. The mahogany hill tourism manager initially numbered 5 people, then one member left. And the UMKM (Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises) actors involved are approximately 52 people (some are directly involved and not) with a total of about 50 employees. Thus, it can be emphasized that in the Bukit Mahoni tourist area there has been a cultural transformation as an effort to strengthen community resilience and sustainable tourist destinations. The cultural transformation model can be described in the Fig. 2 above.

The model above was created due to the strong transformation of the traditional culture of POKDARWIS in response to the Covid-19 pandemic which continued until the new normal. The most accommodated awareness in Bukit Mahoni is the habit of cleanliness, health, safety, and protecting the environment or CHSE [6], [16].

Not only the local community, cultural transformation also occurs in visitors who are recorded as respondents in this study, there are 70 people who come from various cities, districts, and sub-districts around Tenggaraong Seberang, some even outside the island.

The results of the quantitative data analysis (tabulation and percentages) resulted in the diagrams below. The questionnaire was distributed to 70 visitors from the surrounding area and from other areas. As illustrated in Fig. 3 below:

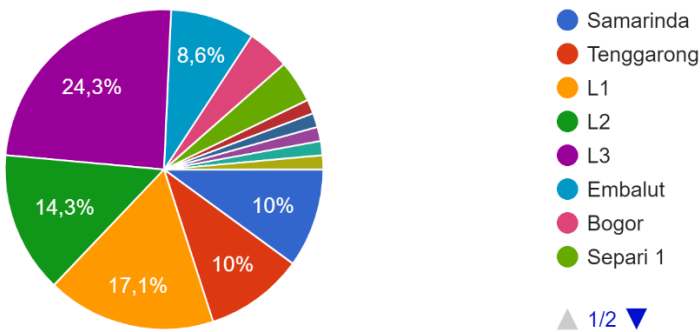


Fig. 3. Regional Origin of Respondents

Source: Results of google form analysis

Furthermore, we also collected data on the allocation of funds prepared by visitors to travel to Bukit Mahoni. This was done to see the preparation of each respondent's trip to Bukit Mahoni after the pandemic which prohibited traveling for 2 years. The 70 respondents have various allocation of funds for traveling, as follows in Fig. 4:

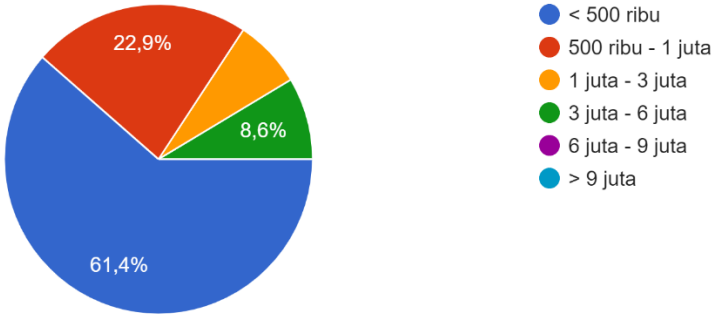


Fig. 4. Respondents' Travel Fund Allocation

Source: Results of google form analysis

Respondents who visit Bukit Mahoni are caused by several pull and push factors that come from internal and external sources, especially due to the cultural transformation of the community and tourists after the pandemic which encourages changes in behavior and social interactions, as follows in Fig. 5:

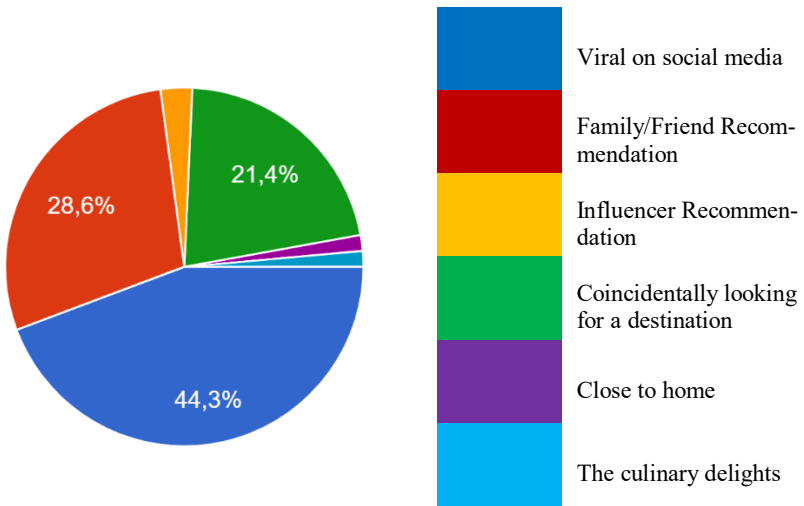


Fig. 5. Respondents' Push and Pull Factors for Visiting

Source: Results of google form analysis

The surprising result is that the respondents are fully satisfied with the services provided by POKDARWIS Mentari Bukit Mahoni which has undergone a cultural transformation after the Covid-19 pandemic.

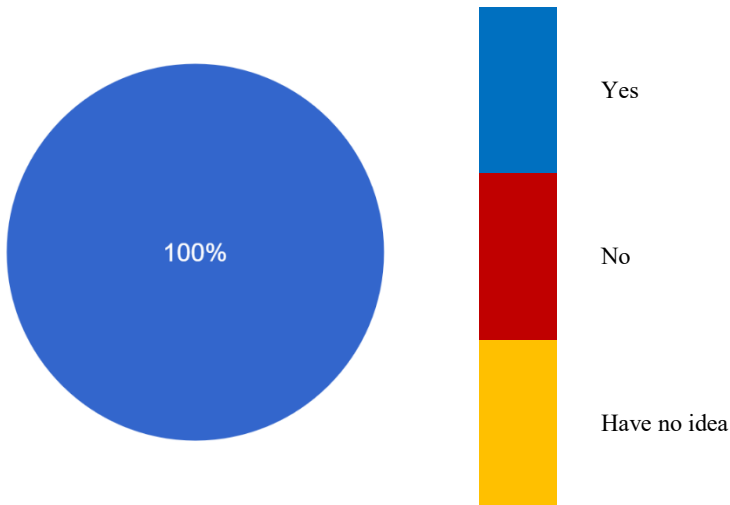


Fig. 6. 100% Satisfaction Level of Respondents

Source: Results of google form analysis

Thus, it can be said that the cultural transformation of the community and managers of Bukit Mahoni has a positive impact on services to visitors with a 100% satisfaction level. All visitors (70 people) agreed that they were satisfied with the POKDARWIS services for the cultural transformation that occurred after Covid-19 (Fig. 6).

4 Conclusion

The Covid-19 pandemic not only has an impact on the decline in mental conditions and public health, but also has a positive impact as an accelerator for the emergence of cultural transformation of communities that are adaptive to the surrounding environmental conditions. Tourism is one of the sectors that has been severely affected by the physical and social restriction policies arising from the Covid-19 Pandemic. This is contrary to the basis of tourism which is initiated by human movement, displacement, and travel from their place of origin to an attractive destination to rejuvenate the mind and body from the routine of life. Without human movement, tourism is less meaningful and does not get a sense of belonging from the experience of traveler interaction with the environment and host community. Community-based tourism destinations bring opportunities for economic progress and growth in the region, especially in rural areas. Bangun Rejo Village, located in Tenggarong Seberang Sub-District, Kutai Kartanegara, seized the opportunity to polish some of the village's potential into a tourist destination, namely Bukit Mahoni. The development is essentially a form of commercialization of ideas originating from the community through the transformation of ideas into POKDARWIS work programs that collaborate with academics. Unfortunately, the Covid-19 pandemic has caused this transformation to turn into a cultural transformation towards strengthening community resilience and sustainable destinations. Because with

the pandemic, managers, communities, and visitors become more concerned about cleanliness and health, which is also in accordance with the culture that has been believed and ritualized. The model was created due to the strong transformation of the traditional culture of POKDARWIS in response to the Covid-19 pandemic which continued until the new normal. The most accommodated awareness in Bukit Mahoni is the habit of cleanliness, health, safety, and protecting the environment or CHSE. Cultural transformation also occurs in visitors who are recorded as respondents in this study, there are 70 people who come from various cities, districts, and sub-districts around Tenggara Seberang, some even outside the island. A total of 24.3% of visitors came from L3 which is close to Bukit Mahoni, hence the majority of visitors, 61.4%, only prepared a budget allocation of <500.000 rupiah. The most driving factor for visitors (44.3%) was caused by this destination going viral on social media, with a surprising 100% satisfaction rate.

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