

**COMPARISON BETWEEN COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS OF TOURISM  
OBJECTS AT UNESCO GLOBAL GEOPARK TO CREATE TOURISM**

**BRANDING**

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**ABSTRACT**

Unesco Global Geopark (UGG) in Sukabumi, West Java, Indonesia is one of many geoparks in Indonesia. As a tourism destination, it has many beautiful destinations, including waterfalls, geysers, beaches, local community and its wonderful scenery. The local government needs to work hand in hand to improving the geopark tourism. The aim of this research is to improve communication between all parties to manage the geopark. With communication systems perspective, all aspect to build UGG as a tourism destination hopefully can be more effective. Using communication systems approach, this research indicates the proper model as well as the media used to create excellent branding. Furthermore, the concept of marketing communication will be used to analyze the market segmentation of the potential tourists. The concepts of branding experience and branding tourism are utilized as the benchmark to determine the proper model and system to create good branding for the selected tourism objects. To obtain the results, this research has selected some famous sights in two or more areas in Pelabuhanratu, Sukabumi. The characteristics of each area of this tourism object will be compared and analyzed to know the advantages and disadvantages. This research uses descriptive method by analyzing the opinions and news related to the research object. The data results

then will be compared with various references on tourist objects and modeled communication system as a branding of tourism.

**Keywords:** Communication Systems, Marketing Communication, Tourism, Brand Experience, Branding Tourist

## **Introduction**

Geopark National Ciletuh PalabuhanRatu (GNCP) located in Sukabumi Regency was officially recognized by Unesco on April 17, 2018; since then its name became Unesco Global Geopark (UGG) of Ciletuh Palabuhanratu.

According to Dana Budiman, a general manager of Geopark Management Agency of Geopark Ciletuh Palabuhanratu, it is natural that Ciletuh area received recognition from the world. This geopark is incredible. It has a complete natural beauty. There are landscapes, mountains, waterfalls, rice fields, garden, and it ends at the river mouth to the sea. UNESCO team had been evaluating this geopark since the early of Agustus 2017. Now, with UGG title, Ciletuh will become the world tourism destination. "Therefore, Geopark Ciletuh must be developed in near future in order to revive the economy of its people.

(<https://lifestyle.sindonews.com/read/1298495/156/ciletuh-dan-rinjani-dapat-predikat-ugg-152394592>).

This statement was emphasized by governor of West Java Achmad Heriawan (Aher), who asked for commitment of every party to maintain the remaining tourism destination. Moreover, the main requirement of an international is the preservation of geodiversity, biodiversity, and cultural diversity.

(<https://regional.kompas.com/read/2018/04/16/13301341/geopark-ciletuh-palabuhanratu-ditetapkan-sebagai-unesco-global-geopark>).

Based on the Decree (SK) of the Regent of Sukabumi No.556/Kep.684-Disparbudpora/2014, Determination of Area of Geopark Ciletuh Palabuhanratu was 45,820 Ha, covering 15 villages in 2 Subdistricts including Ciemas and Ciracap. In its development, Geopark Ciletuh area was extended to reach Cisolok and Palabuhanratu areas with increasing area to 126,100 ha and cover 74 villages in 8 Subdistricts.

Next, as the consequence of the determination of Geopark Ciletuh Palabuhanratu area by Unesco, supporting areas around this geopark becomes a wide tourism destination. These supporting areas are the North Area of Palabuhanratu including Geyser in Cisolok, beaches in Karang Hawu, and Kasepuhan Sirna Resmi that covers villages of Sinar Resmi, Cipta Mulya and Cipta Gelar; the Central Area including Loji Beach, Curug (waterfall) Gentong, Vihara Dewi Kwan Im, and Puncak Darma; and the South Area including Amphitheater (mega theater) in Tamanjaya, Curug Awang. All these areas have various characteristics and are scattered. It is not an easy task in term of tourism management, let alone each region has its own uniqueness including geodiversity, biodiversity, and cultural diversity aspects.

Based on the data obtained from Disparbudpora (Dinas Pariwisata, Kebudayaan, Kepemudaan dan Olah Raga/Agency of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sport) Year 2016, the number of local tourists was 2,568,130 people, and the number of foreign tourists is 92,360 people.

Then, data of Ciletuh Geopark Information Center (GIC) during the period of January-November 2017, the number of visitors reaches 967,311 people, consisting of 802,868 domestic and local visitors, as well as 164,443 foreign

tourists. In the first year of opening in 2012, the number of visitors reached 343,910 people. From eight subdistricts included in Ciletuh-Palabuhanratu Geopark area, until November 2017, the highest number of visit to Palabuhanratu was recorded 416,323 visitors, followed by Ciracap as many as 281,670 visitors, Surade for 168,100 visitors, and Cisolok for 56,260 visitors.

The most foreign tourists came from French (26.3%) and Australia (21.1%), followed by tourists from Germany, United States of America (AS), Singapore, and South Africa. The objective was for holiday (73.7%) particularly surfing and beaching (47.8%). A total of 63.2% admitted that the waves in the area and around Palabuhanratu Bay were good and perfect for surfing activity. The length of stay was between 4 days to more than 7 days. And most of them stayed in homestay (52.6%).

Domestic tourists come from West Java, particularly from Sukabumi area. Averagely, these visitors were students. Like foreign tourists, their objective was for holiday (77.2%) and the rest came for school assignment.

Information on Ciletuh-Palabuhanratu Geopark for both domestic and local visitors comes from social media (47.88%) and the rest is word-by-mouth through friends or family. On the other hand, foreign tourists found out the information from websites/blogs (47.4%) and social media (15.8%).

[\(http://indonesiatouristnews.com/satu-juta-orang-ke-ciletuh-palabuhanratu-geopark-segeralah-perbaiki-akses-dan-kebersihan/\)](http://indonesiatouristnews.com/satu-juta-orang-ke-ciletuh-palabuhanratu-geopark-segeralah-perbaiki-akses-dan-kebersihan/)

This data indicate that since the establishment of the area of Geopark Ciletuh Palabuhanratu as Unesco Global Geopark (UGG) Ciletuh-Palabuhanratu, the supporting tourism area has increased in various aspects, both in the number of national or foreign tourist visit and the number of occupancy of hotel or homestay.

The increasing number of tourists visiting Palabuhanratu area impacts the availability of facilities and infrastructures supporting the convenience of tourists visiting the tourism area.

Data from Disparbudpora in 2016 shows the aspects disturbing the convenience of tourists as follows: aspect of road infrastructure/access to tourism location as much as 25% complaining the distance between one tourism destination to other destination that was too far and the damaged road; aspect of cleanliness in the tourism objects of 21.7% complaining about the cleanliness that were not maintained, and around 19.6% of the conditions of facilities and infrastructure in tourism areas were not adequate.

The above phenomena indicates that the vast area of the supporting tourism of UGG Ciletuh-Palabuhanratu become a common problem between local government, tourism office and local community to jointly fix the condition of facilities and infrastructure so that the tourism areas are maintained and convenient for tourist.

According to Ardika (2007: 29), in tourism there are three components that must be complied, namely tourists, geographical elements, and tourism industry. Tourists are the most important element, because tourism is essentially human experiences, something to enjoy, anticipated and remembered throughout someone's life. Geographical elements include market or area that attracts people to come, tourism object or a transit area of a route or trip. Tourism industry is about business or organization that manages tourism products. These three components are interrelated one another as a whole system, that is tourism

(Muhammad Afian Hartono et al, taken from <https://media.neliti.com/media/publications/106257-ID-pengaruh-karakteristik-objek-wisata-terh.pdf> )

Regarding the statement on three components of tourism that must be complied, one component that has not been complied is tourism industry element, where almost every tourism area in UGG Ciletuh-Palabuhanratu has facilities and infrastructures, as well as local industry that have not been managed and ordered well. The condition is similar to local industry that can be bought as gifts as well as local icon.

Based on this phenomena, a system that can integrate local government policy, related office and the needs of local community is required so that the tourism are can increase local income as well as the economy of local community.

Communication system approach is an alternative to synergize the interest of local government, tourism office, and local community, namely by investigating and comparing the obstacles and constraints of every tourism object that supports UGG Ciletuh-Palabuhanratu. Then, the system is implemented through communication marketing approach to study the characteristics of tourists visiting the tourism areas. The result is compared from various aspects and tourism concepts. The comparison result can become a model used as Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for the tourism area management.

### **Literature Review**

Based on the phenomena of the background study, regarding how to synergize the arrangement of facilities and infrastructures in the supporting tourism areas of UGG-Ciletuh Palabuhharatu; *first*, comparing and analyzing the issues regarding communication activities of tourism (facilities and infrastructures) in every area,

including north area of Palabuhanratu, that is geyser tourism area of Cisolok, one of cultural villages in Kasepuhan Sirna Resmi, which is Sirnaresmi Village; central area of Palabuhanratu, which covers Geopark Ciletuh area and north area. The study result of tourism communication conducted by Aat Ruchiat Nugraha et al (2017) explains that a good communication between the government, the owners of capital, the community, as well as other interest groups can strengthen and increase the popularity of a tourism object. Next, the system approach in communication is used so that every aspect supports communication activities of one another or integrated as a unity.

*Second* is comparing and analyzing the characteristics of tourists using marketing communication approach. According to Soemanagara (2008), marketing communication is a communication application that aims to assist marketing activities, and is conducted through marketing aspects, including Product, price, place and promotion, then are applied into communication process so it becomes a model of marketing communication.

From previous researches related to marketing communication of tourism areas, marketing communication activities are focused on an integrated implementation, similar to a study conducted by Karta (2014), where integrated marketing communication requires a coordinated approach between individual campaigns and other information distribution channels. Therefore, an integrated approach on communication marketing ensures that internal public is aware of the organization strategic objectives and visions in terms of brand values. Internal public consists of employees, suppliers, shareholders, and other stakeholders, including the wider community. Third, to generate a marketing communication model that is

suitable with the characteristics of every tourism area, the designed tourism communication system then is integrated into the marketing process. Then, Sutisna (2002:268) described the marketing communication process as follow:

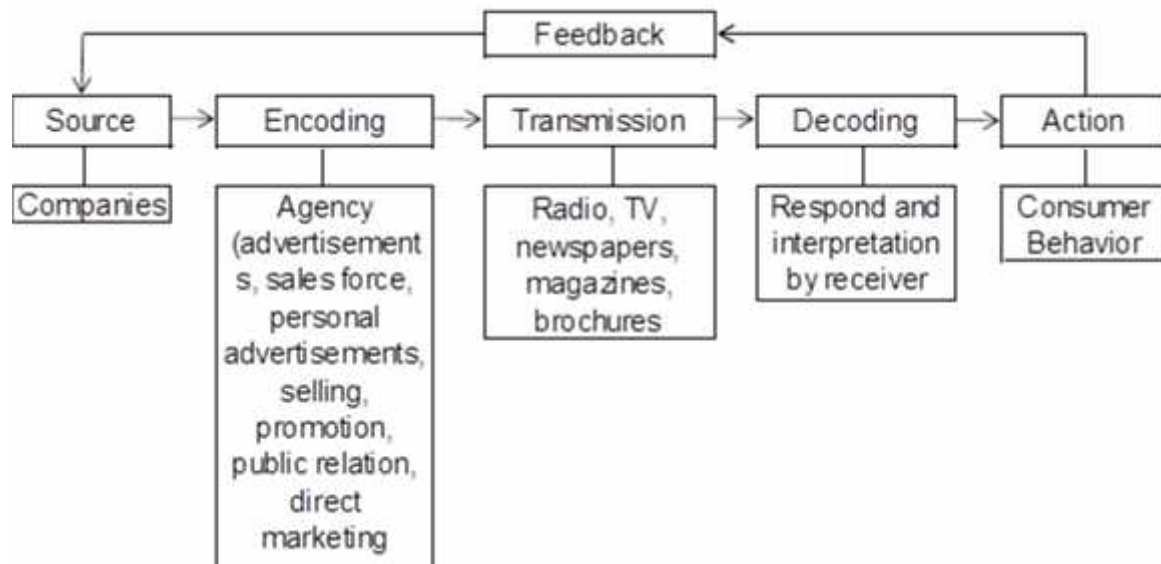


Figure 1. Marketing Communication Model (Sauptika Kancana: Jurnal Aspikom 2017)

Next, Rika Handayani (2017) in Sutisna (2002:271) explained that the success of marketing communication is influenced by many variables such as the ability of marketer to do decoding, so that the communication objective becomes an interesting and effecting message for consumers, the accuracy of choosing the type of promotion, the accuracy of the use of message conveyer media, the attraction of message and credibility of messenger. The credibility of source is the level of expertise and consumer trust to the source of message.

### Method

This study utilizes description survey method, by analyzing opinion and news relating to the study object. Data source includes local government, the Head of Tourism office, and the local community. On the other hand, supporting data was



obtained from the local Tourism Office and Bapedda (Development Planning Agency at Sub-National Level). Then, the data was analyzed according to the theories used and the result was summarized to obtain a systematic and effective marketing communication model used as SOP of other tourism areas.

## **Results and Discussion**

### **Overview of Geopark and Supporting Tourism Areas of UGG Ciletuh**

#### **Palabuhanratu**

Geopark is an integrated geographical area in which there are geological heritage sites and landscape of a certain geological phenomena (with a certain level of significance) managed with a holistic concept including aspects of protection, education and sustainable development (UNESCO, 2016). GEOPARK is not merely about ROCKS, but also about the nearby COMMUNITY (Chris Woodley-Stewart, Geopark Manager, North Pennines, UK).

Tourism areas that support the existence of UGG-Ciletuh Palabuhanratu as the research object include (1) the north area of Palabuhanratu, which is geyser tourism area of Cisolok, located in Cisolok Village, Subdistrict of Palabuhan Ratu, Sukabumi Regency around 15 kilometers from Palabuhan Ratu Beach and Kasepuhan Sirnaresmi located in Sirna Resmi Village, Subdistrict of Cisolok, Sukabumi Regency that is located between the boarder of West Java Province and Banten Province. Therefore, it is categorized as cultural areas known as “Kesatuan Adat Banten Kidul Kasepuhan Sinar Resmi”; (2) the central area of Palabuhanratu, which is Geopark Ciletuh area, namely Tebing Panenjoan in Tamanjaya Village, Panenjoan is composed of old rock. This area is a part of

Tinggian Jampang which collapsed until finally became a giant valley with a horseshoe-like shape that overlooks the open sea.

### **Supporting Tourism areas of UGG Ciletuh Palabuhanratu and Their Problems**

In the Introduction, it has been explained that as the Geopark Tourism area has been acknowledged as Unesco Global Geopark, the consequence is how the vast areas and locations that are far apart are able to become a united tourism area where the facilities and infrastructures are integrated in a tourism communication system that is able to provide a sense of comfort and safe for tourists.

Next, the main issue that many tourists have complained both domestic and foreign tourists is cleanliness in almost all tourism areas that is not well-maintained, particularly toilet facilities.

In a study conducted by Research Unit of Geopark Ciletuh, LPPM UMMI Sukabumi, Hendri Hadiyanto (2015) stated the area of Geopark Ciletuh is a coastal area that has inadequate sanitation facilities such as the absence of facilities to wash hands in the coastal area and the lack of the availability of garbage in geopark area.

This was confirmed by the Head of Paguyuban Alam Pakidulan Sukabumi (PAPSI), Endang Sutisna that in average tourism areas around Geopark are less attentive about the cleanliness, inadequate number of cleaning service from the local government. This is compounded by some tourists who throw garbage carelessly (Interview on July 10, 2018 at 2 PM).

## **Marketing Communication System in the Supporting Tourism Areas of UGG Ciletuh Palabuhanratu**

The main issue of tourism area of UGG Ciletuh Palabuhanratu in 2015 was that there were many damaged road access to Ciletuh Palabuhanratu that have not been repaired. Since 2017, a road along 34,8 KM to Geopark Ciletuh area has been developed by Provincial Government of West Java through the Office of BMPR cq. Bureau of Road Management Area II Sukabumi.

(<https://www.faktabandungraya.com/2017/08/infrastruktur-jalan-menuju-kawasan.html>).

Next, the issue that has not been resolved until today is the arrangement of facilities and infrastructure of the tourism area, particularly cleanliness of environment and toilet. The role of the local government together with the local community is crucial.

Head of Research Center of Geopark and Geological Disaster of Unpad, Prof. Ir. Mega Fatimah Rosana, M.Sc., PhD, stated that the habits and lifestyle of the local community to cleanliness both sanitation or environment must alter so that the supporting tourism areas of UGG Ciletuh Palabuhanratu becomes an area that has economic values and is able to prosper the local community .

(Interviewed on May 9, 2018)

Based on the phenomena found in the research, it can be seen that there is a gap in information and communication between the objectives of government to increase the welfare of the local community through tourism with the habits and knowledge of the local community.

To overcome this problem, a marketing communication system is proposed as follow:

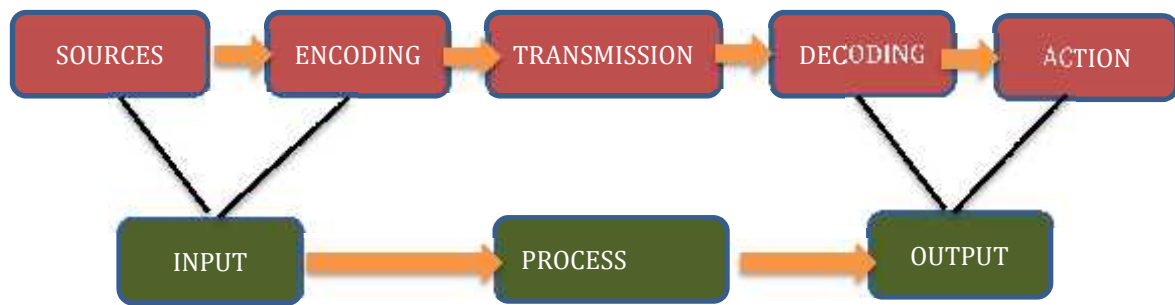


Figure 2: Model of Marketing Communication System

The explanation for the model of Marketing Communication System is as follow:

1. Sources, in this case are policy makers, including local government, tourism office, and government apparatus, before communicating policies to the community, conduct an analysis of situation and condition of the local community (input) ,
2. Then, the analysis result is implemented in the planning of communication activities (encoding)
3. Next, messages are conveyed through appropriate media suitable with the situation and condition of the local community (transmission)
4. The phase of decoding and action is the phase where policies that are conveyed to the local community are re-analyzed for its effectiveness (input)
5. This activity takes place both ways and continues to be evaluated, to find the right marketing communication system suitable with the characteristics of the local community.

## **Conclusion**

To realize the vision of Local Government of Sukabumi Regency “The realization of Geopark Ciletuh Palabuhanratu as a Tourism Destination that is Education-Based and Conservation of the World’s competitiveness for the welfare of the Community“, and Geopark as a development priority destination of tourism sector (Regulation of Ministry of Tourism No.29 Year 2015), it is important that the problems related to facilities and infrastructures in supporting tourism areas of UGG Ciletuh Palabuhanratu to be resolved together involving local government, tourism office, government apparatus, local community and tourists, to mutually maintain the environment of tourism areas to remain sustainable and comfortable for tourism destination.

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