

## EXPLORING LOCAL WISDOM-BASED MARKETING COMMUNICATION MODELS IN TOMALOU FISHERMEN'S VILLAGE FESTIVAL

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### ABSTRACT

The Tomalou Fishing Village Festival is one of the most significant cultural events in the Tidore Islands. This research aims to explore and analyze various dimensions of locally-based marketing communication models used to promote the festival. Through quantitative research methods, including in-depth interviews, participant observation, and content analysis, this study seeks to elucidate the effectiveness of these communication models in enhancing community engagement, fostering cultural appreciation, and attracting tourists to the Festival. Findings from this research give rise to a model called the Marketing Communication Model Rooted in Local Wisdom, which is expected to contribute to existing knowledge in cultural tourism, marketing communication, and community development.

**Keywords:** marketing communication models; tourism; local wisdom; fishing village festival.

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### INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the utilization of locally grounded communication models in marketing has emerged as a primary focus as a strategic approach to promoting cultural heritage and community-based events (Chhabra, 2010; Simabur et al., 2023). One exemplary event embodying this paradigm shift is the Tomalou Fishermen's Village Festival, a vibrant celebration of tradition, culture, and community spirit (Mc Kota Tidore, 2023). Situated in the South Tidore District, Tomalou boasts a rich maritime heritage and a strong cultural identity, making it an ideal locale for exploring the integration of local wisdom into marketing communication strategies.

The Tomalou Fishermen's Village Festival serves as a platform for showcasing unique cultural heritage, culinary traditions, and local handicrafts (Humas Kota Tikep, 2023). With its picturesque landscapes, authentic village atmosphere, and diverse activities, the festival has garnered attention from both domestic and international tourists, contributing to the socio-economic development of the region (Kominfo Malut, 2022). Against this backdrop, there arises a need to investigate the role of marketing communication in promoting and preserving the cultural essence of the Tomalou Fishermen's Village Festival.

This research aims to explore and analyze various dimensions of locally grounded marketing communication models employed in promoting the Tomalou Fishermen's Village Festival. By delving into the principles, strategies, and outcomes of these communication models, this study seeks to elucidate their effectiveness in enhancing community engagement, fostering cultural appreciation, and attracting tourists to the festival. Through a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods, including in-depth interviews, participant observation, and content analysis, this

research endeavors to provide valuable insights into the intricate interplay between marketing communication and local wisdom in the context of community-based cultural events.

The findings of this research are expected to contribute to existing knowledge in cultural tourism, marketing communication, and community development. Additionally, the insights gained from this research can inform policymakers, tourism practitioners, and community stakeholders in designing more sustainable and culturally sensitive marketing strategies for festivals and similar events. Ultimately, by embracing and preserving local wisdom in marketing communication initiatives, communities like Tomalou can continue to celebrate their heritage, empower local artisans, and create unforgettable experiences that resonate with visitors from around the world.

### LITERATURE REVIEW

Marketing communication is the latest concept in the tourism marketing mix, formerly known as tourism promotion (Chhabra, 2009; Rafa'al et al., 2021; Sangadi et al., 2023). However, promotion tends to be one-way communication from producers to consumers, whereas the marketing communication concept emphasizes a two-way interaction that enhances the closeness between producers and consumers or closer than competitors (Melati et al., 2021; Purboyo et al., 2021). The primary activities of tourism destination marketing communication involve delivering information, influencing, and reminding the market and stakeholders (Rafa'al & Sangadji, 2023). The ultimate goal is for the target message recipients to respond as desired by the destination as the message sender. In this regard, the essence of communication science lies in how the message sent by the sender through the media is received by the message recipients. In the context of tourism marketing, the messages sent are related to tourism marketing strategies and tactics themselves. What is unique about tourism marketing is that marketing activities cannot be carried out solely by tourism destination managers (Beirman, 2020; Kozak & Baloglu, 2010; Middleton & Clarke, 2012; Morrison, 2013; Pike, 2012; Pike & Page, 2014). Therefore, the communication process must involve all tourism stakeholders in destination development and growth.

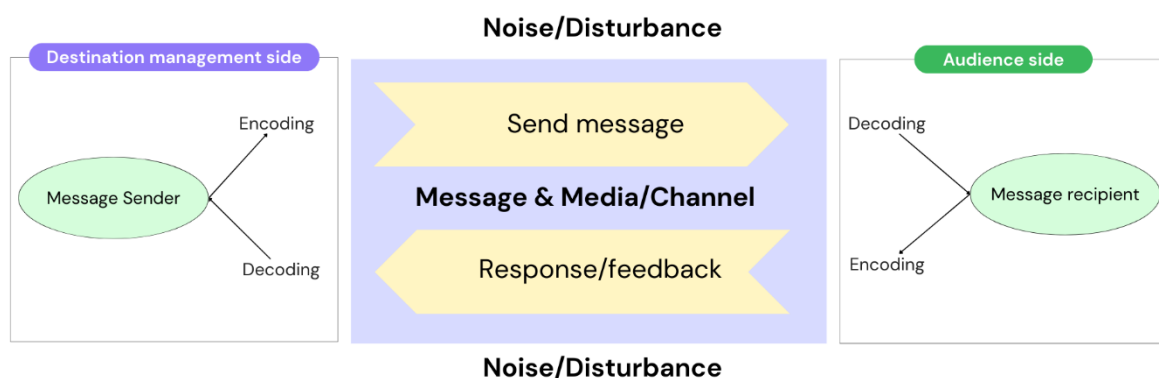


Figure 1. Simple Tourism Marketing Communication Concept  
 Source. (Hidayah, 2019)

From the perspective of communication concepts, it is evident that in the process of communicating value to customers, tourist destinations face disruptions that can impede the communication process. Therefore, marketing communication must be well-

managed to ensure messages are delivered and responded to according to the planned communication objectives (Quirke, 2017; R. Varey, 2002; R. J. Varey, 2002). Effective management of tourism marketing communication involves a method commonly referred to as the marketing communication mix. This mix consists of several techniques or communication methods, such as advertising, sales promotion, public relations, personal selling, direct selling, events/sponsorship, merchandising, and digital marketing communication (McDonnell & Moir, 2013; Rezvani et al., 2017; Shimp, 2000).

The main challenge lies in how tourist destinations can determine the right combination of various marketing communication techniques to achieve communication objectives effectively and efficiently (Batra & Keller, 2016; Buhalis, 2000). To address this challenge, tourist destinations can employ the concept of integrated marketing communication. This concept combines various techniques, methods, media, and marketing communication channels to achieve communication goals as a whole (Batra & Keller, 2016; Schultz & Schultz, 1998). Furthermore, in integrating marketing communication techniques, tourist destinations must also consider the media or communication channels. Online media includes own media, paid media, and earned media, while offline media encompasses personal and non-personal media (Chitty et al., 2017; Moriarty et al., 2014; Zeiser, 2015). By understanding the concept of integrated tourism marketing communication and selecting the appropriate combination of various communication techniques and media, tourist destinations can enhance the effectiveness of their marketing campaigns, attract tourists, and increase the economic and social impact in a region.

## **METHODS**

The method employed in this research is the Exploratory method, aimed at thoroughly examining and obtaining an overview of social phenomena. Exploratory research describes what happens, including who is involved, when, where, and the characteristics associated with a particular social phenomenon or issue (S. Sangadji et al., 2022). This study was conducted in September 2023, focusing on the communication model in the tourism industry at the Tomalou Fisherfolk Festival, Tidore Islands City. Data collection was carried out through surveys and direct observations at the research site. Data were obtained through direct interviews with local residents and stakeholders at the Tomalou Fisherfolk Village. The research was conducted in two stages: research preparation and data collection. Generally, data collection techniques in this study include:

a. Observation

Observation is a systematic observation process of human activities and physical arrangements at the scene continuously to produce facts.

b. Documentation

Documentation can be in the form of writing, pictures, or other works that record past events. In this study, documentation may include pictures of objects as supporting data.

c. Interview

An interview is a conversation between two or more people with specific purposes and objectives. The interview process is carried out by asking the interviewees questions.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Tomalou Fishing Village Festival stands out as an exemplary showcase of how local wisdom can be optimally utilized to attract tourists through the implementation of effective marketing communication strategies. In this endeavor, several aspects need to be considered within the scope of marketing communication, including identifying the uniqueness of local wisdom, crafting compelling narratives, selecting appropriate communication channels, creating creative and informative content, fostering interaction and engagement, as well as measuring and evaluating outcomes as illustrated in the following model:



Figure 2. Marketing Communication Model Rooted in Local Wisdom

The first step in the marketing communication model, as seen in Figure 2, involves identifying unique elements of local wisdom in the Tomalou Fishermen's Village Festival. Examples include the traditions and rituals passed down from generation to generation, the local wisdom in preserving the sea as a source of life, and the diverse coastal culinary delights. Additionally, handicrafts produced from sea resources, such as bamboo weaving and shell processing into various handicraft products, are also attractive. Traditional arts and music enrich the festival experience with authentic cultural nuances. By identifying and highlighting these elements, marketing communication strategies can build strong and convincing narratives for visitors, inviting them to experience the cultural richness and traditions present in the Tomalou Fishermen's Village Festival. Thus, this step becomes a crucial foundation in attracting interest and participation from both the community and tourists in the ongoing festival.

Based on the identified local wisdom, the next step involves developing engaging and authentic narratives to attract tourists' interest. These narratives can be conveyed in various forms, such as stories about the rich culture and traditions of fishermen,

inspirational stories about local community efforts to preserve the sea, and unforgettable coastal culinary experiences. Thus, the potential beauty of nature and the uniqueness of Tomalou's culture can be realized and discovered by visitors. Through these stories, tourists can emotionally connect with their destination, gain a deeper understanding of local heritage, and experience memorable and authentic experiences. By packaging narratives in various engaging and informative forms, Tomalou can attract the attention and interest of tourists from various backgrounds and expand its positive impact on the overall community and local tourism development.

The third step of the communication model involves utilizing various communication channels to reach the right target tourists. In this case, several communication channels that can be utilized include social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter, which allow for creating engaging content and direct interaction with potential tourists. Additionally, the use of tourism websites and blogs can provide comprehensive and in-depth information about the festivals or tourist destinations offered. Mass media, such as newspapers, magazines, and TV, can also be used to increase the event's visibility and attract tourists on a broader scale. Moreover, the distribution of brochures and leaflets in strategic locations is also an effective way to reach potential tourists directly. Collaboration with influencers and travel agencies is also an important strategy in expanding the promotional reach and building event credibility. By effectively utilizing these communication channels, the Tomalou Fishermen's Village Festival has a great opportunity to attract the attention and participation of relevant tourists, positively impacting local tourism development.

The fourth step of the communication model involves creating engaging and informative content to capture tourists' attention. This can be done through various means, such as producing captivating photos and videos showcasing the beauty of Tomalou's nature and culture, presenting blog articles that delve into fishermen's traditions and rituals in-depth, and sharing video testimonials from tourists who have visited the festival. Additionally, informative infographics about Tomalou's coastal cuisine and handicrafts can be created. Through this content, the potential and unique attractions of Tomalou as a tourist destination can be clearly showcased to potential visitors. By leveraging the cultural and natural wealth it possesses, this content is expected to inspire and motivate tourists to visit Tomalou, as well as strengthen the festival's image and identity in the minds of the general public. Therefore, efforts to create quality and relevant content become one of the important strategies in expanding promotional reach and increasing tourist interest in the festival.

The fifth step of the communication model involves building interaction and engagement with target tourists through various inclusive means. This includes responding to questions and comments on social media, holding quizzes and giveaways to increase participation, providing information and travel tips about Tomalou to enhance tourists' interest and knowledge, and holding live streaming to provide direct experiences to potential visitors. Thus, this step not only creates meaningful interactions between the destination and potential audiences but also produces engaging and memorable experiences that can influence tourists' decisions to visit Tomalou. Through these strategies, marketing communication becomes not only a means to convey information but also a tool to build strong relationships between the destination and visitors, strengthening Tomalou's attractiveness and reputation as an interesting and visitor-friendly tourist destination.

The sixth step of the communication model involves measuring and evaluating the results of the marketing communication strategies implemented to determine their effectiveness. This is done using data and analysis obtained from various sources to identify the most appropriate and optimal strategies. Measurement and evaluation are carried out to understand the extent to which communication goals have been achieved, whether the messages conveyed have been well-received by the target audience, and how effective the actions taken have been in achieving the desired results. Thus, the evaluation allows for determining whether the strategies applied have been successful or need to be adjusted. The use of careful data and analysis can provide valuable insights into assessing the performance of marketing communication strategies and assist in making better decisions to improve overall communication effectiveness. Therefore, this step becomes crucial in a sustainable marketing communication cycle, ensuring that each step taken has the desired impact and contributes to the achievement of overall organizational goals.

## CONCLUSIONS

The model of marketing communication based on local wisdom has proven to be an effective strategy in attracting tourists and enhancing tourism potential in Tomalou. By identifying and constructing narratives, selecting appropriate communication channels, and creating engaging content, the Tomalou Fishermen's Village Festival can serve as a successful example of leveraging local wisdom for sustainable tourism development. However, it is important to acknowledge several limitations in this research. Firstly, this study primarily focuses on the effectiveness of marketing communication in the context of the Tomalou Fishermen's Village Festival, which may limit the generalization of findings to other cultural events or destinations. Secondly, although qualitative research methods have been utilized, future research could benefit from a broader exploration of visitors' perceptions and behaviors through quantitative survey-based approaches or mixed methods.

Moving forward, future research directions could include investigating the long-term impact of marketing communication based on local wisdom on tourism sustainability and community empowerment. Additionally, comparative studies across different cultural events or destinations could provide valuable insights into the adaptability and effectiveness of these communication models in diverse contexts. Furthermore, exploring the role of technology and digital platforms in strengthening the reach and engagement of marketing communication based on local wisdom could also be a way to enhance the impact of such communication on sustainability and community empowerment.

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