Overtourism in Indonesia after the COVID-19 Pandemic: Social Psychology Perspective

Sobreturismo en Indonesia después de la pandemia de COVID-19: perspectiva de la psicología social

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Abstract: The tourism industry suffered a significant loss from the COVID-19 pandemic. However, in line with decreasing the COVID-19 impacts, recent tourism behavior may be the cause of a phenomenon called as overtourism. The aim of this study was to investigate the unique phenomena of overtourism in Indonesia after the COVID-19 pandemic through a social psychology perspective.
sobreturismo en Indonesia después de la pandemia de COVID-19 a través de un enfoque psicológico social. Mediante un análisis crítico del discurso, este estudio encuentra que una emoción negativa generada por la pandemia de COVID-19 ha llevado al “turismo de venganza” provocado por dos años de aislamiento. Después de que el efecto de transmisión de COVID-19 está disminuyendo, las personas que experimentan un colapso psicológico ventilan sus intereses turísticos simultáneamente, lo que a su vez provoca un exceso de turismo. Desde la perspectiva de la psicología, la emoción negativa acumulada durante el confinamiento puede ser la razón del exceso de turismo. Mientras tanto, el exceso de turismo también tiene un impacto social negativo. Desde la perspectiva de la psicología social, el apego al lugar es una de las necesidades básicas de todo ser humano. Cuando se interrumpe el control sobre su entorno, esto puede generar muchos problemas. El exceso de turismo descontrolado provoca daños ambientales y reduce la calidad del turismo. Por lo tanto, este estudio sugiere que el gobierno y las partes interesadas colaboren para mitigar los desastres turísticos para prevenir la amenaza del turismo excesivo a la sostenibilidad del turismo.

**Keywords:** Tourism, Revenge Tourism, Overtourism, Social-psychology, Sustainability

 psycolohical approach. By using a critical discourse analysis, this study finds that a negative emotion generated by the COVID-19 pandemic has led to “revenge tourism” caused by two years of isolation. After the transmission effect of COVID-19 is decreasing, people who experience psychological breakdown, vent their tourism interests simultaneously, which in turn causing overtourism. In the perspective of psychology, negative emotion that has been piled up during lockdown may be the reason of overtourism. Meanwhile, overtourism also has negative social impact. From social-psychology perspective, place attachment is one of the basic needs in all human. When the control over their environment was disrupted, this may lead to many problems. Uncontrolled overtourism causes environmental damage and reducing the quality of tourism. Thus, this study suggests that the government and stakeholders collaborate to mitigate tourism disasters to prevent the threat of overtourism to tourism sustainability.

**Keywords:** Tourism, Revenge Tourism, Overtourism, Social-psychology, Sustainability

Palabras clave: Turismo, Turismo de venganza, Overtourism, Psicología social, Sostenibilidad
1. INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the tourism industry (Metaxas & Folinas, 2020). COVID-19 pandemic has changed not only various human activities around the world but also the way people view to do social activities, trade, and travel, especially about the sustainability of the tourism industry in the future (Muhammad Yamin, 2021). Many tourists opted to stay away from countries affected by the pandemic, and many also choose to travel to other countries that are considered safer than countries that are still struggling with this pandemic (Rahman et al., 2021). Data show that the tourism industry has 900 million activities per year worldwide (Muhammad Yamin, 2021). According to the Indonesian Ministry of Tourism, the tourism sector has experienced a decrease in the number of foreign tourist visits by 22% since the start of the outbreak in 2020. This decline has forced many hotels to close temporarily or permanently due to financial constraints caused by a decrease in demand (Atmojo & Fridayani, 2021). 70% of flights to Indonesia have been canceled due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 virus. The total number of daily flight arrivals in Indonesia has fallen by around 80% since the start of the pandemic (High, 2021). This has had a negative impact on the tourism sector in Indonesia, as the number of tourists has fallen significantly (Mutiah, 2020).

In addition, many countries have implemented strict quarantine and isolation measures which have had a severe impact on tourism in certain areas (Gössling et al., 2021). Despite these challenges, the tourism industry is resilient and continues to recover in the middle of current crises (Deb & Nafi, 2020). Despite the declining number of tourists visiting Indonesia, the hospitality industry has managed to maintain its momentum by introducing digital solutions to enhance customer experience (Gretzel et al., 2020) (Haywood, 2020).

The Covid-19 pandemic, which is getting under control in Indonesia, has made the tourism sector move in a positive direction (Ministry of Finance, 2022). Almost all tourist destinations have fully operationalized their tourist attractions (Expositionnews.com, 2021). Even though the Indonesian government has not officially declared that the COVID-19 pandemic is over, people have chosen to carry out their normal activities, while adhering to the strict health protocols such as masks, washing hands, and limiting crowds in public space (Kemenparekraf, 2020). The current state of affairs is very good for social and economic movements. Research conducted by Surwandomo & Yanuar (2021) states that the main reason why the Government of Indonesia prefers policies that allow migration activities in domestic and international contexts is to guarantee social, economic, political and cultural life in society (Surwandomo & Yanuar, 2021). The implications of this policy produce positive goals, where in 2022, Indonesia's tourism growth reaches 330.46% when compared to the same period the previous year (Annur, 2022) and Indonesia's economic growth in the third quarter of 2022 is around 5.72% (Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Indonesia, 2022).
The positive growth of Indonesian tourism provides many benefits for its supporting sectors, such as hotels, travel services, restaurants, souvenirs, and others (Lokaldata.beritatagar.id, 2020). The increase of visits by foreign and domestic tourists in Indonesia post-pandemic is more influenced by the thought of "revenge" in travel (Ocbcnnisp.com, 2022). The term "revenge tourism" according to Kertajaya (2020) refers to a trip taken by tourists after months of staying at home due to the COVID-19 pandemic (Sudjana et al., 2021). Another definition of revenge tourism was also conveyed by a Social Psychologist Juneman Abraham where this term is a phenomenon of traveling or visiting tourist destinations after being isolated and this is a response to limitations or mobility restriction on physical movement during a pandemic (Winurini, 2021).

Research conducted by Girish (2021) in South Korea shows that by using the TRA (Theory of Reasoned Actions) revenge tourism is based on psychological changes and negative emotions that provoke tourists due to frustration and boredom during COVID-19 pandemic (Girish, 2021). Other research on revenge tourism was also carried out by Sudjana et al (2021) which used AIDA scale indicators (Attention, Interest, Desire, and Actions) and found that domestic tourists in Indonesia are more interested in natural, mountainous, marine and culinary tourism destinations such as Labuan Bajo, Yogyakarta and Bali. On the Attention scale, the research founds that the majority of tourists know these destinations from social media or the internet, meanwhile, on the Interest scale, the majority of tourists feel happy to be able to make direct visits to these tourist destinations, compared to watching them on social media or the internet. On the Desire scale, the majority of tourists are very enthusiastic about going on a post-pandemic tour and they have been looking forward to this for months. Finally, on the Actions scale, the majority of tourists have prepared a wishlist of destination destinations and a sufficient budget for them to travel for an average of 3-4 days (Sudjana et al., 2021).

Revenge tourism is not a simple issue (Girish, 2021). As a result of revenge tourism, there has been an increase in the number of COVID-19 cases that had previously been controlled. Examples of an increase in COVID-19 cases as a result of revenge tourism have occurred in China, India and France, which are experiencing the third wave of spikes in cases of the spread of COVID-19 (Winurini, 2021). However, research conducted by Panzer-Krause (2022) has slightly different findings regarding the impact of revenge tourism. Research conducted in Germany and Ireland as a whole indeed found that the desire of tourists to travel continues to be seen, but the low level of comfort makes them prefer domestic trips. The study also stated that the distributions of vaccines has steadily increasing, showing high interest from tourists to travel across the country (Panzer-Krause, 2022).

Another impact of revenge tourism is the phenomenon of overtourism. Apart from the issue of an increase in the number of COVID-19 cases caused by revenge tourism, the phenomenon of overtourism in the world and in Indonesia is not an exception. This posed a challenge for the government and stakeholders in the tourism...
sector (Capocchi et al., 2019). The definition of overtourism according to the European Parliament (2018) describes a situation where the impact of tourism, at a certain time and in a certain location, exceeds the threshold of physical, ecological, social, economic, psychological and/or political capacity (Vagena, 2021). Another terminology conveyed by the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO, 2018) is similar to Von Harold Goodwin (2019) which states that overtourism describes the deteriorating quality of tourist destinations due to the large number of visitors and creates a bad experience for local residents and visitors, and this is the opposite of responsible tourism which makes tourism a better and more comfortable destination to visit (UNWTO, 2018) (Goodwin, 2019).

This study will focus on discussing the phenomenon of overtourism in Indonesia after the COVID-19 pandemic through a social psychological approach, where this approach can clearly describe the phenomena of overtourism in Indonesia. Conceptually this is based on the assumption that overtourism is basically about the number of visitors (social density) in relation to space, (speed) changes related to outcomes that may be social, cultural, economic and/or environmental (intensity over time), and the socio-psychological responses among the population that are triggered by these changes (stimulus overload, attribution, control, and arousal). This conceptualization recognizes that the presence of tourists is not solely negative, but can also be perceived positively (Gössling et al., 2020).

2. MATERIAL AND METHODS

This research is a qualitative descriptive study using the critical discourse analysis method or also called critical discourse analysis (CDA) model of Van Dijk (Eriyanto, 2012). This study aims to determine overtourism that occurred in Indonesia during the COVID-19 pandemic. This qualitative descriptive research produces descriptive data in the form of words, both written and spoken from the people and or behavior observed. This approach is directed at the background and individual holistically (whole). This research is a study using the critical discourse analysis method, therefore this article emphasizes the meaning of the text rather than the sum of categorical units. The basis of discourse analysis is interpretation, because discourse analysis is part of an interpretative method that relies on the researcher's interpretation.

The research object used by the authors in this study is text sourced from journal articles, books, reports, and online media (internet). In carrying out a discourse analysis, apart from analyzing the text, it is also necessary to analyze social cognition and social context from the object being studied. Social cognition is a dimension for explaining how a text is produced by individuals/groups by writers. This dimension can be done with library research (Eriyanto, 2012). Social context / social analysis looks at how the text is further related to the social structure and knowledge that develops in society regarding the author's discourse on this
dimension. This can be done by interviewing respondents or related parties. Meanwhile, text analysis is a dimension that explains and interprets a text (Eriyanto, 2012).

The data collection technique used in this research is through documentation and literature study. Data analysis in qualitative research using the Van Dijk model uses data analysis techniques in unit processing with unit typology and unit arrangement. The technique aims to determine the right categorization (Moleong, 2014). Meanwhile, the methodical steps taken in this study are: collecting texts based on the thematic or chronological. This is done to facilitate the process of intertextuality and between thematic texts that occur all the time.

3. RESULTS

Tourism is one of the significant revenue objects for the state apart from the oil and gas sector (Lew, 2011). It is not surprising that Indonesia is making optimal efforts to increase tourist visits (especially foreign tourists) to tourist destinations and attractions. The Indonesian government launched five super priority tourist destinations, namely, Borobudur, Lake Toba, Labuan Bajo, Mandalika, and Likupang. (Sari, 2022). The calculation of the benefits obtained by Indonesia in optimizing the tourism sector is around 14.1 billion dollars per year (Darmawan, 2019) (figure 1). Behind these advantages there is an important issue that cannot be denied, which is, overtourism.

Figure 1. Indonesia's revenue from the tourism sector
Source: Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Indonesia, 2020
Reports conducted by TelusuRI (Saputra, 2021) finds that there are five tourist destinations in Indonesia that experience the phenomenon of overtourism, including Borobudur, Mount Semeru, Komodo Island, Malioboro and Bali. More than that, the problem of overtourism does not only discuss excess visitors but also the impact of environmental damage left behind, as has happened in Spain, Italy, Japan and several other countries. (Darmawan, 2019). In addition, areas that experience overtourism will experience problems such as more and more local residents being disturbed because of too many visitors, a decrease in the quality of the tourist experience, burdened infrastructure, and threats to cultural heritage. (Maulana, 2022).

Study done by Claudio Milano (2017) shows how dense and overcrowded visitors through data taken from the Airbnb lodging service application in the Venice, Italy (figure 2). In figure 3, it can be seen that a significant increase in resident visits is happening around the Venice area (Milano, 2017).
The impact of overtourism on the environment can be seen in Figure 4 below, where the waste left by tourists on Kuta beach, Bali in Indonesia. In fact, in 2017 Bali was declared a "garbage emergency" as a result of the large amount of waste that filled the island of Bali (Andy, 2020). Butler (1974) states that uncontrolled tourism can cause loss of local identity, environmental damage, such as waste, pollution and damage to coral plants. (Andy, 2020).
Mitigation of the overtourism phenomenon has been tried by the Government of Indonesia, such as efforts to increase entrance ticket prices to two super priority destinations such as Borobudur Temple and Komodo Island. (Mardian, 2022) despite being rejected by some members of the public (Sulaeman, 2022). This short-term policy is the most effective in managing the issue of overtourism in these two destinations. On the other hand, long-term policies need to be carried out by the Government and related stakeholders by prioritizing a sustainable tourism approach that measures environmental, economic and socio-cultural aspects. (Hardy et al., 2002). Best examples in managing the phenomenon of overtourism is Bhutan, where this country implements a "high value low impact" tourism policy. The policy requires every tourist to meet a minimum daily package of US$200 per person per night and US$250 specifically for March, April, May, September, October and November. Thanks to this policy, Bhutan has succeeded in increasing revenue from the tourism sector, even though the number of visits is low (Mardian, 2022).

The COVID-19 pandemic, which is increasingly under control, has influenced the public interest in tourism, especially since for months the Indonesian people have been restricted in their movements through various policies in order to prevent the spread of this outbreak. (Sudjana et al., 2021). On the other hand, the Indonesian government also wants to restore the economy through optimizing UMKM (Micro Small and Medium Enterprises) in the tourism sector. Because this sector is most affected by the spread of the COVID-19 virus. The intersection of these two becomes an equilibrium. Through the increasing number of tourists or visitors at each tourist destination will generates benefits for both parties (Juhanda et al., 2022).

Controlling the phenomenon of overtourism by prioritizing disaster tourism mitigation (Rosyidie, 20014) is one of the solutions in overcoming this issue, the various examples above can be used as a reference for the Indonesian government in making policies related to the phenomenon of overtourism. Indonesian tourism should prioritize the quality of tourism itself in addition to the quantity of tourist visits. Indonesia's unique cultural heritage and natural beauty are assets that need to be maintained in terms of environmental, social and economic sustainability (Mardian, 2022).

4. DISCUSSION

Covid-19 pandemic infection has massive psychosocial implications that could leads to mental health problems (Stamu-O’Brien et al., 2020) such as fear, discrimination (Asmundson & Taylor, 2020a), anger, guilt, denial, stress, anxiety, post-traumatic stress, stigmatization, insomnia, and depressive symptoms (Jones et al., 2017) which in turn will increases the risk for acute complications of pre-existing chronic diseases (Torales et al., 2020). Stamu-O’Brien et al., (2020) on his paper explains that health anxiety is applicable to anyone. There are no single person in this
world that immune to health anxiety and anyone could experience it in one form or another. Moreover, Stamu-O’Brien et al., (2020) defines health anxiety as perceived changes of bodily sensations and this changes is may resulting in new illness or diseases. There are many sensations that may trigger health anxiety, among them are the ones related to infectious diseases (Asmundson et al., 2010; Asmundson & Taylor, 2020b).

One other examples of psychological implications of covid-19 is depressive disorder. Galea et al., (2020) states that depressive disorder due to covid-19 can be defined as persistent period of depressed mood or loss of interest/pleasure in activities. It is associated with insomnia, loneliness, despair and social withdrawal. Some patients may be forced to consume substances to reduce this depressive symptoms (Stamu-O’Brien et al., 2020). Pandemic covid-19 also forced many nations to implements lockdown regulations in order to limit the viral infections of the virus. While in lockdown or quarantine, many people reported that they experience psychological breakdown such as loneliness, confinement, boredom, anger and frustrations. Much more severe psychological breakdown also shown by family members who lost their family or friends from covid-19, especially in cases which the deceased had contracted covid-19 from family member, guilt will probably last forever. It is an utmost important to give emotional support and care to survivors.

As expressed by Hall et al., (2020), covid-19 pandemic diminished tourist’s interest to travel due to lack of accessibility and mobility. Meanwhile, Bol et al., (2021) stated quite similar opinion that due to nationwide enforced social confinement and lockdown policies, it limited people’s mobility. All of this was extreme measures taken to reduce the spreading of covid-19 virus. While it is effective, it also had negative impacts on people’s as describe previously.

Frustration was rising and might give birth to unexpected phenomenon in form of revenge travel (Girish, 2021). Not only frustration that might lead to revenge travel, but the perception of FOMO (fear of missing out) and several other reason during current lockdown or similar drastic measures in the future may lead tourists to consider what it called as “last-chance tourism”(Hindley & Font, 2018). Research done by Adikari et al., (2021) shown that negative emotions such as anger and disgusts strongly felt during pandemic and expressed by a lot of people, in turn increasing their frustration. Jin et al., (2016) believed that emotions are crucial stimuli, especially in a crisis like covid-19 pandemic. People may be focusing more on how to deal with their stress (conative coping, e.g., revenge travel) instead of actually learning about the situation (cognitive coping) and making sense of it (Jin et al., 2012).

Study done by Girish, (2021) supports the finding from Jin et al., (2016) that negative emotions does affected people’s decision and may resulted to disruptive types of tourism such as revenge travel. In his study, Girish, (2021) highlighted that negative emotions can be the catalyst that may provoke tourist to embark on revenge travel. One research done by Abdullah, (2021) already shown that people give strong
impression of wanting to do revenge travel as soon as when it is possible to travels. In his research, three respondents stated that they will travels as soon as pandemic ends while three other said that they would travel after the vaccine is distributed. All of this is strong indication that revenge travel will be occurring soon enough.

Fotiadis et al., (2021) also said pretty much similar to what Abdullah, (2021) finds on his research. Post-covid tourism or revenge travel may be happening after pandemic is stabilized. In some countries, revenge travel is happening after the lockdown policy was lifted. This might be somewhat reckless behaviour since the virus was not completely eradicated just yet. Choudhary, (2021) in her paper states that when India government lift up lockdown regulation, people started to go to various beachside, hill homestay or resort nearby. She believes that this behaviour stem from months of rigorous lockdown, work from home, doing classes or meeting online, unable to see friends and relatives and in result, creating boredom. Choudhary, (2021) concludes that revenge travel is highly likely will occur as countries lift up the lockdown policy and starts to opening up. This can be seen from the increase numbers of flight booking and hotel bookings. While this is a good way to recover the economy, the impact from revenge travel may be resulting in overtourism.

Overtourism is defined as “the impact of tourism on a destination that greatly influences the perceived quality of life of the residents and/or quality of visitor experiences in a negative way”(UNWTO, 2018). Dodds & Butler, (2019) stressed out that current definition of overtourism does acknowledge the consequences of overtourism to residents and communities such as a declining sense of place. Milano et al., (2019) also added that overtourism also give permanent changes to lifestyles and available facilities. Furthermore, several other researches also finds that the reduce of experience due to over-visitation (Capocchi et al., 2019; Koens et al., 2018; UNWTO, 2018).

Namberger et al., (2019) states that overcrowding may give negative impact on destination image and tourist’s experience. Similar to the findings of Namberger et al., (2019), Jacobsen et al., (2019) and Machleit et al., (2000) suggest that overcrowding can be a source of negative reaction from visitors. This overcrowding phenomenon may having a negative experience on revisit and recommendation as reported by several researches (Navarro Jurado et al., 2013; Neuts & Nijkamp, 2012).

This overtourism phenomenon have led to the highest point on several countries, leading to the rise of negative attitudes express explicitly. While residents are usually always be the first to act about the damaging effects of overtourism on their lifestyle and local environment (Gössling et al., 2020), nowadays, tourists also starts to raise their concerns given the negative consequences of overtourism on their destination experience (Koens et al., 2018; Sæþórsdóttir & Hall, 2020). These protests recently also involve communities, social movements, neighbourhood associations and activist (Colomb & Novy, 2016; Seraphin et al., 2018). Anti-tourism campaigns have been reported on many major destination such as: France, Spain,

Overtourism phenomenon also can be explained through psychological perspectives that emphasizes on meanings and emotions (Devine-Wright, 2009). Ramkissoon et al., (2013) added that place attachment also able to explain the bases of actions taken by residents affected by overtourism. Place attachment is defines as an emotional bond people share with a place and place changes will result in issue-attention cycle involving awareness, interpretation, evaluation, coping and action (Devine-Wright, 2009). Furthermore, studies from 1970s discussed negative emotions (Stokols, 1972) and social exchange theory (Richard & Emerson, 1976) that explain the relation of place and person. The interrelationship between place and person can be infer more deeply through conceptualisation based on presumption that overtourism in essence is all about total visitor numbers (social density) and its relation to space and the speed of change, connected to many outcomes such as social, cultural, economic and/or environmental and socio-psychology responses among residents triggered by all of these changes which includes stimulus, overload, attribution, control and arousal (Gössling et al., 2020).

Another study done by Jacobsen et al., (2019) suggest that links between place and psychology have strong relevance in order to understand social attitudes. Their study relates the notions of density of people within space to psychological responses. The so called “perceived social density” may activate higher states of arousal, which in turn may leads to either positive or negative outcomes or as Stokols, (1972) explains, goal directed behaviors such as negative avoidance or positive approach. Jacobsen et al., also relate these cognitive and affective response to the concepts of “personal space”, which describes by Andereck, (1997) that perceptions of social density may trigger human defence system such as fear and aversion.

Meanwhile, McKercher et al., (2015) on his study finds that negative perceptions of place change were far more likely than positive perceptions as a result from tourism. When tourism was perceived negatively, this was caused by declining of place attachment, loss of distinctiveness, continuity, and self-esteem or self-efficacy. Schmidt & Keating, (1979) identified that stimulus-overload theory held key basis to examine these relationships between place/person changes. These determines the changes in attitudes as an effect from the changes in social density of tourist in places. Stimulus-overload theory is based on the concept that the numbers, their presence and their diversity in the space may lead to psychological stress, causing affective or behavioural responses (Schmidt & Keating, 1979).

On the other hand, responses from local community in regards to overtourism may be triggered when local residents perceive changes happening around them is out of their control. It is already well-known at this point that people like to have a sense of control over their environment (Skinner, 1996). Research done by Consiglio et al., (2018) supports this notions. They found that, perceived loss of control has been linked to high social density environments, these lead to compensatory or
control behavioural response. Moreover, local residents may not be willing to relocate due to the feelings of attachment, a sense of belonging or an inability to move for personal and situational reason. This feeling of attachment is highlighted by Baumeister & Leary, (2017) that humans have this fundamental need to belong and the desire for interpersonal attachment. All of this psychological aspects, can be used to understand why overtourism have such a significant impact on people and need to be wary of, especially when the revenge travel is on a rise post-pandemic.

5. CONCLUSION

The condition of the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic which is increasingly sloping and under control has made the Indonesian people express their interest in traveling after months of being confined from social interaction. This is known as “revenge tourism”. The community's expression of interest in traveling is understandable because of feelings of boredom due to the never-ending pandemic. On the other hand, the Indonesian government also has the desire to revive the tourism sector which has been badly hit by the COVID-19 pandemic. Great interest from the public to return to tourism after the outbreak was under control and the Indonesian government's efforts to move the tourism economy sector met at the equilibrium point of Indonesia's tourism recovery after the COVID-19 pandemic. Even so, there is a quite crucial issue behind these two wishes, namely the emergence of the phenomenon of overtourism which has hit almost all tourist destinations in Indonesia.

The phenomenon of overtourism that has hit Indonesia has also occurred in other countries. Overtourism actually happened before this pandemic happened. However, with the occurrence of revenge tourism, more and more people express their interest in traveling. From psychological perspectives, negative emotional factor caused by COVID-19 give rise to overtourism. The accumulated negative emotions are then released in the form of tourism activities carried out jointly by many people, causing an excessive build-up of visitors to tourist destinations and attractions. Related to this, the Indonesian government and related stakeholders need to mitigate tourism disasters. In the long term, overtourism will threaten the sustainability of tourism related to three main aspects, namely, environment, economy, and socio-culture. Education for the public regarding responsible tourism really needs to be done as a form of preventing damage and worsen the quality of Indonesian tourism.

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