



GREEN TOURISM COMMUNICATION POLICY: THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND CREATIVE ECONOMY'S SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES IN BUILDING DIGITAL ECOTOURISM AWARENESS

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the transformation of the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy (Kemenparekraf)'s communication policy in implementing green tourism and to examine public reception toward digital ecotourism awareness in Indonesia. The research adopts a constructivist paradigm with a descriptive qualitative method, combining data from official policy documents, digital observation through Brand24, and in-depth interviews with government officials, academics, and ecotourism practitioners. Unlike previous studies that primarily emphasize tourism promotion, this research focuses on how digital communication strategies shape public participation and interpretation of sustainability values in the online sphere. The findings indicate that Kemenparekraf's digital initiatives—such as #TravelResponsibly, Green Parekraf, and Green Tourism Training—have transformed governmental communication patterns from a top-down, informative model into a participatory and dialogical system. The public's reception shows a predominantly positive sentiment, with communities not only receiving but also co-creating sustainability messages through social media and creative content production. Using Diffusion of Innovation Theory and the Sustainable Communication Model, this study reveals that the success of green tourism communication depends on the clarity of value benefits, cultural compatibility, and inclusivity in public engagement. This research contributes both theoretically and practically by offering an integrative framework that connects government digital communication, environmental awareness, and civic participation in sustainability discourse. It highlights the emergence of eco-conscious digital citizenship as a new socio-communicative phenomenon in Indonesia's tourism landscape

Keywords: Green Tourism, Communication Policy, Diffusion of Innovation, Sustainable Communication, Digital Ecotourism Awareness

1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is recognized as one of the countries with the greatest tourism potential in the world, thanks to its natural wealth, cultural diversity, and strategic geographical location in the tropical region. The tourism sector not only contributes to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) but also serves as an important platform for cultural diplomacy and the strengthening of national identity on the global stage (Duxbury et al., 2021). In the context of sustainable development, tourism has the potential to become a driving force capable of integrating economic growth with environmental conservation. However, this great potential often faces fundamental challenges, particularly the low level of public awareness regarding the importance of sustainability in tourism activities (Hermawan & Mahfuda, 2022).

Tourism practices that result in environmental degradation such as deforestation, pollution, and marine ecosystem destruction are still frequently found in various tourist destinations. Findings by Ramdhan and Amri (2019) indicate that the level of natural resource damage in Indonesia remains high, threatening the long-term carrying capacity of tourism areas. This phenomenon creates a gap between *das Sein* (social reality: low environmental awareness among society) and *das Sollen* (the ideal expectation: the realization of ecological and participatory sustainable tourism). Therefore, there is a need for a communication policy strategy that is not only informative but also transformative in fostering ecological awareness among the public.

The Indonesian government has established several regulations that form the legal foundation for the development of sustainable tourism, such as Law No. 5 of 1990 on the Conservation of Natural Resources and Ecosystems, Regulation of the Minister of Environment and Forestry No. P.16/MENLHK/SETJEN/KUM.1/5/2017 on Nature Tourism, and Regulation of the Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy No. 4 of 2021 on Ecotourism Areas. These regulations demonstrate the government's commitment to environmental preservation and local community welfare. However, without effective communication strategies, such policies risk remaining merely administrative documents with limited practical impact (Ritonga et al., 2024).

Within this framework, the concept of green tourism has become a vital foundation for Indonesia's tourism policy direction in the digital era. Green tourism emphasizes not only environmental preservation but also the welfare of local communities and the economic sustainability of tourism areas (Hu et al., 2023). This approach requires behavioral transformation among tourists to act more responsibly toward the environment, while encouraging tourism industry actors to integrate sustainability values into their business practices. At the same time, green tourism functions as an educational platform that teaches tourists to respect both nature and local culture (Bian, 2023).

The Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy (Kemenparekraf) plays a strategic role in realizing this transformation through adaptive and inclusive communication policies. In the digital era, society is no longer merely a passive recipient of information but has become an active producer of messages within the virtual public sphere. This shift in communication patterns requires the government to move from a top-down approach to a participatory communication model that accommodates two-way dialogue between government and society (Cox & Depoe, 2015). Social media, interactive websites, and digital campaigns such as #TravelResponsibly and Green Parekraf have become key

channels for expanding the reach of sustainability messages and building Indonesia's image as a green tourism destination (Farhangi & Alipour, 2021).

Nevertheless, the effectiveness of government digital communication strategies still faces several challenges. In some regions, the digital literacy of tourism actors remains low, while the dissemination of sustainability messages often appears ceremonial and fails to produce tangible behavioral changes (Sen, 2020). This condition highlights the need for a communication policy focused on transforming public values and behavior rather than merely promoting tourism destinations. Therefore, a study on green tourism communication policy is highly relevant to assess how the government particularly Kemenparekraf develops digital communication models that can foster broad and sustainable ecological awareness.

From an academic perspective, this study expands the discourse on sustainable communication policy by integrating Diffusion of Innovation Theory (Rogers, 2003) and the Sustainable Communication Model (Servaes & Malikhao, 2020). Rogers' theory explains that the success of disseminating social innovations depends on the extent to which messages have relative advantage, cultural compatibility, and ease of understanding by the public. Meanwhile, Servaes emphasizes that sustainable communication must be participatory, dialogical, and socially empowering. The integration of these two theories allows for a comprehensive analysis of how Kemenparekraf's digital communication policy internalizes sustainability values within digital society.

Based on this background, this study has two main focuses: (1) to analyze Kemenparekraf's digital communication strategy in building awareness of green tourism in Indonesia, and (2) to evaluate public reception of this communication policy within digital spaces. This research is expected to provide both empirical and theoretical contributions to the development of a participatory, data driven communication policy model capable of fostering eco-conscious digital citizenship digital citizens who possess ecological awareness and actively contribute to supporting sustainable tourism in Indonesia.

Literature Review

This research is grounded in three main theoretical frameworks: Diffusion of Innovation Theory by Everett M. Rogers (2003), the Sustainable Communication Model by Servaes (2020), and Ecotourism Theory. The Diffusion of Innovation Theory explains the process through which new ideas are disseminated and adopted through effective communication channels, where government communication strategies play a key role in accelerating the adoption of green tourism values. Ecotourism Theory emphasizes the balance between environmental conservation, local community empowerment, and ecological education for tourists as a conceptual foundation for developing sustainable tourism. Meanwhile, the Sustainable Communication Model provides a lens for understanding how sustainability messages are constructed and delivered in a consistent, participatory, and meaningful manner in the digital sphere. Together, these three theories form a comprehensive analytical framework to assess the transformation of Kemenparekraf's communication policies in fostering digital ecotourism awareness in Indonesia.

Coirala's (2022) research employed a qualitative descriptive method to analyze the application of the pentahelix model in developing turtle conservation areas in Ampiang Parak, South Coast Regency. The study revealed that collaboration among government, academia, community, business actors, and media effectively enhanced the success of conservation-based ecotourism. Unlike the present study, which examines the transformation of Kemenparekraf's communication policy at the national level, Coirala's research focused on local wildlife conservation efforts and did not address the digitalization of policy communication.

Similarly, Khotimah et al. (2024) used a qualitative ethnographic approach to explore the preservation of the local Nyelamaq tradition in Tanjung Luar Village through the pentahelix model. The findings indicated that the synergy among pentahelix actors successfully preserved local cultural values while enhancing the attractiveness of tradition-based ecotourism. Although both studies highlight multi-actor collaboration, this research differs by focusing on digital policy communication practices and public reception rather than specifically strengthening traditional cultural values.

Luong's (2023) study adopted a quantitative survey method to examine the relationship between destination image, place attachment, and visiting intention, with eco-travel motivation serving as a moderating variable. The findings demonstrated that eco-travel motivation strengthens the influence of destination image on tourists' intention to visit. While Luong's study focuses on individual tourist behavior, the present research investigates institutional communication and public policy transformation in building national-level digital ecotourism awareness.

Meanwhile, Ritonga et al. (2024) applied a qualitative policy analysis approach to identify the effectiveness of communication policies in promoting ecotourism in Indonesia. The study found that the success of green tourism promotion is strongly influenced by the integration of cross-media communication strategies and government regulatory support. Although this topic is closely related to the present study, it remains limited to examining the relationship between communication and the increase in tourist numbers. In contrast, this research extends the focus to include the transformation of digital communication policy and public reception toward green tourism policy as indicators of sustainable communication effectiveness.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a descriptive qualitative method with a constructivist paradigm. This approach was chosen because the research focuses on deeply understanding the process of transforming the green tourism communication policy implemented by the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy (Kemenparekraf) within the digital context. The constructivist paradigm views social reality as a co-construction between the researcher and the participants, where scientific truth is not considered singular but is built through dialogue, interpretation, and contextual meaning (Creswell & Creswell, 2022). In other words, this study does not aim to test hypotheses or measure relationships between variables, but rather to interpret how green communication policies are designed, implemented, and received by the public in digital spaces (Edmonds & Kennedy, 2020).

The descriptive qualitative approach was chosen because it allows the researcher to portray social phenomena holistically without intervening in the reality being studied. This approach emphasizes understanding the social and cultural contexts behind Kemenparekraf's communication policies. Through this perspective, the researcher seeks to explore how digital communication strategies are utilized to instill sustainability values and how the public interprets these messages within social media spaces (Weyant, 2022).

This research relies on two types of data—primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through in-depth interviews and digital observation, while secondary data were derived from official documents and scientific literature.

In-depth interviews were conducted with 12 key informants selected through purposive sampling, comprising individuals who possess knowledge and direct involvement in issues related to green tourism and governmental digital communication. The informants were divided into three main groups: (1) Kemenparekraf officials involved in formulating sustainable tourism policies at the directorate level; (2) academics and public communication experts familiar with theories and practices of environmental policy communication; and (3) digital ecotourism actors, including community-based tourism managers and active travelers participating in digital campaigns such as #TravelResponsibly and Green Parekraf. This sampling technique was chosen to represent key actors within the sustainability communication ecosystem (Flick, 2022).

In addition to interviews, the researcher conducted digital observation using the Brand24 platform to analyze public discourse and digital sentiment regarding the green tourism policy. The data collected included public posts, comments, and reactions on various social media platforms such as X (Twitter), TikTok, YouTube, and national online news portals. This observation process was conducted systematically to map public reception patterns and the dynamics of sustainability discourse within digital spaces.

Meanwhile, secondary data were collected from official policy documents such as the Regulation of the Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy No. 4 of 2021 on Ecotourism Areas, Kemenparekraf annual reports, academic publications on green tourism, and journal articles discussing communication policy models and public participation (Ritonga et al., 2024). The use of secondary data aimed to strengthen the theoretical and policy context underpinning the field findings.

The data collection process consisted of three main stages: documentation, interviews, and digital observation. These three sources were analyzed simultaneously to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the implementation of green tourism communication policy. The researcher adopted the principle of reflexive inquiry, involving active participation in the data collection process while maintaining analytical distance to ensure objectivity in interpretation (Creswell & Creswell, 2022).

The collected data were then analyzed using the interactive analysis model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (Miles et al., 2020), which includes four stages: (1) continuous data collection throughout the research process; (2) data condensation to reduce and focus on relevant information based on thematic categories; (3) data presentation in the form of narratives and thematic tables illustrating digital communication strategies and public reception; and (4) conclusion drawing and verification by comparing empirical data with the theoretical framework.

To ensure the validity and credibility of the findings, the researcher applied triangulation techniques involving sources, theory, and expert validation. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing interview results among different actors (government, academia, and the public). Theoretical triangulation was achieved by comparing the findings against the two main theoretical frameworks: the Diffusion of Innovation Theory (Rogers, 2003) and the Sustainable Communication Model (Servaes & Malikhao, 2020). Meanwhile, expert triangulation was conducted by consulting communication policy scholars and sustainable tourism practitioners to validate the interpretations. These steps were undertaken to ensure that the data and interpretations produced were valid, reliable, and representative of the social phenomena under study.

3. RESULT AND ANALYSIS

Digital Communication Strategy for Green Tourism by Kemenparekraf

The Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy of the Republic of Indonesia (Kemenparekraf) has developed a series of digital communication strategies to promote the implementation of green tourism as part of the national sustainable tourism development agenda. This transformation is not merely a promotional effort but represents a repositioning of the government's communication paradigm toward a more participatory, inclusive, and technology-driven approach.

These digital strategies encompass educational campaigns, multi-stakeholder collaborations, and the dissemination of environmental messages through various social media channels and interactive platforms. Such efforts demonstrate Kemenparekraf's strong commitment to leveraging the power of digital communication to enhance public awareness of green tourism as both a lifestyle choice and a collective social responsibility.

Table 1. Digital Communication Strategies for Green Tourism by Kemenparekraf

No	Program		Platform	Communication Strategy	Aim
1	Green Program	Parekraf	Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy official website, social media campaigns	Disseminating sustainability and environmental responsibility narratives through interactive content	Building a green tourism image and strengthening environmentally friendly behavior among tourism actors
2	Green Training for Villages	Tourism for Tourist	Social media, e-learning platforms	Educating MSMEs and local communities about environmentally friendly practices and digitalizing promotions	Increasing the digital capacity and environmental awareness of tourism village communities
3	Clean Movement (Gili Air)	Tourism Campaign	Instagram, YouTube, Wonderful Indonesia portal	Visual campaigns and short videos on clean and plastic-free tourism behavior	Increasing public participation and ecological awareness among tourists
4	Sustainable Destination Certification		STDev portal & online destination dashboard	Publishing data, green indicators, and open evaluations of tourist destinations	Increasing transparency, accountability, and public trust

5	#TravelResponsibly Movement	Social media (TikTok, X, Instagram)	Visual narratives on responsible behavior at tourist destinations	Changing the behavior of digital tourists to be more environmentally conscious
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Kemenparekraf positions digital communication as a primary instrument for disseminating the values of green tourism. Through various digital channels such as its official website, social media platforms, and the Wonderful Indonesia portal the ministry presents content emphasizing educational value, local wisdom, and community participation. This strategy represents a paradigm shift in governmental communication, moving beyond one-way information dissemination toward two-way interaction with the public, where citizens are encouraged to become active participants in sustainable practices.

These digital communication efforts demonstrate consistency between policy formulation and field implementation. For example, through the #TravelResponsibly campaign, Kemenparekraf employs a narrative visual format with a communicative style that resonates with younger generations. The published content highlights green tourism practices such as the use of eco-friendly transportation, reduction of single-use plastics, and promotion of community-based homestays. This strategy not only promotes destinations but also educates travelers about digital ecotourism ethics (Baldi et al., 2022; Farhangi & Alipour, 2021).

In addition, the Green Tourism Training Program reflects a participatory communication orientation. Through an educational approach supported by digital media, Kemenparekraf facilitates village communities in understanding the principles of green tourism while simultaneously enhancing their digital literacy. This initiative plays a vital role in expanding the base of local change agents capable of organically spreading sustainability messages within their own communities.

At the institutional level, Kemenparekraf also strengthens public transparency and accountability through digital dashboard based sustainable destination certification. Information on environmental, social, and economic indicators of various destinations is made accessible online, enabling the public to monitor sustainability achievements in real time. This data-driven communication strategy not only builds public trust but also reinforces the notion that sustainability has now become a key performance indicator of national tourism development.

The ministry's digital interactions also involve cross-sector collaboration with academics, media, and creative industry players. The pentahelix model, when applied in the digital context, expands the reach of green tourism messages through creative content designed with local cultural approaches. Consequently, policy communication becomes not only top-down but also horizontal and dialogical, fostering shared awareness of the importance of digital ecotourism (Abdrasilova et al., 2024; Chan et al., 2023).

However, several challenges remain to be addressed. One of the main issues is message inconsistency across platforms and the relatively low level of digital literacy among some tourism stakeholders in rural areas. Sustainability messages are often ceremonial in nature and have yet to effectively drive behavioral change. This indicates that the effectiveness of digital communication remains suboptimal without proper integration between national narratives and on-site experiences.

From the perspective of Diffusion of Innovation Theory (Rogers, 2003), Kemenparekraf's communication strategy functions as a process of diffusing sustainability values to the public through digital channels. The ministry acts as a change agent introducing innovation in the form of green tourism practices. The success of message adoption depends on the perceived relative advantage, compatibility with local values, and simplicity or clarity (complexity) of the digital content delivered. When messages are presented in ways that align with the culture and lifestyle of digital communities, the level of acceptance and adoption of sustainability values increases significantly.

Furthermore, according to Servaes (2020) in the Sustainable Communication Model, effective communication in the context of sustainability is not merely about message dissemination it is about participation and collaboration. Kemenparekraf demonstrates this principle through the involvement of local communities, content creators, and creative industry actors in articulating green tourism messages. By positioning society not as the object but as the subject of communication, this strategy transforms the relationship into a dialogical and participatory model. Servaes' framework reinforces the idea that sustainable communication must coexist with social sustainability where messages, participation, and environmental practices are intertwined within a living and dynamic communication system.

Public Reception of the Green Tourism Communication Policy

Public perception of the green tourism communication policy initiated by Kemenparekraf can be traced through social media activities and digital news portals. This reception analysis is based on digital observation data obtained using the Brand24 platform, covering posts on X (Twitter), TikTok, YouTube, and various national online media outlets. The purpose of this analysis is to understand how the public interprets sustainability messages, the extent of their engagement in ecotourism discourse, and the forms of emotional and cognitive responses that emerge.

In general, the majority of posts exhibit positive sentiment, reflecting strong public support for environmental conservation and participation in green tourism initiatives. However, a smaller portion of the data reveals negative sentiment, highlighting perceived inconsistencies in the on-ground implementation of sustainability policies.

Table 4.2. Public Reception of the Green Tourism Communication Policy

No	Content	Users & Media	Time (Date)
1	"Mangrove Tourism in Bahuga Village: The beauty of nature is ready to pamper your eyes and heart. Watch the #Journey episode "Treasure in the North Sulawesi Sea!"	Metro_TV (X.com)	30 Sep 2025
2	"Pertamina is opening up economic opportunities in West Java through ecotourism. It's not just about preserving the environment but also empowering the community."	Antaraneews.com (Media)	19 Sep 2025
3	"ECOTOURISM PROMOTION VIDEO - Putera Puteri DIY 2025! Come support Indonesia's best finalists!"	YouTube Channel	20 Sep 2025
4	"From a damaged former mining site, mangrove ecotourism has now grown, generating millions of rupiah in revenue per month."	@rajajuliantoni (TikTok)	10 Sep 2025
5	"Enjoying the beauty of the Surabaya Mangrove Forest. Sustainable nature is calming."	NahlaTravel (Media Daring)	04 Okt 2025

6	"Piasan marks the gateway to ecotourism and conservation in Ambalas, the beginning of the journey to hidden gems like Pahat Island."	@kemendespdt (X.com)	13 Sep 2025
7	"Tangkahan is getting busier, but it's no longer community-based ecotourism. Now it's more about mass tourism 😬."	@jellypastaa (X.com)	20 Sep 2025
8	"South Solok is developing ecotourism to boost the regional economy, the potential of the green belt is extraordinary."	@InfoSOLSEL (X.com)	24 Sep 2025
9	"Explore Maratua, the Maldives of Indonesia, offering spectacular diving and sustainable ecotourism."	@radarmadiunweb (X.com)	26 Sep 2025
10	"The 4th Lumajang Sticky Rice Festival, a driving force for MSMEs and village pride through Lumajang ecotourism."	@DINAS_KOMINFO (X.com)	29 Sep 2025

Based on digital observation results, the public reception pattern toward Kemenparekraf's green tourism communication policy tends to be positive and affirmative. Most posts express pride in the success of environmentally friendly destinations and sustainable promotion efforts associated with government programs. Posts from media outlets such as MetroTV and AntaraNews emphasize both natural beauty and ecological responsibility, illustrating the alignment between institutional messaging and public perception.

Posts from platforms such as YouTube and TikTok reveal a more participatory form of reception. The public is not merely a passive recipient of messages but also acts as a content producer affirming support for local ecotourism initiatives. For instance, promotional videos from the Putera-Puteri Ekowisata 2025 event serve as a digital participation space where audiences help spread sustainability values through comments, likes, and shares. This reflects a form of "negotiated reading" (Stuart Hall), where audiences do not simply accept messages passively but interpret and modify them according to their social context.

In addition to supportive responses, constructive criticism also emerged. For example, a user under the handle @jellypastaa remarked that Tangkahan had shifted from a community-based ecotourism model to mass tourism. This criticism indicates a heightened level of ecological awareness among netizens, suggesting that the digital public now demands consistency between "green" rhetoric and on-the-ground practices. Thus, negative reception in this context actually reinforces the validity of communication policy, as it demonstrates critical public engagement.

From a thematic perspective, the majority of posts highlight three dominant themes: (1) environmental and mangrove conservation, (2) local economic empowerment, and (3) regional identity and pride.

These themes strongly resonate with Kemenparekraf's core messages in its green tourism campaigns. Such narratives strengthen the legitimacy of government communication policies, as they are not only received but also rearticulated by the public in more emotional, visual, and context-specific forms.

Interestingly, positive sentiments predominantly originate from local and community-based accounts such as InfoSOLSEL, DesaSukaraja8, and DinasKominfo Lumajang, indicating a horizontal dissemination of messages from the national to the regional level. This finding illustrates the effectiveness of a network-based communication model, which enables the adaptation of green tourism values to local contexts. Local communities are

no longer merely policy objects but have become active communication actors who help shape sustainability narratives within the digital sphere (Nag, 2024; Ting, 2022).

Overall, the public's tendency toward green tourism reflects a process of internalizing sustainability values at the discursive level. Social media serves as both a space of representation and reflection, where official messages from Kemenparekraf intersect with public expressions in the form of creative content, humor, and documentation of green travel experiences. This pattern demonstrates the success of digital communication in shaping eco-conscious digital citizenship digital citizens who are environmentally aware and actively evaluate public policies in open, participatory ways.

From the perspective of Diffusion of Innovation Theory (Rogers, 2003), public responses to the green tourism policy illustrate the stage of early majority adoption in the diffusion of social innovation. Sustainability messages have moved beyond the experimental phase and are now being accepted as a new social norm, particularly among digitally connected generations engaged with visual content. The factors of observability (the ease of perceiving benefits) and compatibility (alignment with social values) serve as key drivers of this acceptance. Digital campaigns by Kemenparekraf featuring local narratives and community testimonials have accelerated the adoption of green values within the public sphere.

Meanwhile, according to Servaes (2020) in the Sustainable Communication Model, the success of policy communication depends on the extent to which public participation is accommodated as a core element of the communication process. The public's active interaction through comments, video participation, and locally generated content demonstrates the existence of egalitarian two-way communication. Within Servaes's framework, public acceptance of green tourism is not merely the result of persuasion but the manifestation of a participatory, inclusive, and sustainable communication process. Therefore, the green tourism communication policy is not only accepted but also brought to life by the public through creative and collaborative digital discourse.

Discussion

The findings of this study reveal that the digital communication strategies implemented by the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy (Kemenparekraf) through the green tourism program have successfully shifted the government's communication model from mere information delivery to collaborative practices involving the public, local communities, and creative industry actors. Campaign strategies such as #TravelResponsibly and Green Parekraf function not only as promotional media but also as participatory spaces for building public ecological awareness. This demonstrates that the success of environmental communication policies largely depends on the ability of public institutions to adapt sustainability values into digital narratives that are communicative, interactive, and culturally contextualized within society.

Furthermore, digital observation findings indicate that public reception toward the green tourism policy is predominantly positive. The public perceives this program not as mere governmental rhetoric but as a concrete initiative to integrate environmental preservation with local economic welfare. Patterns of social media interaction show public enthusiasm in reinterpreting sustainability messages, both through direct support and constructive criticism. In this context, digital communication serves as an arena of

negotiated meaning, where official government narratives intersect with the everyday experiences of digital citizens (Datlen & Pandolfi, 2020; Gerbaudo, 2024).

The findings also reinforce the idea that effective policy communication does not end with message dissemination but involves the public as active subjects in shaping discourse. The digital activities of citizens participating in green tourism campaigns, creating content, and engaging in discussions on ecotourism issues indicate the emergence of an inclusive and reflective communication ecosystem. Consequently, digital spaces function not merely as platforms for destination promotion but also as arenas for cultivating national ecological consciousness that is participatory and sustainable.

When compared with the study of Coirala (2022), this research expands the analytical scope by positioning digital communication as a central dimension in the implementation of ecotourism policy. Coirala's study emphasized local-level pentahelix collaboration for wildlife conservation, whereas this study highlights the role of cross-actor communication in the national digital sphere in shaping mass public perception. Similarly, Khotimah et al. (2024) examined the preservation of local traditions but did not incorporate a participatory digital communication approach. This distinction underscores that the present study contributes to broadening the understanding of adaptive policy communication, which responds to technological change and evolving information behavior in society.

Meanwhile, compared to Ritonga et al. (2024), who focused on the effectiveness of green tourism promotion policies, this research goes beyond the promotional aspect by analyzing public reception dynamics as indicators of sustainable communication success. Thus, the study not only describes communication strategies but also uncovers how the policy is translated, adopted, and reinterpreted by the public in digital spaces. This digital reception approach marks a significant distinction, providing a micro-level understanding of policy meaning from the perspective of society itself.

Within the framework of Rogers' (2003) Diffusion of Innovation Theory, Kemenparekraf's communication practices demonstrate a progressive stage of innovation adoption. The green tourism message has been received by the public as a social innovation with a high level of compatibility with the ecological aspirations of younger generations. The observability factor is evident through visual content that showcases the tangible benefits of ecotourism, while trialability is reflected in public engagement efforts to adopt environmentally friendly behaviors through responsible travel practices. This diffusion process underscores Kemenparekraf's success as a change agent capable of shaping public perception of green tourism as a new social norm.

From Servaes' (2020) perspective, the findings affirm that sustainable communication cannot be achieved without equal participation between institutions and the public. Kemenparekraf has successfully facilitated public dialogue that bridges the interests of government, business actors, and local communities within an egalitarian digital environment. This process represents a form of transformative communication consistent with the principles of sustainable communication, in which social, ecological, and cultural sustainability are integrated within public communication practices. Hence, the green tourism strategy not only disseminates environmental messages but also fosters a collective sense of responsibility rooted in social interaction.

The novelty of this research lies in its integration of digital reception analysis with the evaluation of governmental communication policies in the context of green tourism. This

study not only outlines communication strategies but also assesses effectiveness and public acceptance in digital spaces through a constructivist approach. Such an approach generates new insights into how environmental communication policies can be evaluated through public participation dynamics and sentiment analysis on social media. Therefore, this research strengthens the position of green tourism not merely as a policy program but as a living, reflective, and sustainable digital social movement that contributes to building national ecotourism awareness.

4. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the success of the green tourism communication policy implemented by the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy (Kemenparekraf) depends not only on the content of the messages but, more importantly, on the adaptability, participatory nature, and sustainability of its digital communication strategies. The transformation of government communication from a top-down model to a two-way collaborative model has produced a more inclusive and transformative form of public communication. Through programs such as #TravelResponsibly, Green Parekraf, and Green Tourism Training, the government has successfully shifted public interaction patterns from passive message reception to active participation in constructing the meaning of sustainability in digital spaces (Servaes & Malikhao, 2020).

The findings also demonstrate that the Indonesian public is becoming increasingly eco-conscious and digitally engaged in supporting sustainable tourism practices. The digital reception analysis indicates that the majority of citizens do not merely agree with the government's narrative but also create and reproduce creative content that independently articulates sustainability values. This marks the emergence of a new form of environmentally oriented digital citizenship or eco-conscious digital citizenship, in which digital citizens play an active role in driving social transformation toward sustainability (Baldi et al., 2022).

From a theoretical perspective, the study reinforces two key paradigms. First, within the framework of Rogers' (2003) Diffusion of Innovation Theory, Kemenparekraf's communication policy operates as a process of social innovation diffusion that has successfully advanced from the early adoption to the early majority stage, driven by the message's relative advantage and compatibility with the cultural values of the digital society. Second, based on the Sustainable Communication Model (Servaes & Malikhao, 2020), this study confirms that communication sustainability can only be achieved through equal participation between institutions and the public. In this regard, Kemenparekraf has successfully implemented the principle of co-creation of meaning, allowing the public to participate in shaping discourse around green tourism.

From a practical standpoint, this research offers several key recommendations for Kemenparekraf and other government institutions seeking to strengthen sustainability-based communication policies.

First, ensuring cross-platform narrative consistency is crucial so that sustainability messages remain coherent and do not lose their substantive meaning.

Second, enhancing the digital literacy of local tourism actors is vital to ensure that policy implementation goes beyond symbolic gestures and drives tangible behavioral change in the field (Hu et al., 2023).

Third, the government should build strategic collaborations with content creators, environmental communities, and educational institutions to establish a participatory and sustainable communication ecosystem (Cox & Depoe, 2015).

Moreover, this study contributes significantly to the development of policy communication theory. The use of digital reception analysis enriches understanding of how the public interprets, negotiates, and adopts government policies in the social media era. The theoretical contribution lies in integrating digital reception analysis with policy communication evaluation, a combination that remains relatively underexplored in sustainable tourism studies in Indonesia. Thus, the findings can serve as a foundation for developing a national sustainable communication policy model one that emphasizes not only message dissemination but also social participation and the strengthening of citizens' ecological identities.

For future research, it is recommended that similar studies adopt expanded methodological approaches, including big data social media analysis and digital social network mapping, to quantitatively measure the reach, resonance, and dynamics of sustainability discourse (Gerbaudo, 2024). An interdisciplinary approach combining communication, technology, and public policy perspectives would further enhance understanding of environmental communication effectiveness in the information society era (Luthra, 2024).

Overall, this study asserts that sustainability cannot be achieved solely through administrative policy but also through collaborative communication that thrives within digital spaces. Kemenparekraf has demonstrated that transparent, participatory, and data-driven communication can foster public ecological awareness while simultaneously strengthening Indonesia's image as a world-class green tourism destination.

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