

ENHANCING TOURISM BRANDING THROUGH TECHNOLOGY: A STUDY ON SMART CITY IMPLEMENTATION IN TELAGA JONGE, YOGYAKARTA SPECIAL REGENCY, INDONESIA

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ABSTRACT

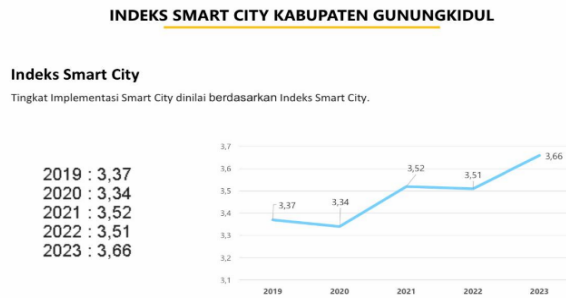
Technological innovation plays a key role in the transformation toward smart cities. As part of the “Gerakan Menuju 100 Smart City” initiative, Gunungkidul Regency issued Regent Regulation Number 24 of 2023 on the Smart City Masterplan, which includes *Smart Branding* in tourism. This study examines the implementation of *Smart Branding* at Telaga Jonge Tourism Area using Edward III’s policy implementation theory—focusing on communication, resources, disposition, and bureaucratic structure. The research applies a qualitative descriptive approach, with data collected through observation, interviews, documentation, and literature review. Informants were selected via purposive sampling, including Pokdarwis representatives, vendors, and visitors. Data analysis followed the stages of reduction, display, and conclusion. Findings show that Telaga Jonge has applied the 4A principle (Attraction, Amenity, Accessibility, Ancillary) effectively, supporting *Smart Branding* objectives. From the four implementation aspects, progress is generally adequate. However, challenges persist, particularly limited human resources for promotion and internal dynamics within the management team. Suggestions include increasing promotional personnel and improving leadership structure to enhance branding performance.

Keywords: Smart City, Smart Branding, policy implementation, tourism development, technological integration

INTRODUCTION

The advancement of technology and information has driven the transformation of local governance toward the concept of *Smart City*, particularly through the implementation of *Smart Branding*. In Gunungkidul Regency, the development of a smart city is guided by Regent Regulation Number 24 of 2023 concerning the Smart City Masterplan. As one of the six core dimensions of the *Smart City* framework, *Smart Branding* aims to enhance the attractiveness and competitiveness of the region by leveraging technology in tourism promotion, business development, and city image building. The Telaga Jonge Tourism Area has been designated as a priority location for the implementation of *Smart Branding* in the regency. Integrating digital technology into tourism management and marketing is essential to optimize branding effectiveness and strengthen Gunungkidul’s identity within the *Smart City* initiative. Therefore, it is

crucial to assess how technological integration supports the implementation of *Smart Branding* at Telaga Jonge in accordance with the existing regulatory framework. Table 1.1 Smart City Index of Gunungkidul Regency



Source: Communication and Informatics Office of Gunungkidul Regency: 2024

Based on the data presented, the level of *Smart City* implementation in Gunungkidul Regency reached its highest index in 2023 at 3.66, compared to the lowest score of 3.34 in 2020, with fluctuating progress in between. According to the Gunungkidul Communication and Informatics Office, in 2023 the regency received a national award as the best *Smart City* implementer in the categories of *Smart Branding* and *Smart Society*, awarded by the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology (Kemenkominfo). Evidence from the official local government website is provided in the attachment.

One of the awarded *Smart Branding* initiatives is the "Pasar Digital" (Digital Market) program by the Department of Tourism of Gunungkidul. This Quick Win aims to build a digital marketplace ecosystem, where tourism destinations are promoted through social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube. These locations offer local products, attractive photo spots, and a visually appealing environment that encourages visitors to create and share content online. This strategy has had a direct positive impact on the local economy around the tourism sites.

This aligns with the vision of Gunungkidul's *Smart City* development as stated in Regent Regulation Number 24 of 2023 on the Smart City Masterplan: "Realizing an Improved Quality of Life for Gunungkidul Communities with Dignity by 2026." To achieve this vision, appropriate strategies and efforts are required. This research focuses on the implementation of the *Smart Branding* program in the tourism sector. Tourism was selected due to its strategic role in promoting the region and serving as a model for other areas. The cultural richness and natural beauty of Gunungkidul provide valuable assets for tourism development. Through *Smart Branding*, it is expected that regional development can be accelerated and local revenue (*Pendapatan*

Asli Daerah / PAD) can be increased.

METHODS

This study adopts a qualitative descriptive approach to explore the implementation of tourism development at Telaga Jonge in supporting the *Smart Branding* initiative under Regent Regulation Number 24 of 2023 on the Smart City Masterplan of Gunungkidul Regency. The research was conducted from January 1 to February 1, 2025, at Telaga Jonge Tourism Area, Pacarejo Village, Semanu District, Gunungkidul. Qualitative data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis, with primary sources including members of the local tourism awareness group (*Pokdarwis*), vendors, and visitors. Secondary data were obtained from relevant literature, journals, and official documents. The findings aim to provide a comprehensive understanding of how *Smart Branding* is implemented in practice, particularly focusing on the role of digital promotion, community involvement, and sustainable tourism management.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Telaga Jonge Tourism Profile

Telaga Jonge Tourism Area is located in Padukuhan Jonge, Pacarejo Village, Semanu District, Gunungkidul Regency, Special Region of Yogyakarta. It lies approximately 7 kilometers east of Wonosari or 5 kilometers west of Semanu Subdistrict. Covering an area of about 3 hectares, the lake is surrounded by man-made forests that create a cool and natural atmosphere. The water never dries up, even during prolonged dry seasons a unique characteristic that has drawn local attention for years.

Originally known as a “petilasan” (sacred site) associated with the legendary figure Kyai Jonge, believed to possess supernatural powers, the location was developed into a tourism object in 2017 by the local community. Supported by the Pacarejo Village Government and the Gunungkidul Tourism Office, infrastructure and facilities such as parking areas, food stalls, and performance stages have been built.

The site is open daily from 06:30 to 17:00 WIB, with no entrance fee only a parking fee of IDR 3,000. On weekends, a Digital Market is held, attracting more visitors. The tourism site is managed by Pokdarwis (Community-based Tourism Awareness Group) Jonge Raya, consisting of 45 members under the official decree of the Gunungkidul Tourism Office No. 002/KPTS/2019.

B. Analysis of Telaga Jonge Tourism Object Development Technology

The development of Telaga Jonge Tourism Area is led by the local community through *Pokdarwis* (Community-based Tourism Awareness Group) Jonge Raya, with support from the government and private sector. The management aligns with Law No. 10 of 2009 on Tourism, which emphasizes systematic, planned, integrated, sustainable, and responsible development. It also follows the Ministry of Tourism and Creative

Economy Regulation No. 9 of 2021, highlighting that tourism must be community-based, environmentally sustainable, and culturally respectful.

In line with Sharpley's (2009) concept of sustainable tourism, the site aims to balance environmental conservation, local community needs, and tourist satisfaction. The development also applies the 4A framework proposed by Sunaryo (2013):

1. Attraction – Natural beauty and cultural heritage serve as main attractions.
2. Amenity – Supporting facilities such as restrooms, parking areas, mosques, and food stalls are available.
3. Accessibility – Well-maintained roads ensure ease of access for visitors.
4. Ancillary – Managed by a structured *Pokdarwis* , ensuring effective operation and promotion.

Moreover, Telaga Jonge has adopted digital technology in its promotional strategies, reflecting integration with the *Smart City* initiative through the dimension of *Smart Branding* . According to Regent Regulation No. 24 of 2023 and the Ministry of Communication and Informatics (Kominfo), indicators of *Smart Branding* include:

- Tourist-friendly destinations
- Comfort-supporting infrastructure
- Hospitality culture
- Utilization of information technology

This makes Telaga Jonge a relevant case study for analyzing the implementation of *Smart Branding* within the broader context of smart city development.

In today's digital era, the use of information technology has become a crucial element in tourism management and promotion. Within the context of *Smart Branding* , technology is used to enhance information accessibility and strengthen marketing strategies.

One notable innovation at Telaga Jonge Tourism Area is the implementation of a Digital Market , which operates every Saturday and Sunday. The market offers traditional foods such as Soto Bathok, Es Cendol, and Lotek, combining cultural values with digital innovation. Vendors wear traditional lurik cloth, while transactions are conducted using tokens instead of cash.

Additionally, the site provides *Instagrammable* photo spots that encourage visitors to create and share content on social media platforms, further supporting digital-based promotion.

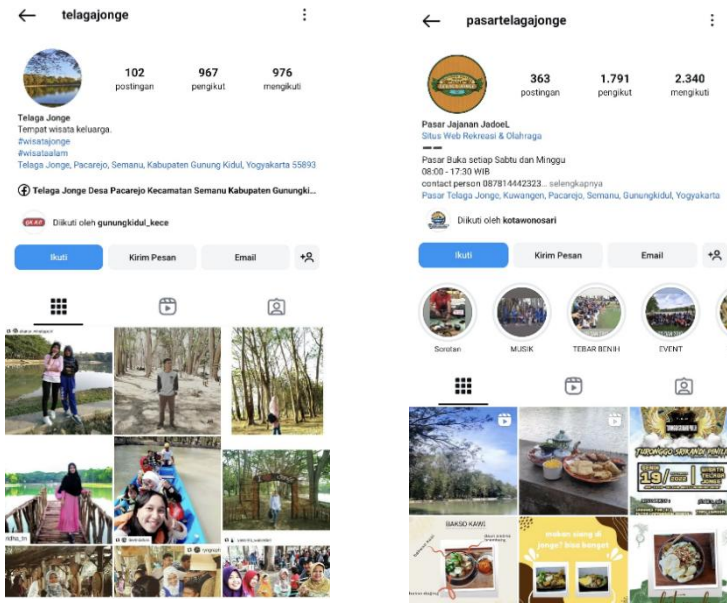


Figure 4.1
on January 16, 2025)

Telaga Jonge instgram account (accessed



Figure 4.2 Telaga Jonge Facebook account (accessed on January 7, 2025)



Figure 4.3 Telaga Jonge Youtube account (accessed on January 8, 2025).

This study evaluates the implementation of the *Smart Branding* concept at Telaga Jonge Tourism Area as part of the implementation of Regent Regulation No. 24 of 2023 on the Smart City Masterplan in Gunungkidul Regency. Using Edward III's policy implementation theory, the research focuses on four key indicators: communication, resources, disposition, and bureaucratic structure.

Research Findings:

1. Tourism Development at Telaga Jonge

- Aligned with sustainable tourism principles, focusing on economic growth while preserving environmental and cultural values.
- Meets the 4A framework (Attraction, Amenity, Accessibility, Ancillary).
- Offers a tourist-friendly environment with supporting facilities and local community involvement through *Pokdarwis* (Community-based Tourism Awareness Group).

2. Implementation of Smart Branding

- Utilization of digital platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, and official websites for promotion.
- The presence of a Digital Market – where cashless transactions are conducted using tokens – has become a major attraction.
- Provision of *Instagrammable* photo spots enhances visitor engagement

and online visibility.

- However, there is still limited use of integrated technology and declining frequency of promotional content.

3. Policy Implementation Analysis (Edward III Theory)

- Communication : Socialization by the Department of Tourism and *Pokdarwis* has been carried out, although coordination timing remains a challenge.
- Resources : Adequate infrastructure and basic facilities exist, but there is a lack of dedicated personnel for marketing.
- Disposition : Strong commitment from stakeholders, including government, private sector, and local communities, supports branding efforts.
- Bureaucratic Structure : The organizational structure of *Pokdarwis* is clearly defined under an official decree, though the dual role of the leader occasionally affects efficiency.

4. Challenges and Recommendations

- Key challenges include limited human resources for promotion, low activity in digital marketing, and internal dynamics within the *Pokdarwis* leadership.
- Recommendations: increase staffing for promotion, periodically evaluate

organizational structure, and enhance digital technology integration to optimize *Smart Branding* performance.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research on the *Smart Branding* Program at Telaga Jonge Tourism Area as an effort to support the implementation of Regent Regulation No. 24 of 2023 on the Smart City Masterplan in Gunungkidul Regency, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. The Telaga Jonge Tourism Area has successfully implemented *Smart Branding* through the 4A tourism framework : *Attraction, Amenity, Accessibility* , and *Ancillary services* .

2. The development of the Telaga Jonge Tourism Area supports the implementation of the *Smart Branding* initiative.
3. The implementation of *Smart Branding* serves as a model for collaboration between local government, community leaders, and private sectors in realizing the *Smart City* vision for Gunungkidul Regency.
4. Based on Edward III's theory (*communication, resources, disposition, bureaucratic structure*), the implementation of tourism development at Telaga Jonge is generally effective:
 - Communication : Has been well-established through socialization efforts involving *Pokdarwis* and the local community.
 - Resources : Adequate overall, although there are limitations in human resources dedicated to marketing and promotion.
 - Disposition : Strong commitment from stakeholders supports the branding process.
 - Bureaucratic Structure : A clear organizational structure exists under the official decree of the Department of Tourism (No. 002/KPTS/2019), though some internal management dynamics still occur.

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