
DYNAMIC MARKETING IN INDONESIA'S ECOTOURISM SECTOR: A REVIEW AND RESEARCH AGENDA

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ABSTRAK:

Peran *dynamic marketing capability* telah dipelajari dan diaplikasikan secara luas di berbagai industri, tidak terkecuali di industri pariwisata. Namun, sangat sedikit literatur yang membahas mengenai *dynamic marketing* di regional Indonesia, padahal dengan diperolehnya pengertian melalui studi sebelumnya mengenai subjek ini, pemahaman praktis dan teoretis sebelumnya mampu merepresentasikan pemahaman yang komprehensif di *ecotourism* Indonesia. Penelitian ini dengan demikian bertujuan untuk menilik kembali literatur dari studi sebelumnya mengenai aplikasi *dynamic marketing* di sektor ekowisata secara khusus di Indonesia. Hasil dari studi ini diharapkan dapat merangkum dan menyajikan studi terbaru dari peneliti sebelumnya tentang bagaimana *dynamic marketing* dapat diaplikasikan di ekowisata Indonesia.

Kata Kunci: *dynamic marketing; dynamic capability; ekowisata; Indonesia*

ABSTRACT:

The role of dynamic marketing capability has been widely discussed and applied in various industries, not exceptionally tourism industry. However, very few literatures have discussed regarding studies of dynamic marketing in Indonesia's ecotourism sector, whereas by gaining insights from previous scholars regarding this aspect, it can produce comprehensive understanding both theoretically and practically in the field of Indonesia's ecotourism. This study aims to review literatures from previous scholars regarding the applicability of dynamic marketing in ecotourism sector particularly in Indonesia. The outcome of this study is to summarize and present existing studies from various scholars to the readers regarding how dynamic marketing can be applied in Indonesia's ecotourism market.

Keywords: *dynamic marketing; dynamic capability; ecotourism; Indonesia*

INTRODUCTION

Ecotourism objects are those places that are directed towards exotic, natural environments, especially to support preservation efforts and observe wildlife. Ecotourism generally contribute positive synergistic relationships between tourism, biodiversity, and local people, facilitated by appropriate management (Ross & Wall, 1999). Usually, National Parks in various countries are ecotourism objects, for example in Indonesia. Indonesia has been known for its magnificent ecotourism objects which are widely popular in the world. Several ecotourism spots in Indonesia are Raja Ampat, Wakatobi National Park, Ujung Kulon National Park, Mount Gede National Park, Mount Bromo National Park, Mount Rinjani National Park, Mount Semeru National Park, Lake Toba, and many more. Indonesia offers distinctive leisure experiences which have attracted tourists worldwide; this is shown by tourists' number of arrival in Indonesia from the year of 1995 to 2014 which has increased nearly 200% (Worldbank, 2014).

Just as other industries, ecotourism also faces numerous threats and opportunities (Wearing & Neil, 2009) on its landscape either in developed countries (Diamantis, Johnson, Fennell, & Dowling, 2003; Fuller, Bultjens, & Cummings, 2005; Jarvis, Weeden, & Simcock, 2010), developing countries (Gouvea, 2004; Laurance, Alonso, Lee, & Campbell, 2006; Mbaiwa & Stronza, 2009; Okech, 2011) or particularly in Asia (Hitchcock, 2009). For example regarding the right of public access in Scandinavia (Sandell, 2006), infrastructure problems and local communities including stakeholders in Vietnam (Lipscombe & Thwaites, 2003), unhealthy travelers that present threats to primate ecotourism in Malaysia (Muehlenbein et al., 2010), threats of unmanaged tourism towards environmental quality and biodiversity in China (Nianyong & Zhuge, 2001), land use policy problem with regard to land tenure and Park Protection in Amazonian Peru (Yu, Hendrickson, & Castillo, 1997).

Firms must actively oversee the changes in the industry environment to be able to respond to fluctuations to survive, not exceptionally in the tourism sector. One of the methods to approach and respond to changes in the market is through dynamic marketing capability (David J. Teece, Gary. Pisano, & Amy. Shuen, 1997a) which enables firms to continuously respond and act innovatively in emerging markets. Additionally –in terms of ecotourism – to preserve the three fundamental elements of sustainability which are people, planet, profit (Fisk, 2010; Kuhlman & Farrington, 2010).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Dynamic Capabilities

The basis of this study is to review the idea of dynamic capability by David J. Teece et al. (1997a) for firms to actively adapt, absorb, and innovate (Wang & Ahmed, 2007) in a highly dynamic business environment, of which on this study is seen through the lens of ecotourism sector. Ideally, firms must respond to the changes or shifts in the market, otherwise firms will not be able to strive and survive in the industry's competition. Many examples have shown these phenomena for example the decline of Nokia (Surowiecki, 2004). Firms must actively find new ways to innovate – particularly in the development of technology – unless they will perish (Christensen, 2013). Based on that occasion, this study fully agree with Pöppelbuß et al. (2011) which mentions that firms needs to continuously innovate through the idea of sensing, seizing and transforming changes or even barriers and opportunities into profits, even more, through this notion firms can also grasp the sustainability concepts which preserves people, planet, and profit (Fisk, 2010; Kuhlman & Farrington, 2010).

Dynamic Capability in Tourism

Dynamic capability philosophy has been applied in various industries such as typesetter (Tripsas, 1997), retail food (Marcus & Anderson, 2006), automobiles and mainframe computers (Iansiti & Clark, 1994), pharmaceutical (Athreye, Kale, & Ramani, 2009). Its derivative philosophies such as the idea of sensing, seizing, transforming (Pöppelbuß et al., 2011) based on the notion of adaptive, absorptive, innovative capabilities (Wang & Ahmed, 2007) are considered useful to be implemented strategically into the above various industries. How does dynamic

capability be linked with ecotourism, or why does ecotourism sectors need to be aware and understand the importance of dynamic capability? Stamboulis and Skayannis (2003) had actually studied innovation strategy for experience-based tourism where they argued that any location or business which intends to perform better than others should become either a learning region or a learning industry. As the world has become more digitalized, the landscape of tourism marketing had been revolutionized by the mobile as well internet applications. The ability to ‘sense’, to ‘seize’ and finally to ‘innovate’ Pöppelbuß et al. (2011) will become extremely crucial for businesses to grasp potential opportunities in the future. In addition, Pine and Gilmore (1998) had formerly addressed the idea of ‘experience economy’, which is then readapted by Stamboulis and Skayannis (2003) into four general quadrants with one ‘sweet spot’ on the middle of the four quadrants as in Figure 1.

Huy and Khin (2015) observed that ecotourism can also be the media to promote sustainable competitive advantage. Denicolai, Cioccarelli, and Zucchella (2010) proposed a complementary approach to tourism systems based on the idea of dynamic capabilities and destination management. Walsh, Lynch, and Harrington (2011) discussed tourism firms in the lens of dynamic capability (Eisenhardt & Martin, 2000; David J. Teece, Gary Pisano, & Amy Shuen, 1997b) to observe how these firms can manage and reconfigure their resources to deal with highly turbulent environments which is expected to produce innovations and competitive advantages. Camisón and Monfort-Mir (2012) separately attempted to measure innovation in tourism industry from the Schumpeterian and the dynamic-capabilities perspectives.

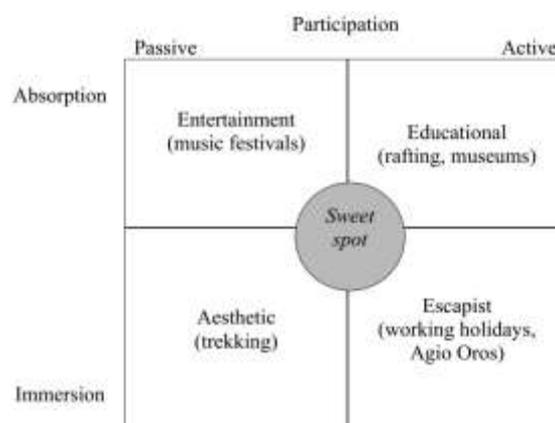


Figure 1 The Realm of Experience Realization in Tourism Sector (Stamboulis & Skayannis, 2003)

Studies regarding ecotourism in Indonesia have been previously conducted through different approaches by former scholars (Borchers, 2002; Butarbutar & Soemarno, 2013; Clifton, 2004; Janes Cochrane, 1996; Janet Cochrane, 2009; J. E. Cochrane, 2003; Dalem, 2002; Galley & Clifton, 2004; Hakim, Kim, & Hong, 2009; Hakim & Nakagoshi, 2007; Hill, 2000; Idajati, Pamungkas, & Vely Kukinul, 2016; Manurung, 2000; Nuva, Shamsudin, Radam, & Shuib, 2009; Rahmat, 2000; Ross & Wall, 1999, 2001; Sproule, Suhandi, Lindberg, Wood, & Engeldrum, 1998; Zaharin Aris et al., 2015). Nevertheless, previous studies that connect ecotourism in Indonesia through the lens of dynamic capabilities were considerably missing, whereas earlier scholar have shown that dynamic capabilities can produce competitive advantage (Reuter, Foerstl, Hartmann, & Blome, 2010; Vivas López, 2005; Wang & Ahmed, 2007; Winter, 2003; Wu, 2010) and sustainability (Hammervoll, Leif-Magnus Jensen, &

Beske, 2012; David J Teece, 2007). This particular study will focus on the three fundamental elements of the derivatives of dynamic capability which are sensing, seizing, and transforming (Pöppelbuß et al., 2011).

Sensing, Seizing, and Transforming

As Pöppelbuß et al. (2011) puts it, sensing refers to the management of different sources of information and knowledge that need to be translated into leading problems and unmet service needs before a more focused conceptualization of new service solutions follows in the seizing phase; seizing consists of three basic activities of which solution development, solution evaluation and selection, as well as solution detailing; transforming also comprises of three elements of which unfreezing – breaking existing work structures and addressing resistances; changing – testing prototypes or market testing; and finally refreezing – which foster all tasks necessary to implement the new service processes. According to these explanations, we can put this into the following order. First, sensing in a simple explanation can be stated as scanning either opportunities or threats faced by firms both internally and externally. Second, the respective firms must be able to develop solution, look for alternatives and options, and formulate the most feasible, sustainable and profitable solution. Finally, they need to prepare for changes implemented in the work structures or business operations.

DISCUSSION

International tourist arrivals have shown significant increases in Indonesia (Figure 2). Up to now, Indonesia's tourism contributes four percent from the total GDP and on 2019 it is expected to rise to be eight percent. Indonesia is ranked on 50th position based on The Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Report 2015 (World Economic Forum, 2015). This ranking is justified by several aspects such as environment, policy and conditions, infrastructure, natural and cultural resources. As World Economic Forum (2015) reported, Forest Watch Indonesia mentioned that Indonesia lost 990,000 hectares of forest between 2010 and 2013 while 45% of coral reefs in the region's "Coral Triangle" face high level of threat. Therefore, Indonesia is ranked globally on 50th position, and 11th on regional order. On this study, it is argued that the Indonesia its ecotourism sector is facing crucial concerns particularly in environmental issues (Butarbutar & Soemarno, 2013), community development (Walpole & Goodwin, 2001), and infrastructure readiness (Walpole & Goodwin, 2000). This study attempts to address these concerns with the lens of dynamic capability philosophy.

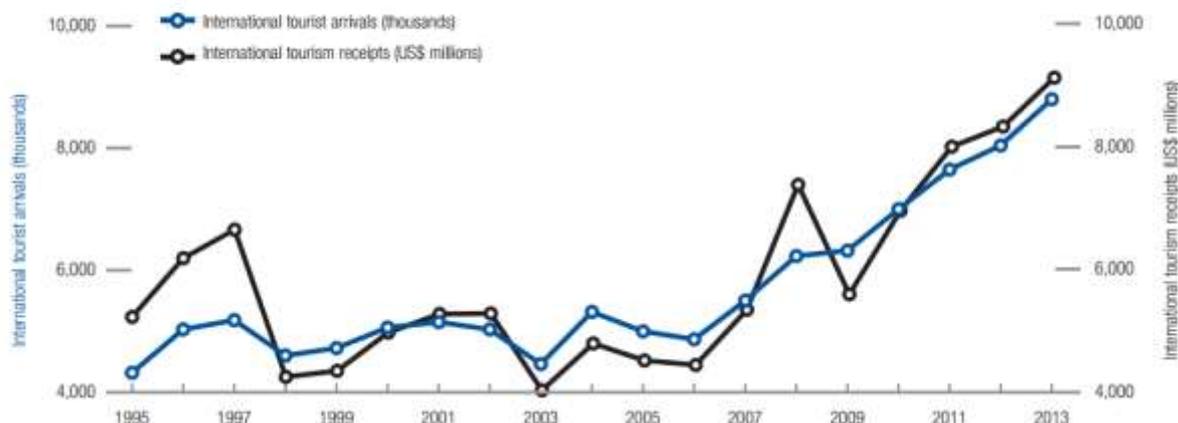


Figure 2 International Tourist Arrivals and Receipts in Indonesia (World Economic Forum, 2015)

Sensing requires extensive and rigorous research towards the phenomena that are actually occurring in the ecotourism industry. Market sensing inevitably demands comprehensive market understanding including the political, social, economic, environmental, economy and technological aspects. Indonesia's tourism needs to earnestly seek for innovations and developments organized by the trends happening both in the domestic and international market. Sensing can be approached by observing trending phenomena in the society, then merge it with the potential of the ecotourism sector in Indonesia. For example, the Dieng Jazz Festival and *Jazz Atas Gunung* in Mount Bromo, are some of the cases that have scanned the trend of the rising popularity of jazz music in Indonesia with the sensation of experiencing the nature of Indonesia. Some sports in the outdoor nature activities were also conducted such as Bali Marathon, Bromo Marathon, Bali Triathlon that promotes not only tourism activity but also combined with sports which were trending on the last five years. Diving festivals such as Pulau Weh Dive Festival, Buleleng Bali Dive Festival, Pemuteran Bay Festival promoted diving as sports activity can be merged with outdoor natural ecotourism object in Indonesia.

We can see that from the above events, market scanning in the future can be approached by scanning the trends happening on the society and combine it to create unique value proposition, particularly in ecotourism sector. Sports combined with ecotourism become marathon or triathlon or trail running event. Music combined with ecotourism become jazz festivals located on the mountains. In the future, Indonesia's tourism must actively scan, explore and integrate innovations by combining two or three experiences towards something unique. As information has been widely available, Indonesia must actively look for opportunities and challenges and thereby it can be proceed further to be seized and transformed on the advancement of Indonesia's ecotourism. Future research agenda based on this study is directed towards possibility and opportunity in the future to be options and alternatives which can potentially be seized into profitable and more importantly sustainable ecotourism activities. This can include not only sports and music but other aspects such as arts, cultures, etc.

Seizing means fundamentally grasping the potentially profitable and sustainable ideas and therefore contextualized and analyzed to be implemented in Indonesia. Upon finding out potential areas of activity, feasibility study or market testing is certainly needed to measure whether the conceptual ideas are matched with the demographic,

psychographic, or economic conditions of Indonesian people. For example, night clubs entertainments may be one of the ideas that are potentially profitable, but by considering the local culture, this type of activity may not be able to be implemented.

Transforming is the last stage of which the previous two phases must be fulfilled. The process of freezing and unfreezing cannot be undertaken if the processes of seizing or ultimately sensing are not carried out. Hence, before landing on this particular process, strong justification of sensing and seizing must be ensured. Therefore, on this study it is argued that the process of sensing and seizing of which Indonesia are still lacking, shall be the focus in the future to strategically plan for long term sustainable goal in terms of social, financial and environmental issues arise in Indonesia.

Looking at the present condition of Indonesia's tourism, it is certainly true that Indonesia has massive potentials to be further developed especially in the ecotourism sector. The role of the government to actively engage in the philosophy of dynamic capability is considered to be highly important as it will boost and improve the current tourism conditions towards better ranking in the future. Profit is not the only issue, sustainability needs to be taken into account when discussing about the ecotourism of Indonesia. Ecotourism needs to actively scan for opportunities as well as challenges in order to be resolved and utilized for further progression. Thereby, Indonesia needs to conduct thorough benchmark and study regarding tourism from more advanced countries such as Singapore, Hong Kong, Japan. By marketing dynamically, not only profitability issue can be resolved, but also sustainability issue can be achieved.

CONCLUSION

This study attempts to link the theory of dynamic marketing capability with the ecotourism industry in Indonesia. Conclusion can be drawn from the above analysis that Indonesia has not yet fully developed and implemented its tourism as shown in the index by World Economic Forum. Dynamic marketing capability through the eyes of sensing, seizing, and transforming can be one of the methods to approach better result in resolving the issue of profitability and sustainability in Indonesia. Not only government, but also private and academics need to enthusiastically find innovations and alternatives to boost Indonesia's ecotourism to a more advanced system and can compete with other countries with the natural resources that Indonesia has until now.

This study however limits the study by providing only preliminary insights for future studies, which has not been discussed by previous scholars. It is strongly suggested for further studies to discover possibilities of merging leisure or academic or historical aspects, for example, with the ecotourism in Indonesia. Hence, by combining these two or more aspects, it is expected that value proposition can be made to be offered to tourists both domestic and international.

BIOGRAPHY

Harriman Saragih is a faculty member in Management studies at both Regular and International classes in the University of Pelita Harapan, Indonesia. He obtained his Bachelor's in Engineering from Bandung Institute of Technology while his Master's in Management was received from Binus Business School. Having worked formerly at the multinational shipping line also oil and gas industries, at the UPH Business School he

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