

Representation Of Indonesian Tourism Space On Social Media: A Study Of The Distribution Patterns And Digital Narrative Of #WonderfulIndonesia Hashtags On Platform X

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the representation of Indonesian tourism spaces in digital discourse through the #WonderfulIndonesia hashtag on the X platform by examining spatial distribution patterns, narrative themes, temporal dynamics, and user engagement. A descriptive qualitative approach was employed. Data were collected through manual crawling on X using Google Colaboratory, Python, and the snsrape library, focusing on public posts containing #WonderfulIndonesia between April 1, 2024 and May 1, 2025. The dataset included posting time, text, user or post location, media, usernames, and post links. Data analysis involved filtering, grouping by location and theme, and thematic analysis of narratives. The findings indicate that digital representations of tourism spaces are concentrated in popular destinations, particularly Yogyakarta, Bandung, Jakarta, and Lumajang, while several attractive destinations receive more limited exposure. Dominant narratives include local nature tourism, culture and culinary experiences, religious and cultural events, nostalgia, healing, domestic exploration, and national pride. Posting activity increases during weekends, national holidays, and tourism events. Although user engagement is low, the hashtag functions as a communication node connecting institutional actors and the public in constructing Indonesia's tourism image. The findings show that social

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media produces spatial representations that influence destination visibility and support inclusive tourism promotion strategies.

Keyword: Virtual Geography; Spatial Representation; #WonderfullIndonesia.

INTRODUCTION

The development of digital technology and massive social media that occurred during this period also had a significant influence on the tourism sector. The space regarding information about tourist destinations, which was previously limited through brochures, print media, or oral communication, has now transformed into the digital realm. The process of reconstructing the tourist space took place through uploads on social media, thus forming a new landscape in the dissemination of information and tourism promotion. (Ernawati & Hananto, 2023; Sufi & Sabri, 2020) (Ichsan et al., 2024; Prasetyo et al., n.d.) (Novilia & Gustaman, 2024; Wibowo et al., 2025)

The concept of virtual geography has become very relevant as an approach that can be used in understanding how a space is represented, communicated, and interpreted digitally. The use of social media, one of which is Platform X, not only serves as a means of sharing information, but has also become a means of forming spatial and cultural representations of various tourist destinations. Platform X (<https://x.com>) is one of the text-based social media platforms and public conversations that has great potential to be a source for analyzing an actual phenomenon in the digital world. The platform not only allows the search of spatial information through geotagging or location metadata features, but also allows for narrative analysis in the form of keywords, opinions, and discourses that accompany each upload. One of the features that makes it easier for users to search for a hot topic of problems that are happening in the digital world is to use the hashtag (#) feature. (Batty, 1997; Osborne & Jones, 2022) (Putri, 2022; Ullaeli et al., 2024)

The phenomenon of using hashtags (#) such as #WonderfullIndonesia, which is part of the official campaign of the Ministry of Tourism of the Republic of Indonesia, has become a space identity to promote Indonesian tourist destinations in cyberspace. This hashtag is not only used by official government accounts or tourism industry players, but also by the general public, (Chotijah, 2020; Cabinet Secretary of the Republic of Indonesia, 2017; Yudithadewi, 2020) *influencers*, and international tourists, thereby building a broad and dynamic digital narrative network.

The ease of disseminating information through digital media is also inseparable from concrete problems that are rarely realized by many people. The problem of inequality in promotion

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and distribution of tourist destinations arises along with the rise of digital promotion. For example, the dominance of uploads highlighting popular destinations such as Bali, Yogyakarta, and Labuhan Bajo causes other areas with similar tourism potential to get less exposure. This inequality has an impact on the distribution of tourism economic benefits, as well as causing an imbalance in development between regions. Unequal spatial representation on social media also strengthens the physical inequality that occurs in the field.

The uneven distribution of tourism information and narratives in the digital society has direct implications for public perception. This reinforces that the reality of space in the study of geography is no longer purely physical, but also socially and digitally formed. Therefore, the analysis of how Indonesia's tourism space is represented spatially through social media is important to be studied in depth, especially through hashtags such as #WonderfulIndonesia

This research aims to unravel the question of the balance of representation of Indonesian tourist spaces in digital discourse, as well as how the narrative formed by Twitter users builds the social reality about tourist destinations in the eyes of the public. The Twitter data exploration method with crawling techniques and digital narrative content analysis was used to obtain this picture.

Through this research, it is hoped that it will be able to contribute, both academically in the development of virtual geography studies and digital communication, as well as practically as input for equitable tourism promotion policies. The representation of tourist spaces on social media is not just a reflection of digital activities, but an integral part of the construction of spaces that affect the flow of tourists, development policies, and public understanding of the diversity of Indonesian destinations.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach with the aim of exploring the representation of Indonesia's tourism space on social media X through the use of hashtags #WonderfulIndonesia. This approach was chosen because it allows for an in-depth observation of spatial and narrative tendencies in tourism digital content without conducting experiments or manipulation of variables. Thus, this study focuses on understanding the social meaning and construction of spatial representation formed by users of platform X in the context of digital tourism communication.

Data collection is carried out through manual *crawling* techniques that combine direct exploration on platform X and the use of Google *Colaboratory* (Colab) with basic Python

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commands and *snscape* libraries. The *crawling* process is done without using an official API, so only publicly available data is retrieved. The data collected was limited to *tweets* containing #WonderfulIndonesia hashtags in the period of April 1, 2024 to May 1, 2025 according to the temporal limitations of the study.

The data obtained includes the time of the upload (*created_at*), the content of the tweet text (*full_text*), username, location (location) if available, as well as *tweet links* and supporting media (*image_url*). All data is then compiled in table format and sorted manually using Microsoft Word and Excel software. The filtering process is carried out to ensure the relevance of the content to tourism topics, eliminate duplication, and group data based on specific themes or locations.

Data analysis was carried out qualitatively with a thematic approach. Text data is read and manually coded to identify dominant narrative patterns, such as tourism promotion themes, local exploration, expressions of national pride, and emotional meaning in digital narratives. Thematic categories are formed based on the frequency and meaning of keywords that appear in the tweet text. Spatial analysis is performed descriptively based on location information listed in *tweets* or mentioned in the body of the text, without the use of visual digital mapping.

The temporal dimension is analyzed by marking the upload time pattern, including its association with certain holidays, weekends, or *tourism events*. The results of the analysis are presented in the form of narrative descriptions that relate the time, location, and theme of content in the process of representing Indonesian tourist spaces on social media.

This qualitative and manual approach allows for the deep digging of meaning from the collected digital data while maintaining validity through a systematic filtering and coding process. Even without the use of advanced analysis software, the research findings are still valid because they are based on a scientific framework and a critical interpretation of digital social data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Data Structure and Scope

The data structure in this study reflects the general characteristics of *social media big data* which is unstructured but rich in context. The data set obtained from platform X during the period April 2024 to May 2025 consists of several main elements, namely the upload time (*created_at*), the content of the text or narrative (*full_text*), the location of the user or upload (location), supporting media in the form of images (*image_url*), as well as user account information (*username*) and *tweet link* (*tweet_url*). These attributes allow for spatial, temporal, and semantic exploration of data, which is an important foundation in the study of virtual geography and digital

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communication. (Boyd & Crawford, 2012; Zook et al., 2010)

According to , the effectiveness of social media analysis is highly dependent on a thorough understanding of the structure of the data, including the context in which it is used. The time dimension, for example, not only records the moment of information delivery, but also serves as an indicator of trends, social momentum, and the dynamics of events that influence digital discourse. This opinion is in line with the argument that temporality is a crucial dimension in big data because it allows the identification of repetitive patterns and tipping points in online communication. Bruns & Burgess (2015) Boyd & Crawford (2012)

The *full_text* variable in *tweets* plays an important role as material for digital discourse analysis. In accordance with the view, texts in public media, including social media, are social constructs that contain cultural ideologies, values, and practices. Therefore, the exploration of narratives in *tweets* provides an in-depth understanding of how people frame Indonesia's tourism space in a digital context.

Although *location* variables are often inconsistent or empty for some users, location data is still relevant to be analyzed through a *volunteered geographic information* (VGI) approach. stated that although VGI is voluntary and non-standardized, the data have high value in spatial mapping and studies, especially in revealing collective spatial perceptions. The strategy of combining explicit (metadata) and implicit (from the body of text) information is the main solution to overcome the limitations of location data accuracy on platform X. Goodchild & Li (2012) (Goodchild & Li, 2012; Zhang, 2021)

The existence of *image_url* and *tweet_url attributes* adds a visual dimension to this study. explains that visual analysis in the context of digital media can reveal the affective and symbolic aspects of spatial representation. Images and visual content contribute to the formation of perceptions of tourist destinations, thereby reinforcing the narrative built in the tweet text Pink (2016) (Ullaali et al., 2024) . Thus, the data set structure used offers a wide opportunity to analyze the representation of tourist spaces from various dimensions, both temporal, spatial, and linguistic. The combination of technical (Kitchin, 2014) *metadata* and narrative content makes this data set an important resource in understanding how people shape and disseminate the image of Indonesian tourism on social media. This condition supports the idea that social media is not just a communication channel, but a space for the production of new spatial meanings and identities in the era of virtual geography. (Goodchild & Li, 2012; Kitchin, 2014; Woodpecker, 2015)



2. Location Distribution Pattern

The results of *crawling* data from hashtags #WonderfulIndonesia show that many uploads come from well-known tourism areas that have been widely known by domestic and international tourists. Among them are:

- a. Yogyakarta (especially Borobudur): As one of the largest cultural tourism destinations in Indonesia, Yogyakarta and Borobudur Temple have long been the center of Indonesian tourism promotion. As a UNESCO world heritage site, Borobudur Temple was the main highlight in #WonderfulIndonesia uploads, with many (Borobudur, 2025; Journalism, 2025) *tweets* listing this location. In this case, Yogyakarta shows dominance as a center of cultural tourism that is often promoted on social media.
- b. Central Jakarta: As the capital of Indonesia, Jakarta is one of the most frequently mentioned cities in the hashtag #WonderfulIndonesia. Areas such as Monas (National Monument), HI Roundabout, and Jakarta Old Town are often the focal points of uploads. Jakarta is often the main gateway for domestic and international tourists before continuing their journey to other destinations in Indonesia. (MediaIndonesia, 2024)
- c. Lumajang (Lavatur Semeru): The natural beauty of Mount Semeru located in Lumajang, East Java, is a natural tourist attraction that attracts a lot of attention. In addition to trekking to the top of Semeru, tourists are also interested in exploring the natural beauty around the mountain through the Semeru Lavatur tour program. This reflects the popularity of adventure-based nature tourism that is increasingly popular.
- d. Blora, Temanggung, Banyuwangi, Berastagi, and Wonosobo: These regions represent a diversity of Indonesia's more hidden tourist destinations, but have great potential in the tourism sector. Blora and Temanggung are known for their natural beauty and cultural richness, Banyuwangi with the natural tourist area of Ijen Crater, Berastagi with natural tourist areas such as Mount Sibayak, and Wonosobo with the Dieng Plateau which is famous for its natural beauty and cultural and natural tourism activities.

In addition to the places already mentioned, the *crawling* data also shows other specific locations that are not very well known but are starting to get more attention among tourists. For example:

- a. Tanjung Lesung (Banten), which is an increasingly popular beach tourism location, often appears in uploads with the theme of natural or cultural tourism.
- b. Pangandaran, a beach tourist area in West Java, is also seen quite often as a location in *tweets* with the hashtag #WonderfulIndonesia.



- c. Raja Ampat (Papua), which even though it is already known as an international tourist destination, still continues to be promoted as a symbol of the beauty of Indonesia's underwater nature.

However, in the existing data sets, there are some limitations in the location data, which need further attention in spatial analysis:

- a. Common Locations (Like 'Indonesia'): Many *tweets* only list common locations such as "Indonesia" or even "East Indonesia", which are very broad and don't provide detailed spatial information. This may happen because the user didn't include a *geotag* or didn't fill in a specific location field when uploading a *tweet*. mentioning that many social media users choose to provide location information on a limited basis or even not fill it out, especially if the platform does not explicitly ask for location data. (Boyd & Crawford, 2012)
- b. Empty Location Data: It's not uncommon to find *tweets* that don't list the location at all in the *location* column. This can be caused by several factors, such as user privacy settings, technical errors in the app, or because the user does not use the *geotagging* feature at all. and notes that although social media such as X makes it possible to add location data, not all users use it consistently, so it can create an imbalance in spatial representation. Martí et al. (2019) Shelton et al. (2015)

While missing or overly generic location data can be a hindrance in pure spatial analysis, this can be overcome by relying on the place names mentioned in the tweet text. suggests the use of Zook et al. (2010) *volunteered geographic information* (VGI) that relies on spatial information provided voluntarily by the user, either through text or metadata. Therefore, even if the location data is incomplete or empty, the name of the place mentioned in the tweet text (e.g. "Kuta Beach Bali", "Prambanan Temple Yogyakarta") can still be used to map the tourist location.

The location distribution pattern found in this data set shows the dominance of some of Indonesia's main tourism destinations, but also opens up opportunities for new destinations to get more attention on social media. Despite the limitations of data related to overly general or empty locations, the text-based approach in narrative analysis allows researchers to remain effectively identified sites, enrich spatial analysis, and provide a more complete picture of the representation of Indonesian tourist spaces. (Goodchild, 2007; Graham & Shelton, 2013)

3. Tweet Theme and Narrative

In the context of social media, digital narratives are a reflection of the way people interpret space, experiences, and identities. Through the exploration of text content in the hashtag set data



#WonderfulIndonesia in X, a diversity of narrative themes was found that reflected the various dimensions of tourist spaces in Indonesia. These narratives not only describe places, but also shape perceptions, collective experiences, and social constructions of the tourism space in the digital landscape. (Fauzia et al., 2022)

The first dominant theme is the promotion of local tourism and nature. Many *tweets* feature natural-based and locally managed tourist destinations, such as Situ Patenggang in Bandung, Ciparay Tasikmalaya Waterfall, or Temanggung Gembongan Swamp. These uploads are usually accompanied by words such as "natural beauty", "cool", or "a quiet place for *healing*". This shows how people associate natural tourism with the value of emotional balance and aesthetics of space. In the study by, this phenomenon is referred to as part of Urry & Larsen (2011) *the tourist gaze*, which is the tourist's view shaped by visual culture and expectations of naturalness and tranquility.

The second theme that emerged was local culture and culinary, as seen in the *tweet* about Blora's typical coconut milk coffee and mud cake from Malang. Culinary is an integral part of digital tourism promotion because it is able to unite aspects of taste, identity, and tradition. Local experiential tourism such as gastronomy plays an important role in shaping an authentic tourism narrative, which is increasingly favored by millennial and Gen Z travelers in the digital age. (Garcia Henche, 2021; Samala et al., 2022)

In addition, there are many *tweets* that contain content related to cultural and religious events, such as Eid celebrations, Nyepi Day, and Pacitan Anniversaries. This event is often associated with an invitation to return home, celebrate with family, or visit sacred and traditional places. In this case, the tourist space is not only interpreted as a vacation destination, but also as a spiritual and cultural space that is connected to the social life cycle of the community (Timothy & Boyd, 2003). This phenomenon shows that domestic tourism in Indonesia has a very strong religious and cultural dimension.

Furthermore, popular narratives around nostalgia, *healing*, and domestic exploration also emerged. Words like "*healing*", "vacation", "*explore*", and "sightseeing" are widely used to frame travel as a form of self-healing or *escape* from the routine of urban life. This concept is in line with the theory of *emotional geographies* put forward by Davidson et al. (2005), which explains that tourist spaces are often used as a place to manage emotions and reshape personal connections with nature and community.

One of the interesting narratives that stands out in some *tweets* is digital nationalism. Sentences such as "My homeland is still Indonesia as far as it goes" or "Proud to Travel in Indonesia" show how digital space is used to build national identity through tourism promotion.



This phenomenon reinforces Lim's (2017) opinion on the role of social media in shaping digital *nationalism*, where citizens show their pride through online participation that promotes local culture, nature, and diversity to the world.

Outside of these main themes, there were also several *tweets* that raised the issue of environmental conservation, sustainable tourism, and tourism accessibility for all groups. Although the number is still limited, this kind of content shows that social media can also be used to voice criticism and reflection on tourism practices that are not inclusive or damage the environment. This supports the finding of Higgins-Desbiolles (2006) that tourism should be seen as a social and political practice, not just an economic activity.

Overall, the narrative analysis of *tweets* in hashtags #WonderfulIndonesia shows that social media is not only a promotional space, but also a field for discourse production. This discourse reflects the way people construct tourism spaces through local, emotional, and national perspectives, all of which contribute to the formation of Indonesia's image as a rich, diverse, and meaningful tourism destination.

4. Time Dynamics (Temporal)

Analysis of the time dimension in the hashtag set data #WonderfulIndonesia shows the presence of a certain temporal pattern in the frequency of uploads. The time distribution shows that the volume of tweets tends to increase significantly at specific moments, especially before and during national holidays, religious celebrations, weekends, as well as national special events such as Karisma Event Nusantara or campaign promotions of the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy (Kemenparekraf). This pattern indicates a close relationship between the social time cycle and digital tourism promotion activities in Indonesia.

The increase in uploads during Eid al-Fitr (Eid) and Nyepi Day, for example, reflects the tradition of homecoming, family visits, and exploration of local tourist attractions that increase offline, and then projected into the digital space. This is in line with the idea of *time-space convergence* (Janelle, 1968) which states that technology shortens distance and time in human interaction, including in the context of tourism mobility and digital communication. Collective vacations create a "time axis" where tourist spaces become a meeting point between social practices and media representation.

In addition to religious holidays, weekends are also the peak point of upload frequency. Many X users use Saturday and Sunday to travel to locations around their residences, then share their experiences through social media. A study by Xiang et al. (2015) shows that tourism social



media activities tend to increase on weekends, because free time allows people to take short *escape tourism*, and simultaneously share visual or textual narratives on digital platforms.

This temporal phenomenon is also influenced by the existence of official government campaigns and *national events*. Programs such as Karisma Event Nusantara (KEN) which are routinely held in various regions show an amplification effect on the intensity of *tweets*. User X not only shares personal content, but also participates in expanding the reach of the promotion through *retweets* and re-uploads of official promotional content. According to Gretzel et al. (2006), the synergy between institutional promotion and public participation in social media forms a pattern of "*co-created content*" that enriches the perception of destinations.

This temporal analysis also shows that time is an important part of the production of digital tourism spaces. Not all tourist attractions get the same exposure throughout the year, but it is highly dependent on the social, political, and cultural moments that take place. This is where the concept of *event-driven tourism communication* becomes relevant, namely the idea that the representation of destinations is often shaped not only by the place itself, but by ongoing events (Getz, 2008). X, as a real-time-based media, is very sensitive to this rhythm, thus allowing temporal analysis to be an important indicator in looking at the "digital time" of Indonesian tourism.

These patterns show that tourism communication through social media does not take place randomly, but rather follows a collective social rhythm. This data can be visualized through monthly, weekly, or daily trend graphs to show fluctuations in communication intensity. In addition, this pattern is also beneficial for the government and tourism industry players to determine time-based digital campaign strategies more effectively.

Thus, the temporal dimension in #WonderfulIndonesia representation shows a strong linkage between social time, cultural agendas, and digital communication practices. Time is not only a marker of when information is conveyed, but it is an integral part of how tourist spaces are constructed and capitalized in virtual spaces.

5. Interaction and Engagement

One of the key findings of the hashtag analysis #WonderfulIndonesia on platform X is the low level of user interaction, which is reflected in the relatively low number of *retweets* and *likes* on most *tweets*. This phenomenon indicates that although the tourism digital space is filled with diverse content, many of it is informative and one-way promotional, without sparking viral conversations or discussions. In the context of social media communication, this suggests that tourism campaigns in X function more as a channel for content dissemination than as a



participatory forum that builds two-way communication (Lovejoy & Saxton, 2012).

Low engagement rates do not reduce the strategic value of the content. *These tweets* actually display the main function of social media as a digital representation tool, whose success value is not only measured by the number of *likes* or *retweets*, but also by the substance expressed and how the tourist space is constructed through narrative. Castells (2009) emphasized that in a networked society, the value of information is determined not only by virality, but also by *meaning-making* processes that are formed collectively in digital networks.

The pattern of location dominance in *the tweet* reflects the concentration of digital tourism promotion in certain regions, especially in Java such as Yogyakarta, Bandung, and Jakarta. This condition creates an unbalanced representation of space, where many other regions in Indonesia with attractive geographical potential lack adequate exposure. A critical geographical perspective views this phenomenon as a form of spatial bias, in which spaces that are more digitally exposed gain greater visibility and symbolic value in national tourism maps (Harvey, 2006).

Digital narratives developed by government accounts, tourism agencies, and individual users show a variety of motives, ranging from national pride campaigns, personal travel experiences, to reflective and emotional local exploration. The narrative enriches the understanding of the tourist space as a social and symbolic space that is constructed digitally. Lefebvre (1991) explains that space is not only the result of material practices, but also the production of representations and symbols in popular culture, which in this context is reflected through *tweets*.

Hashtag #WonderfulIndonesia functions as a national digital communication node, a place for various actors—both official and independent—to collectively build Indonesia's tourism image. These hashtags form a discursive network (Bruns & Moe, 2014), which is a network of discourse built through the repetitive practice of mentioning locations, places, and experiences in digital format. The dominance of certain actors and locations in this network shows that there is a representation bias that needs to be critically examined, especially in the context of fair and inclusive tourism promotion for areas that have been less reached by large-scale digital promotion.

The strategic value of #WonderfulIndonesia content as a spatial and narrative representation remains high even though the statistical interaction is relatively low. These findings strengthen the understanding that digital tourism spaces are formed not only through the number of clicks or likes, but through narrative processes involving agencies, places, identities, and discourses in the ever-evolving digital social space.



CONCLUSION

This research shows that the representation of Indonesian tourism spaces in social media, especially through the hashtag #WonderfulIndonesia in X, is the result of a complex and dynamic digital communication process. Through a virtual geography approach and spatial-temporal and narrative analysis, it was found that the tourism space is shaped not only by the practice of physical visits, but also by the social constructions that take place online.

Spatially, the tweets analyzed showed a concentration of uploads in popular tourist areas on the island of Java such as Yogyakarta, Bandung, Jakarta, and Lumajang, while many other potential destinations still did not receive adequate exposure. This indicates that there is an inequality of digital visibility that has the potential to strengthen the disparity in tourism development between regions. In addition, inconsistent location metadata is also a challenge in spatial analysis, although this can be addressed through the exploration of implicit locations in the text narrative.

From a temporal perspective, the frequency of uploads has been proven to increase ahead of national holidays, weekends, and tourism events such as Karisma Event Nusantara. This reinforces the finding that social time and national event cycles have a great influence on the dynamics of digital representation of tourist spaces. Time is not only a marker, but also an important dimension in regulating the rhythm of communication and production of tourism discourse on social media.

Narrative analysis shows that tweets in hashtags #WonderfulIndonesia contain various themes, such as local nature promotion, culinary, personal experiences, and national pride narratives. These narratives reflect the way people interpret tourist spaces emotionally, culturally, and symbolically. Even with a relatively low level of interaction, the content still has a strong representational value as a material for studying digital tourism communication.

The hashtag #WonderfulIndonesia functions as a national communication node that unites institutional actors and the community in building the image of Indonesian tourism. However, the dominance of certain actors and location bias signal the need for a more inclusive and equitable digital promotion strategy. This research emphasizes the importance of seeing social media not only as a promotional tool, but also as a space for production and spatial representation battles, where image, identity, and access to space are shaped and questioned.

Thus, the results of this study are expected to contribute to the development of virtual geography literature, tourism communication, and social media-based spatial analysis, as well as a consideration for policymakers in designing digital tourism promotion strategies that are more equitable, participatory, and contextual to spatial diversity in Indonesia.



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