

## The Tourism Office's strategy in maintaining Bendi which has changed its function as a cultural identity in Jam Gadang Kota Bukittinggi

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### ABSTRACT

This study discusses the strategy used by the Bukittinggi City Tourism Office towards bendi as cultural transportation. The purpose of this study is to explain the changes in the function that occurred in bendi from the Dutch colonial era until now and the strategies carried out so that this bendi tourism can survive until now. The research method used is qualitative research. Data collection techniques include field observations, interviews, and documentation. The theory used is Talcott Parson's theory of Modernization and the Theory of Change by John Lewis Gillin. The finding of this study is that bendi underwent a change in function, bendi was originally the main transportation used by the ruler because at that time bendi was the only mainstay transportation. The progress of science and technology gradually resulted in vehicles becoming varied so that bendi became public vehicles that all people could ride. The development of technology, making bendi no longer a public transportation but converted into cultural transportation used by the Bukittinggi Tourism Office to become a mainstay tourism. The strategy offered by the Bukittinggi City Tourism Office in maintaining bendi is to provide training to bendi coachmen, deworming to bendi horses, provide decorative lights, brand signs, and uniforms, then number the bendi, and finally the base site determination.

**Keywords:** Bendi, Social Transformation, Strategy

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### INTRODUCTION

West Sumatra is one of the provinces with the tourism sector as a support for regional income. Kodhyat (in Kurniansyah 2014: 28) explained that tourism is traveling temporarily from one location to another to achieve balance and happiness in all socio-cultural and environmental aspects. Tourism in West Sumatra also varies from natural tourism and cultural tourism. Nature tourism (Kodhyat in Gunawan 1997: 5) is a trip to a tourist area with a special purpose not only for recreation but to study, admire and enjoy the natural scenery along with its flora and fauna. Farid (2015: 30) explained that cultural tourism is a type of tourism caused by the attraction of art and culture in an area or place, such as relics of ancestors, ancient objects and so on. One of the cities dubbed as a tourist city is Bukittinggi City.

Bendi in a cultural perspective shows that this traditional vehicle is a vehicle that has the same benefits as other transportations but bendi is a cultural object so that bendi at this time has undergone a change in function. Etymologically, function change comes from two words, namely the word change (change) and function. Change means events related to changes in the position of elements of a system until changes occur in the structure of the system (Kartasapoetra: 2007: 48). While Function according to Sutarto (Nining: 2008: 22), is a breakdown of tasks that are similar or closely related to each other to be performed by a certain employee, each of which is based on a group of similar activities according to their nature or implementation. So Change of Function is the use value of an item that undergoes a transition or exchange, which at first functioned as the main vehicle but along with the development of the era where technology developed making this traditional means of transportation this bendi undergo a change in function which is now a tourist vehicle.

The Youth and Sports Tourism Office of Bukittinggi City makes bendi as a cultural vehicle by offering tour packages around Jam Gadang by riding a bendi and setting a predetermined bendi rate. The Bukittinggi City Tourism Office plays a very important role in maintaining bendi as one of the cultural vehicles that still survives today. Various efforts were made such as determining bendi operational rates, determining the place of bendi so that it is easily found by tourists. As well as cleaning the place of bendi was also carried out by the Fire Department as one of the efforts they can do in maintaining the temple so that it is increasingly loved by tourists.

Maintaining traditional means of transportation in the midst of today's modern era requires the right strategies and steps. The Bukittinggi City Tourism Office as a party that plays a role in preserving tourism carries out several strategies so that bendi remains viable as the identity of Bukittinggi City. The rise of various types of transportation that are present, making bendi as a traditional vehicle that has its own uniqueness is used as one of the tour packages offered by the Bukittinggi City Tourism Office. Not only as a tourist facility, indirectly with the offer of this tour package has educated tourists who ride bendi that bendi has a very important role for the development of transportation, especially in Bukittinggi City.

How to Change the Function of Bendi in the City of Bukittinggi, West Sumatra Province, considering that bendi has now turned into a cultural vehicle in supporting the income of the Bukittinggi City area in the field of Tourism. As well as strategies and steps taken by the Bukittinggi City Tourism Office as the party that plays a role in maintaining bendi in the modernization era at this time.

## **METHOD**

The study was conducted by using qualitative types of research. The qualitative method according to Nasution (1992: 5) is to observe the environment, interact with the environment, and try to use language and its interpretation of the surrounding world. The object of this study is bendi as a cultural identity and the strategy of the Bukittinggi City Tourism Office in maintaining bendi as a cultural identity. This research was conducted in

Jam Gadang Kota Bukittinggi, West Sumatra Province. The primary data in this study is data collected directly by the research from the first source or the object of the research itself in Jam Gadang Kota Bukittinggi, West Sumatra Province. Secondary data in this study are relevant sources of additional information to complement the writing of research on the Tourism Office's Strategy in Maintaining Bendi which has undergone changes in function as a Cultural Identity in Jam Gadang Kota Bukittinggi. Miles, Huberman and Saldana (2014: 10) suggest that activities in qualitative data analysis are carried out interactively and take place continuously until complete, so that the data is saturated. The data analysis includes: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion.

## **FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

Transportation is one form of technological development. Transport comes from the Latin "transportare", where trans means opposite or other side and portare means transport or carrying. So transportation means transporting or carrying (something) next to another or from one place to another (Kamaludin, 1987 in Ferry, 2016: 6). Historically, the development of transportation has been very slow, evolving with gradual changes, and these changes actually began with long-distance walking. Transportation is a means by using tools to transport people and objects from one place to another. These tools can be humans, animals, natural power or use machines or not (Salim, 1993: 5).

Along with the times, Bendi began to experience changes. The following is a description of the Transformation of the Function of the bendi over time:

### **1. Dutch Colonial Period**

Bendi has changed its function since the Dutch Colonial Period until now. In the Dutch Colonial era, there were not so many vehicles or transportation that bendi was a luxury item that could only be ridden by certain groups. This was the heyday for bendi transportation, due to limited transportation. This causes bendi to become the main means of transportation that is very luxurious in nature. Bendi is only intended for the ruler in carrying out his duties, to travel from one place to another.

According to Ishakawi (2010: 8) explained that the aspect or role of a person can determine the meaning of the bendi in its use, someone who uses the bendi is an important person at that time. Ishakawi explained that a ruler or leader uses bendi as their personal vehicle and the meaning in the use of bendi for rulers is as a symbol of power, leadership, strength, bureau, ideology, politics, patrol or duty, and lifestyle. When viewed from the interests of a businessman or person at that time, bendi has a different meaning. Bendi remains a personal vehicle but has a meaning as a social, economic, and lifestyle status that is different from ordinary people.

### **2. Independence Era**

Ishakawi (2010: 13) explained that during the independence era, Bendi experienced a shift from private vehicles to public transportation, from luxury goods to ordinary because they could be owned by the community. Finally, bendi became public transportation that could be used as people's livelihood. Bendi has become the main means of transportation in Jam Gadang, so IKABE (Ikatan Bendi) was formed. Along with its development, bemopun

vehicles began to enter the city of Bukittinggi. Bendi itself has now changed its term to PERKABI (Persatuan Keluarga Besar Angkutan Bendi).

At first, the presence of bemos in Bukittinggi raised pros and cons. The pro in question is people who use bemo transportation services. People will certainly choose vehicles that are more efficient in supporting their activities. If you use a bendi, it will take a long travel time. While the cons are from the coachman bendi who feel aggrieved because it is considered that their livelihood is taken. However, because the target market is different between bemo and bendi, gradually between the coachman and the bemo driver do not feel disadvantaged, instead between the bemo soup and the bendi coachman coexist with each other. This is because, special routes for bemos and bendi have been arranged so that it depends on which transportation people want to choose.

### 3. Modernization Era

During the modernization period, technology began to develop rapidly so that the narrow land of life for vehicles that still use traditional power such as horses. In the modernization era, bendi is preferred as a cultural vehicle, no longer as the main means of transportation. The place of bendi point was determined by the Bukittinggi City Tourism Office so that the bendi in the Jam Gadang Area was more organized and neat. The place that has been set is also a crowded area of visitors to Bukittinggi. Of course, this will make it easier for tourists who want to enjoy getting around with Bendi and Bendi coachmen who are looking for passengers.

Changes that occur in the community regarding changes in the function of bendi are one example of social changes in society. This change is related to the system in the use of traditional means of transportation changed to the use of modern transportation. Gillin (Soekanto, 2009: 263) explained that Social Change is a variation of accepted ways of life that cause changes in geographical conditions, material culture, population composition, ideology, diffusion and new discoveries in society. The new discovery in question is that the use of modern transportation is more widespread among the community at this time because if you still use traditional transportation, people's mobility activities will be limited. Maintaining bendi in the modernization era now requires various strategies to keep bendi afloat. The strategies of the Bukittinggi City Tourism Office in maintaining traditional Bendi vehicles as cultural identity are:

1. Providing Training to Bendi Coachmen



**Figure 1: Tour guide training**

The Bukittinggi City Tourism Office as the office that plays a role in developing tourism potential in Bukittinggi conducts a kind of training and counseling to all business actors on how to provide services intended for tourists visiting Bukittinggi City. The city of Bukittinggi not only has Jam Gadang as a tourist attraction, many other attractions that should be visited by visitors. The distance between one tourist attraction and another is actually not too far, so visitors can choose to ride a bendi or walk.

## 2. Deworming

The Department of Agriculture and Food also participates in maintaining cultural assets in Bukittinggi. One of them is the provision of vitamins and deworming to bendi horses in the Jam Gadang Square. This is so that the horses used as tourist transportation are maintained in good health, so that visitors who ride the bendi feel safer and more comfortable because the bendi horses they ride have been given vitamins and medicine.

### **Figure 2: Feeding deworming and vitamins horse bendi**

The concern of various parties in Bukittinggi proves that bendi is a cultural asset that must be maintained. Bendi is a traditional vehicle so it requires cooperation from various



parties so that this traditional vehicle is maintained in the midst of an increasingly modern era. The provision of deworming is one of the manifestations of maintenance and improvement carried out by the Bukittinggi city government which is realized by the Department of Agriculture and Food. The purpose of giving this drug is so that the bendi horse which is used as a tourist facility is maintained cleanliness and health so that tourists who want to enjoy the bendi do not need to worry anymore because these tourist bendis are already in good health. The system referred to by Parson is the bendi as a traditional vehicle that has changed its function into a cultural vehicle.

## 3. Provision of Decorative Lights, Brand Signs and Uniforms

The provision of decorative lights in addition to being a decoration on the bendi is also a source of lighting. Moreover, the time to stop the bendi until night so that if it is not equipped with lighting, it will cause accidents both for other transportation drivers and the bendi transportation itself. Lights are one of the important components in a means of transportation.



**Figure 3 : decorative lamps**

Furthermore, the Bukittinggi City Tourism Office facilitates brand signposts that include bendi tourism operational costs. So visitors who want to ride the bendi, can see the tariff instructions listed on the brand.



**Figure 4 : Brand signage**

Swarbrooke in Soeda (2017: 6) explained that one of the efforts to realize the integration of tourism resources is to provide parking laham. Bendi parking is regulated by the Bukittinggi City Tourism Office in addition to adding neatness to the city as well as easy access to find bendi for tourists.



**Figure 5 : Bendi parking**

Another facility provided by the Bukittinggi City Tourism Office is uniform. The uniform given is in the form of takuluak bulango clothes, batik pants and a deta hat. The wearing of this uniform shows the characteristics of Minangkabau because the coachman bendi will later guide the tour.

**Figure 6 : Bendi Coachman Uniform**



#### 4. Numbering the bendi

The number was initiated by the Bukittinggi City Transportation Office, the purpose of giving this number was to ascertain how many bendi were in Jam Gadang and as an easy way to detect each bendi unit. This is done, if one of the bendi has an accident it will be easy to find out what number bendi has an accident. If you have an accident involving a



bendi, it will be easy to identify what number of bendi is involved, later after that PERKABI will help the bendi concerned to solve the problem.

**Figure 7 : Bendi number**

#### 5. Determination of the place of the bendi

The city of Bukittinggi, which has earned the nickname of a tourist city, makes all government apparatuses and communities to create a conducive environment for the creation of comfort for tourist visits. The purpose of determining the place of mangkal bendi is arranged so that the tourist bendi in Bukittinggi City is organized and neat, so tourists who want to enjoy riding a bendi vehicle are quite easy to find where the mangkal bendi point is located.



**Figure 8 : place of the bendi**

The Bukittinggi City Government as a related agency in making city progress in the field of tourism makes various efforts so that Bukittinggi remains a tourist destination that must be visited by tourists. This can be seen in preserving bendi tourism, related agencies work together to contribute so that bendi tourism remains a mainstay of tourism.



**Figure 9 : Cleaning of the place by the Fire Department**

Parson (in Kumba, 2019: 20) explained in modernization theory that latency means that a system must complement, maintain and improve both individual motivations and cultural patterns to support the progress of a system in it. The efforts that have been made by the Government of Bukittinggi are a manifestation of functional imperative attitudes because in them they strive to maintain bendi as a cultural vehicle by maintaining and improving and doing ways to achieve a common desired goal.

Apart from the strategies carried out by the Bukittinggi City Tourism Office above, several other strategies are also carried out by bendi coachmen who have contributed to the Bukittinggi City Tourism Office as the authority in regulating bendi tourism in Bukittinggi to maintain traditional bendi vehicles, namely:

1. Formed PERKABI (Bendi Transport Big Family Association) Bukittinggi

PERKABI which is an organization must have management formed by each member. The management structure in the organization serves as a guideline for strategizing and achieving predetermined targets. Without a clear organizational structure, it is certain that an organization will be difficult to develop. Similarly, the PERKABI organization in Bukittinggi aims to create maintenance and control for each PERKABI member.

## 2. Promote bendi offers via phone and rent horses

The knowledge gained from the training provided by the Bukittinggi City Tourism Office can be applied when serving guests. The provision of friendly service will make tourists who enjoy bendi can become a subscription. In addition, the bendi coachmen rent bendi horses carried out by the bendi coachmen in addition to additional income indirectly as well as their efforts to preserve bendi for the local community. This is done because bendi today is more intended for tourism so that at certain events people still use bendi as a means of transportation. Bendi is also used as a wedding procession, Qur'anic khatam and circumcision ceremony.



**Figure 10. Babendi at the Wedding**

## 3. Decorating Bendi Horses

As one of the efforts that can be done by bendi coachmen in attracting the attention of tourists, they deliberately decorate the bendi as attractive as possible so that tourists visiting Bukittinggi City are interested in enjoying bendi transportation services. Decorating the bendi horse is done as an allure to tourists who will ride the bendi horse. This is because the tourist bendi in Bukittinggi still maintains accessories from the Dutch colonial period. The pioneering contained in the bendi is usually obtained from generation to generation so that the authenticity of the bendi accessories is maintained.

Bendi has become a cultural identity for Bukittinggi City. Identity comes from the Latin word *idem* which means the same. Identity according to Rummens (in Santoso 2006: 45) means similarity or unity with others in a certain region or things. According to Dorais (in Santoso 2006:45). Cultural identity is the basic awareness of the specific characteristics of a group that a person has in terms of living habits, customs, language, and values. Cultural identity is related to ethnic identity, to categorize a society, you must know the cultural characteristics of a group first.

One of the cultural identities possessed by the Minangkabau ethnicity is bendi, because bendi has existed since the Dutch colonial era and was a vehicle used by officials at that time in carrying out their duties. Bendi has witnessed that the city of Bukittinggi is one of the historical cities in West Sumatra.

## CONCLUSION



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