

# Consistency of Tanjungpinang City's "City Branding" Policy

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**Abstract.** Globalization has transformed all aspects of life, influencing Indonesia's social, political, and economic dynamics. The openness of globalization allows the exchange of values that may have both positive and negative impacts. One of its positive outcomes is the adoption of global concepts such as City Branding, which serves as a strategic tool for urban image management and competitiveness. This study examines the consistency of City Branding policies in Tanjungpinang City, Riau Islands Province, Indonesia. As a city rich in history, culture, and natural beauty, Tanjungpinang has implemented City Branding through slogans such as "Gurindam City" and "Gurindam City of Pantun," emphasizing its Malay cultural identity and literary heritage. Using a qualitative library research method, this study analyzes policy consistency, government strategy, and implementation dynamics related to City Branding and its integration with the Smart City concept—particularly in the dimension of Smart Branding. Findings show that Tanjungpinang's City Branding focuses on three main aspects: tourism, business, and city appearance. These strategies are supported by technological innovation, digital promotion, and cultural preservation programs that enhance local economic growth. However, the emergence of multiple slogans over time has created inconsistencies that potentially weaken brand identity. To strengthen its global positioning, Tanjungpinang must ensure message consistency, community involvement, and alignment between policy vision and branding implementation. Consistent and unified City Branding will not only promote tourism and investment but also reinforce the city's identity as a cultural and smart urban destination.

**Keywords:** City Branding; Smart City; Urban Identity; Policy Consistency; Tanjungpinang City

## 1 Introduction

Globalization brings great changes to all activities, both social, national, and state activities. Life in the era of globalization puts Indonesia to be connected to other countries which allows the exchange of new values, so that it can have a negative or positive impact which is a logical consequence of globalization. This happens because globalization has removed the boundaries of each country both economically, socially, and politically [22]. Judging from the negative impact, globalization causes cultural competition and competitive fields of life that will be won by the strongest, so that strong cultures will dominate and defeat weak cultures [13]. Judging from the positive impact, globalization directs all countries to compete to realize new collaborations and unity that elaborates the world into a global village, thereby facilitating integration in the fields of trade, investment, technology, investment, and production support such as capital and labor [18]. In line with that, globalization also allows the adoption of concepts from outside that have been tested for benefits to be further applied in Indonesia, such as *the concept of City Branding*.

*City Branding* is the process of forming a city's brand that distinguishes it from other cities, carried out by introducing the city through sentences, slogans, *taglines* and symbols to the media so that it is embedded and becomes an attraction of the imagination of the crowd [9]. *City Branding* focuses on image management, about what and how the image is built and the communication aspects that are carried out in the process of managing the image [4]. *City Branding* is an important thing in managing the city's image in order to image itself as a commodity and compete to be the best in the era of globalization [21]. *City Branding* prioritizes the use of all city potentials so that they have value and benefits [8]. The plurality of potential in a city can be packaged into the concept of *City Branding* which represents the potential itself and ultimately forms the character of the city, thus giving rise to a multi-interactive relationship between one individual and an individual based on an interest in visiting a city. Various cities in Indonesia have implemented the concept of *City Branding*, one of which is Tanjungpinang City

Tanjungpinang City is the capital of Riau Islands Province, has abundant beauty and natural wealth that has been a source of economy for generations for the community. In addition, Tanjungpinang City has many tourist attractions that are differentiators from cities or regencies which are also located in the Riau Islands Province. The city of Tanjungpinang has a lot of potential tourist attractions, both natural, historical, and cultural tourism, when compared to other areas in the Riau Islands Province, both in terms of the number and types of tourist attractions [14]. Several areas in Tanjungpinang City such as Bandar Piring, Kota Lama or Kota Rebah, Senggarang, and Pulau Penyengat have relics in the form of cultural heritage in the form of architectural buildings, tombs and sites [19]. The city of Tanjungpinang, which has a history as the former center of government of the Riau-Lingga Sultanate (Malay), holds history and heritage which is one of the tourist attractions [17]. Penyengat Island-Tanjungpinang City, Singapore, and Johor-Malaysia are a group of regions of the Kingdom of Riau Lingga [16].

When the Malay people in neighboring countries have a cultural proximity to Penyengat Island, it is certain that they will be interested in visiting the island, not only as a tourist destination, but also to remember and visit their ancestors who came from there. This tourist visit will ultimately increase the regional income of Tanjungpinang City and Riau Islands Province. The city of Tanjungpinang also has a literary heritage that has been recognized by the world, namely the twelfth *gurindam*. *Gurindam* twelve is an old Malay poem written by Raja

Ali Haji, an Indonesian writer and National Hero from Penyengat Island, Tanjungpinang City [15]. All of the unique values and characteristics of the city of Tanjungpinang have great potential in economic development by using the tourism sector that contains and offers nature, history, culture, and economic potential. This makes Tanjungpinang City need to increase local wisdom as the main identity and tourist attraction. The local wisdom in question is the typical Malay culture of the region as an identity. Promoting the culture that develops in Tanjungpinang is also a way of *city branding* or the image of Tanjungpinang as a city that maintains local wisdom [23].

In order to promote the potentials in Tanjungpinang City which have unique values and characteristics so that they can increase regional income and economic development, the Tanjungpinang City Government conducts *City Branding*. This can be seen in several slogans of Tanjungpinang City which are indeed made to describe the city of Tanjungpinang so that it is loved and attracts the attention of the public, tourists, investors, and others. City Branding of Tanjungpinang City has been carried out for many years using slogans, such as the slogan "Kota Gurindam" (Persistent, Excellent, Neat, Beautiful, Comfortable, Peaceful, Safe and Humane) which has been used since 2003 during the leadership of Mrs. Suryatati A. Manan as the Mayor of Tanjungpinang for the period of 2003-2008 and 2008-2013. The slogan replaces the previous slogan, namely "Tanjungpinang Kota Bestari" because it is felt to be more appropriate, identical, and *memorable* for the people of Tanjungpinang City and tourists from outside.

*City Branding* was increasingly promoted during the leadership of Mr. Lis Darmansyah, the Mayor of Tanjungpinang for the 2013-2018 period. This is stated in the sixth mission, namely to develop the potential of tourism and regional culture, from this mission the strategy of carrying out *City Branding* is carried out more massively and structured by the Regional Apparatus Work Unit (SKPD). At that time, *the City Branding* carried out also still involved the slogan "Gurindam City". As time goes by and there is a transformation of the Leadership, the slogan "Kota Gurindam" remains valid, even though new slogans exist such as "Tanjungpinang Kampung Kite" and "Tanjungpinang bedelau" which are complementary elements of "Wonderfull Riau Islands" and "Wonderfull Indonesia" as well as to describe the city of Tanjungpinang which is full of cultural, historical, clean, and friendly values to visit as a tourist destination. The slogan "Kota Gurindam" which has been used for many years then received the addition of the vocabulary "Negeri Pantun" so that the slogan "Kota Gurindam Negeri Pantun" appeared. This is done to provide an additional picture that the city of Tanjungpinang has literary values in the form of rhymes that have developed for a long time and are used in various activities.

*City Branding* through the slogans run by the Tanjungpinang City Government in its implementation has experienced various dynamics, there are various uses of slogans to give an idea, influence community behavior, and promote the City of Tanjungpinang. However, only the slogan "Gurindam City" was included in the Regional Regulation (Perda) of Tanjungpinang City. This is stated in the Tanjungpinang City Regional Regulation Number 1 of 2003 concerning regional emblems, mottos, and slogans of Tanjungpinang City. In Article 4 Paragraph 3 of the regional regulation, it is explained that "The slogan of the City of Tanjungpinang is "GURINDAM" which stands for Persistent, Superior, Neat, Beautiful, Comfortable, Peaceful, Safe and Humane which contains the meaning that the City of Tanjungpinang is arranged in an integrated manner to create a beautiful, green, flowery, clean environment, has an alluring power for tourists which is a reflection of an authoritative Government, free from abuse of authority that is detrimental to the community and acts based

on customs, culture, morality and humanity". Although only the slogan "Gurindam City" has been used, the slogan "Gurindam City of Pantun" has been used.

*City Branding* of Tanjungpinang City through the slogan "Gurindam City of Pantun City" is enough to influence the behavior of the people of Tanjungpinang City, supported by technological advances and easy to disseminate information on the local wisdom of the Malay community that is Islamic and cultural will minimize negative effects while making the people of Tanjungpinang City categorized as a smart society [7]. This means that the slogan is not only used to promote the city and attract tourist visits, but also as a guideline for the local people of Tanjungpinang City so that in their daily lives it is based on the values contained in the twelve gurindam. A region's decision to carry out *city branding* can be seen as a communication policy as well as a public policy taken by the local government [11].

In other words, the actions of local governments in promoting and building the image of their city/region through *city branding* are part of the communication policy and public policy of the region concerned. In a policy, the most important thing is the cycle because policy is defined as a continuous process, the policy cycle contains formulation, implementation, and evaluation[12]. During the policy implementation process, consistency is needed so that policies can run well and achieve the expected goals. In addition, good policy consistency will also give good results when policy evaluation is carried out. Policies that are implemented consistently will have a real and important impact on a management program [2]. Based on the above background explanation, the author is interested in conducting a scientific study, in a research on *the city branding policy* of Tanjungpinang City with the title Consistency of *City Branding* Policy in Tanjungpinang City.

## 2 Research Methods

Research requires methods to obtain concrete and comprehensive results. The research method used in this study is qualitative which is a library *research*. Qualitative research is a scientific study that is rooted in an inductive mindset that refers to in-depth observation of a phenomenon [10]. Qualitative research is predominantly oriented towards a thorough or holistic description that can be fully explained about the activity or situation that is taking place rather than comparing the effects of a particular treatment or explaining about a person's attitude or behavior [1]. Then, literature study is an effort to gather information that is in accordance with the topic being discussed. The data sources used in qualitative research are literature studies from reference books and scientific articles [20]. In conducting qualitative literature research, there are several procedures that must be carried out, namely: 1) Tracing primary and secondary data sources, 2) Classification based on research formulas, 3) data processing or reference citation, 4) displaying data, 5) data abstraction, 6) data interpretation, 7) conclusions [6].

## 3 Result and Discussion

The *City branding* policy that was launched is closely related to one of the dimensions of *the Smart City* concept that is also promoted by the Tanjungpinang City Government, namely *Smart Branding*. *City branding* provides the basic framework and concept of city image formation, while *Smart Branding* is the execution of the city's image formation by utilizing technology and innovation to create a smart and modern city. The two complement each other in branding a city. Smart branding is the commitment of the Tanjungpinang City government to

increase the value of regional brands while increasing the local economic growth rate [5]. *Smart Branding* in Tanjungpinang City is intensified on several central aspects, including *tourism branding*, *business branding*, and *city appearance branding* [3]. First, *tourism branding* is a process of creating the uniqueness and excellence of a city in the tourism sector. In Tanjungpinang City, *tourism branding* is carried out through the development of integrated smart tourism and ports. The stages include the preparation of a regional tourism master plan, digital tourism promotion, and the transformation of the image of existing tourist destinations in Tanjungpinang City such as the organization of dragon boat competitions and the Tanjungpinang Art Festival (including poetry, fine arts, poetry, gurindam, and others).

In addition, training is also carried out for tourism business actors (tour guides, accommodation providers, village governments and tourist attractions) as well as the development of the Tanjungpinang e-tourism tourism information system. Second, branding businesses with a focus on developing the Tanjungpinang Investment Lounge platform have stages such as building a Tanjungpinang investment portal, improving the implementation of investment promotions, formulating regulations to support public services for the implementation of special licensing services through the implementation of OSS (online single submission), then building OSS supporting infrastructure, and organizing training to increase the capacity of OSS service officers. Third, city appearance branding is carried out by building smart landmarks that integrate shared workspaces, public areas, environmentally friendly buildings, and educational centers. The stages include the construction of Tanjungpinang City landmarks, the restoration and preservation of Malay cultural heritage buildings, the development of urban decoration and the development of environmentally friendly building areas. Smart branding of Tanjungpinang City, which has three dimensions, namely tourism branding, business branding, and city appearance branding, of course, is carried out to meet the goals that have been set.

The goal of tourism branding is to develop the charm of the city of Tanjung Pinang as a cultural tourism destination, business branding is to raise the level of service and the business climate of a trade business that is healthy and innovative, city appearance branding is to develop city landmarks as branding socio-economic activities of the city of Tanjungpinang. These things are certainly very useful in the economic recovery process in the tourism sector which was previously affected by the Covid-19 virus. Reporting from data from the Central Statistics Agency of Tanjungpinang City, in 2018 the number of foreign tourist visits (foreign tourists) amounted to 140,589, in 2019 it increased to 169,364. Then, in 2020 it decreased to 22,165. The decline occurred due to strict restrictions on access to and from the region, the decline continued in 2021 which amounted to 154. In 2022, the number of foreign tourist visits began to increase again at 25,558, increasing again in 2023 at 57,538. Foreign tourists from Malaysia and Singapore dominate visits to Tanjungpinang City, this cannot be separated from the role of city branding and smart branding. In addition, it is supported by related cultural characteristics and supported by geographical location that facilitates access to Tanjungpinang City.

By adopting the concept of city branding, the Tanjungpinang City Government strives to create an attractive image and arouse interest from both local communities, domestic tourists, and investors. The use of slogans such as "Gurindam City of Pantun Country" marks the government's strategic step in forming a cohesive and grounded city identity. These slogans are not only a promotional tool, but also a guide to the values upheld by the community, as well as reflecting the cultural and historical heritage of Tanjungpinang City. The importance of

consistency in the concept of city branding is reflected in the Tanjungpinang City Government's efforts to maintain the use of the slogan "Gurindam City" despite the change in leadership. The use of the same slogan throughout the leadership period shows the continuity of the government's vision and commitment in building and maintaining the city's image. In addition, the official recognition of the slogan "Gurindam City" through regional regulations affirms the government's alignment with the concept of city branding as an integral part of city development.

However, the emergence of new slogans such as "Tanjungpinang Kampung Kite" and "Tanjungpinang Bedelau" shows that there is a variation in the approach to city branding that is applied from time to time. However, the existence of these new slogans was not officially included in the Tanjungpinang City Regional Regulation. This raises questions about the consistency of the message that the Tanjungpinang City Government wants to convey to the public and visitors. The use of diverse slogans can confuse and reduce the effectiveness of overall city branding efforts. Consistency of message and identity is essential, and consistent and clear messages will help create a strong and memorable image for the city. In addition, consistency also allows the community and visitors to more easily connect with the values and identities carried by the City of Tanjungpinang. Therefore, to achieve success in city branding efforts, it is important for the Tanjungpinang City Government to focus more on unifying the messages conveyed and ensuring that all city branding initiatives are in line with the desired identity and vision.

Nevertheless, the Tanjungpinang City Government's efforts in implementing the concept of city branding have had a positive impact in promoting the city's tourism and cultural potential. With further efforts to improve the consistency of message and identity, as well as consolidate all city branding efforts under one clear vision, the City of Tanjungpinang can strengthen its image and attractiveness as an attractive tourist and investment destination, as well as strengthen its position at the regional and global levels.

Increasing consistency in the concept of city branding still needs further attention. Continuous evaluation of the implementation of branding strategies and responsiveness to environmental changes is key to ensuring that the messages conveyed through these slogans truly reflect the experiences and realities experienced by the community and visitors. In addition, the government also needs to ensure that the concept of city branding remains relevant and effective in responding to changing social, economic, and cultural dynamics. Thus, the steps that have been taken by the Tanjungpinang City Government in implementing the concept of city branding through the use of consistent slogans are a positive first step in promoting the potential and characteristics of the city. However, to achieve better consistency, the government needs to continue to evaluate, adapt, and integrate more deeply between the message conveyed and the existing reality. Only in this way, Tanjungpinang City can strengthen their image as an attractive, dynamic, and competitive tourist destination in the eyes of the local and global community.

In addition to maintaining consistency in the message and identity conveyed, it is also necessary to pay attention to the aspects of effective management and promotion of the Tanjungpinang City Government. The use of information technology and social media as a means to spread city branding messages can be an effective strategy to reach a wider target market, including the young generation who are active on digital platforms. In addition,

cooperation with the private sector and local communities can also strengthen promotional efforts and support the development of quality tourism infrastructure. In addition, it is also important to involve active participation from the community in the process of developing and implementing the concept of city branding. The community is a valuable asset in strengthening the identity and image of a city, so involving them in policymaking and programs related to city branding will increase the sense of belonging and sustainability of the initiative. Through the active participation of the community, the city branding of Tanjungpinang City can become more authentic and relevant to local needs and aspirations.

## **2 Conclusion**

The City of Tanjungpinang, Indonesia, has implemented a branding policy that is closely related to the Smart City concept, specifically in the dimension of Smart Branding. This policy aims to increase the value of regional brands and stimulate local economic growth through technology and innovation. Smart Branding in Tanjungpinang City is focused on three main aspects: tourism, business, and city appearance.

Tourism branding is carried out through the development of integrated smart tourism and ports, including the preparation of a regional tourism master plan, digital promotion, and transformation of existing tourist destinations. Business branding is achieved by developing the Tanjungpinang Investment Lounge platform, building an investment portal, improving investment promotions, and constructing environmentally friendly buildings. City appearance branding is done by building smart landmarks, restoring and preserving cultural heritage buildings, and developing urban decoration.

The goal of tourism branding is to develop the charm of the city as a cultural tourism destination, business branding aims to improve the service and business climate, and city appearance branding aims to develop city landmarks as branding socio-economic activities. These efforts have contributed to an increase in foreign tourist visits in recent years.

The Tanjungpinang City Government has adopted the concept of city branding through the use of slogans such as "Gurindam City," which reflects the government's strategic step in forming a cohesive and grounded city identity. However, the emergence of new slogans has raised questions about the consistency of the message conveyed to the public and visitors. To achieve success in city branding efforts, it is important for the government to focus on unifying the messages conveyed and ensuring that all city branding initiatives are in line with the desired identity and vision.

In conclusion, the Tanjungpinang City Government's efforts in implementing the concept of city branding have had a positive impact in promoting the city's tourism and cultural potential. With further efforts to improve consistency and involve the community, the City of Tanjungpinang can strengthen its image and attractiveness as a tourist and investment destination. The use of information technology, social media, and cooperation with the private sector can also strengthen promotional efforts and support the development of quality tourism infrastructure.

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