
How the Readiness of Nature-Based Attraction During the Pandemic Covid-19? Revisit the Implementation of the CHSE Certification

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Abstract

This study aims to understand the readiness of nature-based attractions during the Covid-19 pandemic by revisiting the CHSE (Cleanliness, Health, Safety, and Sustainable Environment) certification the Indonesian government has implemented since 2020. Using a mixed-method approach, first, combining quantitative research by distributing surveys to visitors and qualitatively interviewing the operators of nature-based tourist attractions. This research was conducted from May to July 2021 in Greater Bandung, one of the favorite nature-based destinations in West Java, Indonesia. As a result, nature-based attractions are ready to receive visitors and can implement various health protocols but are asked to close when the virus spread rate is high again, even though there has never been a cluster. Furthermore, this research found that visitors and operators pay little attention to safety and a sustainable environment during a pandemic. Other highlights to maintain the Implementation of CHSE are strict monitoring by the government and, secondly, the operators' commitment to maintaining the supported facilities.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui kesiapan objek wisata berbasis alam di masa pandemi Covid-19 dengan meninjau kembali sertifikasi CHSE (*Cleanliness, Health, Safety, and Sustainable Environment*) yang telah diterapkan pemerintah Indonesia sejak tahun 2020. Menggunakan pendekatan metode campuran, terlebih dahulu menggabungkan penelitian kuantitatif dengan menyebarkan survei kepada pengunjung dan wawancara kualitatif dengan operator tempat wisata berbasis alam. Penelitian ini dilakukan pada bulan Mei hingga Juli 2021 di Bandung Raya, salah satu destinasi berbasis alam favorit di Jawa Barat, Indonesia. Alhasil, objek wisata berbasis alam siap menerima pengunjung dan bisa menerapkan berbagai protokol kesehatan namun diminta tutup ketika tingkat penyebaran virus kembali tinggi, padahal belum pernah ada kluster. Selain itu, penelitian ini menemukan bahwa pengunjung dan operator kurang memperhatikan keselamatan dan lingkungan yang berkelanjutan selama pandemi. Sorotan lain untuk mempertahankan Implementasi CHSE adalah pengawasan ketat oleh pemerintah dan kedua, komitmen operator untuk memelihara fasilitas yang didukung.

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INTRODUCTION

Covid-19 has significantly impacted the tourism industry globally (Anele, 2021; A. Sharma & Nicolau, 2020). World Health Organization noted 630 million infected around the globe (World Health Organization, 2022), and instantly, most government-issued several handling standards to reduce the spread, such as wearing maskers, closing crowd centers, and maintaining distance. These measures have forced the closure of most of the tourism industry, including the travel industry and tourist attractions worldwide. Therefore, the tourism industry has been directly affected and is believed to be the hardest hit by the pandemic (UNWTO, 2020). Various treatments were then customized to the needs of each different country, one of which is Indonesia, which began to find two people infected with the virus in early March 2020.

The Indonesian government has begun to close international entry and exit access and then imposed large-scale social restrictions to reduce and stop the spread of Covid-19. There are certainly many closures of various tourist attractions due to tightening regulations and not covering operational costs. This encourages various transformations so that tourist attractions can run as usual (Hall et al., 2020; Srihirun et al., 2021). In addition, the Indonesian government, through the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy (Kemenparekraf), formulates the concept of cleanliness, health, safety, and sustainable environment (CHSE) and issues certification for those industries that have implemented it based on minimum standards (Kementerian Pariwisata dan Ekonomi Kreatif Republik Indonesia, 2020).

Nature-based attractions are the main priority which will be opened gradually for the community in new normal conditions (Rudiyanto & Januar, 2021). The Indonesian Tourism Industry Trend Book 2021 (Kemenparekraf RI, 2020) states that nature-based attraction has a small risk compared to other types of attraction and has become famous for the public to get out of the routine to enjoy

the fresh air and reduce boredom. Nature-based attraction is an attraction with nature's proximity to the environment, such as beaches and mountains (Björnsdóttir, 2018). With the CHSE certificate's support and nature-based attractions' popularity during the pandemic, the Indonesian government hopes tourism will gradually recover.

Research on tourism destinations' efforts to manage visits in the covid-19 pandemic setting has attracted various studies. (Koh, 2020) highlighting opportunities for improvement in over-tourism during pandemic events; (Afifi, 2021), identifying tourism features during the new normal period in the form of changes in trip duration, destination wellness, isolated tourism, reduced interaction with local communities, and restrictions on access to tourism services. Furthermore, the study (Alonso et al., 2020) reviewed hospitality managers' readiness to cope with pandemic challenges with a resilience theory approach. Some of these studies provide research where aspects of destination readiness are the main considerations.

This research seeks to fill the scope of the research by using a mixed approach that involves tourist perceptions of the efforts made by tourist destination managers, especially nature-based ones. On the other hand, this study also explores managers' views regarding their efforts to meet the CHSE framework. Thus, the results of this study are expected to provide new knowledge about perceptions from the side of tourists and tourism managers regarding the implementation of CHSE in nature-based destinations. Theoretically, this study is offered as an empirical source of traveler and manager behavior in implementing CHSE.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Nature-based Attraction Readiness

A tourist destination attracts the attention of tourists because it is unique with a diversity of values and nature, culture, and/ or manufactured (UU RI. No 10, 2009). One thing that attracts tourists is nature-based (K. Sharma, 2014). Visitors who travel to nature-based attractions can enjoy the scenery by breathing

free air, seeing birds, taking photos, climbing, rafting, camping, and fishing (Budisetyorini et al., 2021 ; Prawira et al., 2021 ; Prideaux & Cooper, 2009). Therefore, nature-based attractions are related to tourist activities that involve experiences in appreciating nature and the environment (Björnsdóttir, 2018).

The nature-based attraction allows visitors to interact with nature (Kim et al., 2019), not just selling nature and leaving it without planning and management. (Dube & Nhamo, 2020) state that nature-based attractions require planning, managing, and designing nature-based added values. An environmental ecosystem in nature-based attractions consists of plants and animals that can interact with humans (Wolf et al., 2019). (Nurlaila et al., 2021) added that several components must make it worth a visit to prepare for a tourist attraction. The physical and the environment are the two basic things of nature-based attraction. Physical can consist of nature that humans do not make, such as water, mountains, and forests, while the environment must make the visit comfortable and safe (Deng et al., 2002).

Health Protocol in Nature-based attraction

A highly contagious virus that can quickly spread among humans, the COVID-19 pandemic causes fear and panic (Zheng et al., 2021). However, the fear of contagion can last for a short or long time, triggering anxiety and fear of traveling during a pandemic (Novianti et al., 2021). Therefore, it is necessary to have tourist visit rules that adopt and maintains a health protocol.

The visit rules were adopted from various rules and support health protocols worldwide. The World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) has also issued protocols focusing on the required health, safety, and physical distancing standards (WTTC, 2020). The protocol aims to attract tourists' attention again by aligning all the industries involved, such as hotels, tourist attractions, and transportation. It divides the protocol into

three things, namely, 1) HR readiness, 2) safe travel experiences, and 3) rebuilding trust and confidence.

CHSE (Cleanliness, Healthy, Safety, and Sustainable Environment)

In Indonesia, the CHSE for tourism was initiated in June/ July 2020, and the certification has been in effect since September 2020 (Kementerian Pariwisata dan Ekonomi Kreatif, 2020) and encourages tourism recovery efforts during the new normal. CHSE acts as general and specific Guidance for the operator, visitors, and employees and contains a series of health protocols compiled by the Government of Indonesia by adopting health rules from the WHO and the WTTC. CHSE aims explicitly for tourism stakeholders such as tourist attraction operators and their employees, visitors, local governments (city/ region and province), tourism association, and local communities (WTTC, 2020).

Recently, the CHSE issued by (Kementerian Pariwisata dan Ekonomi Kreatif Republik Indonesia, 2020) discussed guide materials for tourism's four stakeholders. According to the topic, this literature review discusses the CHSE guide explicitly on tourist attractions, especially nature-based attractions. The tourist attraction guide covers seven areas, namely 1) entrance/ gate area, 2) locket/ ticket center, 3) tourist activities area, 4) other public facilities, 5) exit/ out area, 6) office, and 7) employee area. The details information about CHSE in tourist attractions is shown in Table 1.

a. Cleanliness

There are several essential things to do in this section. First, all people who carry out activities must wash their hands using soap or hand sanitizer when entering or leaving nature-based attractions. Second, it is necessary to provide facilities for washing hands using soap or hand sanitizer. Third, the operator needs to clean the room and equipment with a disinfectant liquid. Finally, it is necessary to clean toilets, prepare clean

trash cans, and not allow disease-carrying animals to enter (Kemenparekraf, 2020; Kementerian Pariwisata dan Ekonomi Kreatif Republik Indonesia, 2020).

Table 1. CHSE Framework

Aspects	Description
Scope	Cleanliness-Healthy-Safety-Sustainable Environment
Aims	Increase prevention efforts and COVID-19 control for community and public facilities in general to prevent new cluster
Material Guide	1. General Management for all those people activate in tourist attractions 2. Special Guidance for all areas in tourist attractions
For who?	1. Operators 2. Employees 3. Visitors 4. Government (provinces, city/ region, local) 5. Tourism Association 6. Tourism local Coomunities
Where to use it?	1. entrance/ gate area 2. ticket center 3. tourist activities area 4. other public facilities, 5. exit gate area, 6. Management office 7. employee area

Source: (Kemenparekraf, 2020; Kementerian Pariwisata dan Ekonomi Kreatif Republik Indonesia, 2020)

b. Cleanliness

There are several essential things to do in this section. First, all people who carry out activities must wash their hands using soap or hand sanitizer when entering or leaving nature-based attractions. Second, it is necessary to provide facilities for washing hands using soap or hand sanitizer. Third, the operator needs to clean the room and equipment with a disinfectant liquid. Finally, it is necessary to clean toilets, prepare clean trash cans, and not allow disease-carrying animals to enter (Kemenparekraf, 2020; Kementerian Pariwisata dan Ekonomi Kreatif Republik Indonesia, 2020).

c. Healthy

The guidelines in this section urge all people active in tourist attractions to maintain health, such as maintaining distance, avoiding crowds, not touching the face, or paying attention to sneezing and coughing etiquette. Furthermore, it is the obligation to check body temperature, use masks or necessary personal protective equipment, ensuring that health equipment is available to maintain clean air in the area. Finally, there

needs to be standard handling regarding visitors who may have health problems when doing their activities, especially Covid-19 (Kemenparekraf, 2020; Kementerian Pariwisata dan Ekonomi Kreatif Republik Indonesia, 2020).

d. Safety

Safety becomes a significant factor in implementing modern tourism, related to managing risks to visitor activities. In handling the Covid-19 pandemic, the safety aspect has two views: the safety of visitors and host communities. Interaction between the parties cannot be avoided as a service relationship and travel experience. Understanding this, the parties' safety is handled by conducting preventive and pre-emptive risk management. Managers are also expected to handle this safety curatively by closing, reducing, and limiting visit activities on various extreme occasions.

e. Sustainable Environment

Tourism is closely related to the continuity of the environment, which exploits nature in the form of experience. Therefore, engineering done for the benefit of tourism improves the environment's quality, not damaging it like other exploration industries. As it has become a central theme of global tourism development, sustainability is applied by protecting, preserving, and adding value to nature, the economy, and society. In pandemic management, the sustainable environment aspect is carried out by enforcing nature and social protection regulations, including separating medical waste (masks), reducing, re-using, recycling, and prioritizing benefits for the community around tourist attractions.

RESEARCH METHOD

Before collecting the data, the author disburses initial references through trusted sources using the application of Publish or Perish 7. The authors used the keywords "attraction readiness," "destination readiness," and "tourism health protocol." After finding the related concept, the author designed the research method and

instrument. This study uses a mixed-method, quantitative approach to investigate visitor perceptions and a qualitative one to understand managers' perceptions. Mixed methods are suitable for elaborating answers through surveys and reconfirming the early findings through interviews to get a more profound meaning (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

In designing a survey, the authors create the operationalization of variables as the basis for a research instrument. There are three questions for each item of CHSE and one as a reconfirmation question. In addition, six questions related to building confidence and trust in implementing health protocols. In total, there are 19 questions in the survey. The survey is distributed online using a snowball by first asking a filter question about whether the respondent has ever visited a nature-based attraction during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021.

Furthermore, the previous respondent was asked to distribute the survey to others. Quantitative data is then processed by descriptive analysis that displays the mean and percentage of the findings. The result is that 100 respondents successfully filled out the questions with the lowest question validity test of 0.361 and reliability of 0.925. Question items with an account score above 0.3 are considered valid and reliable to be distributed (Sugiyono, 2017).

In order to complete this study, this research interviewed four managers of nature-based attractions. Successfully interviewed managers from nature tourism areas in Lembang and Dago in North Bandung. Eleven interview questions are delivered to understand managers' perceptions of readiness in the new normal. Qualitative data is then processed with the first cycle code technique to create a group and understand the meaning (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Respondent and Informant Profile

Based on survey activities conducted on nature-based attraction tourists, the respondents involved in this study were male (43%) and female (57%). By age, dominated by aged 17-26 years (48%); Furthermore, the age of 27-36 years (26%), and as much as 13% for the age group 37-46 years and 47-56 years, respectively. Respondents with undergraduate education (50%), high school (33%), diploma (12%), and postgraduate (5%). Respondents declared themselves to be students (34%), private employees (20%), homemakers (14%), self-employed (13%), government employees (13%), and the rest were professionals.

Meanwhile, informants from tourist attraction managers in this study were: functional forest ecosystem controllers (1 person), general managers (1 person), operational staff (1 person), and marketing manager (1 person). All informants are representatives of the managers of nature attractions in Greater Bandung.

Readiness from Visitors

Based on survey data that has been conducted, visitors provide an assessment of their perception of the readiness of nature tourist destinations to implement CHSE. Visitors assess that the destination they have visited has an index of CHSE application in cleanliness aspects with good hygiene indicators (perception index = 3.99), toilet in clean condition (perception index = 3.76), as well as the availability of handwashing facilities (perception index = 4.24). On the Healthy aspect with indicators: the obligation to use masks (perception index = 4.39), check body temperature (perception index = 4.27), as well as monitoring health protocols (perception index = 4.24).

Furthermore, respondents assessed the Safety aspect with indicators: security conditions (perception index = 3.97), the existence of a unique team handling Covid-19 (perception index = 3.71), and the existence of self-rescue procedures (perception index = 3.82). In the aspect of a

sustainable environment, respondents assessed the indicator: environmental sustainability (perception index = 4.22), the use of environmentally friendly materials (perception index = 3.89), as well as the involvement of the surrounding community (perception index = 3.76).

Based on these data, an analysis is carried out by combining the perception index of each aspect and obtaining the perception index, as presented in Table 2.

Table 2. CHSE Perception Index

No	Indikator	Mean	Std Deviation	Results
1	Cleanliness	3.99	.855	Wash hand is available, but lack of cleanliness for the toilet
2	Healthy	4.20	.841	Maintain the use of masker, body check, and monitoring
3	Safety	3.83	.776	Maintain safety conditions but lack specific team and safety procedure
4	Environmental Sustainability	3.95	.830	Mainly the sustainability but lack of user-friendly material and less participation from the community

Note: 5 = Very strong and 1 = very weak
Source: Result data of researchers

The CHSE perception index shows that the healthy aspect gets the highest rating with a score of 4.20, which shows that visitors have assessed health management at the natural attractions with a strong commitment. On the other hand, the safety aspect is the lowest, with a perception index of 3.83 at a moderate to strong assessment. This is common in nature tourist destinations in Indonesia, where visitor safety still needs to be strengthened.

If all perceptual aspects are average, an index of 3.99 is obtained, which shows that CHSE enforcement commitment, according to respondents, is considered adequate. This is in line with the study (Ningrum & Septyandi, 2021) that visitors already have a good understanding of the importance of CHSE in tourist destinations and the willingness of managers to enforce health protocols. Furthermore, a study (Villacé-Molinero et al., 2021) shows that

visitors are more sensitive to travel risks. This encourages them to provide a stricter perception of how a tourist destination manages aspects of CHSE consistently.

Table 3. Perception Index Using WTTC Assessment Indicators

No	Indicators	Mean	Std Deviation	Results
1	Information about health protocol	4.08	.861	Good information about the health and visit rules
2	Online reservation and virtual payment (cashless)	3.54	1.058	Lack of online reservation confirmation and more cashless facilities will be better
3	Health protocol before entry	3.72	.877	Enough information about health protocol during entry
4	Complaint center about violation of protocol	3.45	.989	Lack of clarity of complaint center
5	Emergency Health or medical services facilities	3.45	.989	More emergency medical services facilities will be better
6	Health and residence records	3.22	1.021	More consistency in recording the health status and domicile of visitors

Source: Result data of researchers

To strengthen the analysis, the study also surveyed the selected respondents' WTTC health protocol indicators (WTTC, 2020). The WTTC's assessment guidelines emphasize risk management, where managers are motivated to regulate visitor activity pre-during, and post-visitation. As presented in Table 3, the perception index shows that the average respondent's assessment is 3.40. This shows that respondents have the same view in moderate to strong areas with different instruments. However, there are more conservative assessments, especially on handling health risks and minimizing visit risks. According to visitors, several things still need to be considered, namely the provision of online reservations and cashless facilities, certainty to whom/ where to submit a complaint or violation, and more emergency medical services facilities.

World travelers' perception of visit risk is a concern (Nagaj & Žuromskaite, 2021), where tourist activities today have become an

integral part of modern human life. Moreover, many tourist travel activities meet the demands of social media existence (Huerta-Álvarez et al., 2020). Nevertheless, most travelers consider that risky travel is not worth the value of their lives. Noting this, tourism destination managers, especially nature-based ones, need to continue strengthening the aspects of nature, operational, and health risk management.

Readiness from Operators

From the processed interview, the operator followed the government's rules and obeyed them, not daring to violate the social restrictions imposed. Operators assume that even though they are very ready with various protocols but still not given confidence when the spread rate is high. This they do because they want this condition to recover quickly. There has never been a Covid-19 cluster found in the nature-based attraction they manage.

"Alhamdulillah, there has never been a visitor properly checked for dangerous rich or suspected of being exposed to the virus. It does not exist yet. Currently, we also do the closure because of the yes rules from the ministry of home affairs and the governor if not really we are ready to manage tourist activities during the pandemic" (THR)

Operators refocus strategies when allowed to unlock their attractions. For example, they focus on targeting the market for individuals or families and avoiding target markets that can create large crowds.

"For this, we will better prepare the destination by focusing more on family tourists instead of groups, so starting from outbound, we reduce the former group to 20 now only family maximum (6 people). (GFC)

Operators complain about how government regulations can change at any time. Changing the rules based on uncertain conditions can make it difficult for managers because they cannot make the right strategy.

According to the operator, they still cannot open precisely even though they already have a CHSE certificate and meet all the conditions, especially when the Covid-19 spread is getting higher. This is reinforced by one of the managers:

Furthermore, later it is not 3M anymore, there is 5M plus a reduction in mobility, while this tourism involves mobility or displacement of people, so it is not easy to do. Even though 3M is enough, in my opinion. (CKL)

When given the confidence to open, some creative actions operators take are to reduce the number of visitors and not worry about the crowd.

We also dare to reduce capacity. Maybe it can also be a plus, we open even though it is less crowded, so we convey the number is a little bit no need to worry about the crowd (CKL)

For sustainable environments, managers are less focused on this pandemic because they feel they have done it before, so it is not visible. This was conveyed by one of the managers who said that they had implemented environmental sustainability for a long time and invited other parties to do it as well,

Because to maintain this environment, the term cannot be from us, so it is like a merchant, like the people around here, like visitors. Also, the term invites them to take care of the environment because we do not want this to be our heritage (TBP)

Readiness of operators in implementing health programs:

The reason is the first visitors themselves have realized, and there have been many "Oh yes, this is a health protocol that is now a new habit in our lives," and for obvious reasons, so this is indeed the new normal era yes so if you want to go back in time you cannot. So even if the Covid-19 pandemic has begun to decrease, we will still carry out health protocols.

On the other hand, one of the operators complained that the certification process was quite time-consuming. The informant claims

that operators have implemented CHSE and registered for certification but have not been verified. Their evaluation due to the process as described below,

We have been following the CHSE program and carrying out certification procedures since one month ago, but there has been no answer from the verification team, yes, it may be lockdown and emergency PPKM, so it is not easy to come to check the procedure. However, we started a month ago for that registration, but there is no word from the audit team when we want to come for verification to the DDP. (DDP)

All in all, they said that they are fully ready because of the advantages of nature-based attractions that have fresh air and can accommodate more people than other types of tourist attractions, as stated below,

That is the most tourist attraction to apply for the health program. If you say ready, of course, very ready from the first is ready. We are also outdoors, yes, where the air is free, there is no need to be afraid if indoors may be a different fear yes (DDP)

To summarize the above data, the operator perception is presented in [Table 4](#).

Table 4. Operator Perception

No.	Code of attraction	Code of informant	Operators' perception
1	THR	DKY	The manager feels ready to receive visits during the pandemic but still complies with the government's provisions.
2	GFC	STW	Readiness is indicated by adaptation and adjustment of the target market, namely for the segment family. This segment is considered to follow the concept of the travel bubble during the pandemic.
3	TBP	NST	The involvement of the surrounding community becomes a strategy to support destination management readiness during the pandemic.
4	DDP	RVI	With enough management experience, managers feel ready for pandemic conditions.

Source: Data of researchers

The analysis results found that aspects of compliance, adaptation, strengthening strategies, and experiences became part of the readiness of the managers of tourist attractions. Compliance with Government rules is an effort by managers to avoid legal and operational risks. The financial pressure experienced by managers is not followed up by committing law violations. This suggests that managers feel that Government regulation protects against greater risk.

Strategies for strengthening and involving local communities in managing nature attractions during the pandemic are a form of social responsibility and strengthen support for tourist destinations in the eyes of the community ([Ramkissoon, 2020](#)). The study found that managers have full awareness of pandemic challenges that need to be faced by the host community. Furthermore, strengthening environmental sustainability, including host-community, has a causal relationship with the condition of tourist destinations ([Mafruhah et al., 2020](#)).

The pandemic has changed many tourists' behavior, either of their accords or complying with regulations. Market shifting is the most widely carried out strategy by tourism industry players. Choosing a new market or adjusting resources to different behaviors becomes a strategy to strengthen tourism destinations in the post-pandemic period ([Villacé-Molinero et al., 2021](#)). Another strategy is to strengthen smart tourist destinations to increase destination resilience and motivate tourist visits ([Gretzel & Scarpino-Johns, 2018](#); [Novianti et al., 2022](#); [Rafdinal et al., 2021](#); [Susanto et al., 2020](#)).

CONCLUSION

Based on the perception of visitors, nature-based attractions in the Lembang and Dago areas are considered fully ready. Visitors state that all operators maintain hygiene and pay attention to safety. Although it is considered quite ready for the health aspect, they are concentrated in the

handwashing facilities and are located at the gate only. Furthermore, visitors hope that online reservation facilities and non-cash transactions will be developed so that they can avoid physical touch. Finally, visitors think that the manager is at least focused on the sustainable environment and safety aspects compared to other aspects in CHSE. After being confirmed with the operators of the sustainability aspect, it was implemented before Covid-19. So, the difference is not so apparent during a pandemic.

On the other hand, they are very ready based on the perception of nature-based attraction managers. During a pandemic, the manager focuses on readiness for health and cleanliness because safety and a sustainable environment are considered ready long before the Covid-19 pandemic occurs. Most managers think that the readiness of managers, even those with a CHSE certificate, does not significantly impact the various activities limiting regulations. Tourist attraction managers consider themselves victims who are always blamed; even though there are few findings of the spread of the Covid-19 virus in tourist attractions, there is no solid evidence to date in nature-based attractions.

Like other papers, this research has several weaknesses; it cannot generalize with others because it only takes examples of nature-based attractions in Bandung and the limited number of visitors visiting during the Covid-19 pandemic. In addition, this research has not involved the government or parties carrying out CHSE certification. Future research can discuss the government's perception and what they are doing to keep this policy going. Further research can also take examples from various nature-based attractions in other provinces.

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