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ETHICS, DEATH, AND DIGITAL NARRATIVES: MORAL DISENGAGEMENT IN GOOGLE MAPS REVIEWS OF BATU LEMO

ETIKA, KEMATIAN, DAN NARASI DIGITAL: KETIDAKTERLIBATAN MORAL DALAM ULASAN GOOGLE MAPS TENTANG BATU LEMO

Muhamad Zhabiyan Dwi Putra[1*], Primantoro Nur Vitrianto [1], Rian Eka Dani Putra[2]
Sekolah Tinggi Pariwisata Ambarrukmo Yogyakarta[1], Universitas Nasional[2], Universitas Internasional Batam[3]

Email: mzhabiyandp@stipram.ac.id[1*], primantoro.stipram@gmail.com[2], rianekadaniputra2023@student.unas.ac.id[3]

ABSTRACT

The rise of dark tourism as part of contemporary tourism has raised various ethical dilemmas regarding the commodification of death, cultural sensitivities, and tourist behavior toward sacred spaces. However, research on tourists' moral rationalizations in the context of dark tourism, particularly based on digital reviews, remains very limited. This study aims to analyze ethical aspects of dark tourism in Batu Lemo, Tana Toraja, through the perspective of moral disengagement theory. Therefore, this study employs a review analysis approach within a constructivist paradigm to explore how tourists construct moral justifications for death-based tourism experiences. Research data were obtained from 268 Google Maps reviews of Batu Lemo from 2018 to 2026, collected using scraping techniques via SerpAPI and analyzed using thematic analysis with the assistance of NVIVO 12 software. The results indicate that tourists actively employ mechanisms of moral disengagement, particularly cognitive restructuring, consequence distortion, and dehumanization, to interpret burial sites as objects of entertainment, visual consumption, and ordinary tourism experiences. On the other hand, some tourists continue to demonstrate moral sensitivity by respecting the culture and ancestors of the Toraja people. This study contributes to the development of dark tourism research by integrating perspectives from moral psychology, tourism ethics, and digital review analysis. The findings underscore the importance of strengthening tourism ethics education and implementing destination management practices that are more sensitive to local cultural values.

Keywords : Moral Disengagement Theory, Digital Data, Batu Lemo, Dark Tourism Destination, Death-based Tourism

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ABSTRAK

Perkembangan dark tourism sebagai bagian dari pariwisata kontemporer memunculkan berbagai dilema etis terkait komodifikasi kematian, sensitivitas budaya, dan perilaku wisatawan terhadap ruang sakral. Namun, penelitian mengenai

rasionalisasi moral wisatawan dalam konteks dark tourism, khususnya berbasis ulasan digital, masih sangat terbatas. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis aspek etika dalam dark tourism di Batu Lemo, Tana Toraja, melalui perspektif teori ketidakterlibatan moral. Oleh karena itu, penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan review analysis dengan paradigma konstruktivisme untuk mengeksplorasi bagaimana wisatawan membangun justifikasi moral terhadap pengalaman wisata berbasis kematian. Data penelitian diperoleh dari 268 ulasan Google Maps Batu Lemo periode 2018–2026 yang dikumpulkan menggunakan teknik scraping melalui SerpAPI dan dianalisis menggunakan analisis tematik dengan bantuan perangkat lunak NVIVO 12. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa wisatawan secara aktif menggunakan mekanisme ketidakterlibatan moral, terutama restrukturisasi kognitif, distorsi konsekuensi, dan dehumanisasi untuk memaknai situs pemakaman sebagai objek hiburan, konsumsi visual, dan pengalaman wisata biasa. Di sisi lain, sebagian wisatawan tetap menunjukkan sensitivitas moral melalui penghormatan terhadap budaya dan leluhur masyarakat Toraja. Penelitian ini berkontribusi pada pengembangan kajian dark tourism dengan mengintegrasikan perspektif psikologi moral, etika pariwisata, dan analisis ulasan digital. Temuan penelitian menegaskan pentingnya penguatan edukasi etika wisata dan pengelolaan destinasi yang lebih sensitif terhadap nilai budaya lokal.

Kata Kunci : ***Teori Ketidakterlibatan Moral, Data Digital, Batu Lemo, Destinasi Wisata Gelap, Wisata Berbasis Kematian***

INTRODUCTION

Contemporary tourism has undergone significant diversification, one aspect of which is the rise of the phenomenon of dark tourism visits to sites associated with death, suffering, or ritual practices rich in symbolic meaning (Prayag et al., 2021). This phenomenon not only sparks tourists' interest in historical and cultural aspects but also raises complex ethical debates regarding the commodification of death, cultural representation, and sensitivity toward local communities (Magano et al., 2023; Martini & Buda, 2020). The term "*dark tourism*" has gained popularity among modern tourism scholars as it constitutes a multidisciplinary topic spanning tourism, sociology, geography, psychology, and other fields (Iliev, 2021).

In the Indonesian context, the Toraja region is one of the destinations often categorized as dark tourism due to its unique traditional burial practices, which are open to the public (Puteri et al., 2025). One of the most famous sites is Batu Lemo, which features cliff tombs with tau-tau statues representing the deceased (Adams, 2020). This practice reflects the complex belief system and social structure of Toraja society, while also serving as a global tourist attraction (Volkman, 1990). However, the transformation of sacred sites into tourist attractions creates a dynamic between cultural preservation and commercial exploitation, which often triggers tension between local values and tourist expectations (Nag & Mishra, 2024). Debates regarding ethics in dark tourism can be explained through moral disengagement theory. This theory helps explain how individuals may condone unethical or immoral actions of a society outside their own group (Pournader & Kach, 2024).

Over the past five years, a number of previous studies have shown that moral disengagement plays a key role in explaining how tourists rationalize unethical behavior at tourist destinations. A study by Wu et al. (2021) revealed that moral disengagement significantly reduces

tourists' intentions to engage in pro-environmental behavior, and even acts as an inhibitory factor as strong as moral obligation as a driver of ethical behavior. These findings are reinforced by a follow-up study by Wu et al. (2025), which shows that the tourism context often characterized by anonymity and low public self-awareness facilitates moral disengagement, making it easier for tourists to justify unethical behavior. In the context of deviant tourist behavior, Su et al. (2022) found that exposure to the deviant behavior of other tourists can lead to a social contagion effect, in which moral disengagement acts as a mediator that reinforces the intention for such deviant behavior. This indicates that the social environment at the destination plays a significant role in shaping tourists' moral justifications.

Furthermore, Im & Kim (2026) identified that individual psychological characteristics such as psychological entitlement can increase the tendency toward moral disengagement, which in turn triggers unethical behavior at tourist destinations. Another study by Im & Kim (2025) also confirmed that stereotypical perceptions of local communities can trigger negative emotions that increase moral disengagement and lead to disrespectful behavior toward the destination. In the specific context of deviant tourist behavior, Jørgensen & Reichenberger (2023) demonstrate that tourists actively employ various moral disengagement mechanisms, such as consequence distortion and responsibility diffusion, to justify negative behavior in tourism settings. These findings align with the research by Pizzetti et al. (2024), which reveals that tourists tend to adopt a "holiday mindset"—a psychological state that allows them to disregard everyday moral values during travel through various cognitive justification mechanisms.

Furthermore, recent research by Cooper et al. (2026) makes an important contribution by identifying various new mechanisms of moral disengagement in the context of tourism, particularly in situations involving complex moral dilemmas. This study shows that individuals in the tourism industry, such as tour guides, construct justifying narratives to resolve cognitive dissonance between moral values and practices that harm the environment. In more ethically sensitive contexts, such as the practice of covert prostitution in Bali's spa tourism, Wijaya et al. (2026) found that tourists employ moral distancing strategies and reframe activities as part of a "wellness" experience to normalize behavior that is socially controversial. This indicates that the destination context and the framing of the tourism experience significantly influence the process of moral disengagement.

Of all previous studies, none have yet addressed moral disengagement in destination management using a review analysis method on dark tourism websites. Most studies focus on tourist motivation, emotional experiences, or the general image of a destination, without deeply exploring the ethical dimensions reflected in tourists' opinions based on digital data (Mora Forero et al., 2023; Shekhar & Valeri, 2022). This limitation creates a research gap in understanding how ethical perceptions are formed and represented within the digital tourism ecosystem; therefore, this paper aims to fill that gap. In this context, a review analysis approach is relevant for identifying patterns in tourist perceptions, including how they evaluate ethical aspects such as respect for death rituals, the behavior of other tourists, and destination management by stakeholders (Sann et al., 2025).

Therefore, this study aims to analyze ethical aspects of dark tourism in Batu Lemo through a review analysis of tourist review data. Specifically, this study seeks

to identify patterns in reviews related to ethical issues, explore tourists' perceptions of local cultural practices, and provide recommendations for more sustainable and culturally sensitive destination management. Thus, this study is expected to contribute to the development of dark tourism literature, particularly in the integration of data-driven analytical methods with tourism ethics studies. To the researcher's knowledge, no previous study has examined the theory of moral disengagement through customer experiences in an analysis using Google Maps reviews on dark tourism destinations in any database

Global Code of Ethics for Tourism

The Global Code of Ethics for Tourism (GCET), developed by UN Tourism in 1999, is the primary normative framework governing global tourism practices, emphasizing the principles of sustainability, social justice, and stakeholder responsibility. The literature indicates that this code serves as a voluntary guide that integrates economic, social, cultural, and environmental dimensions into tourism development (UN Tourism, 2025). Several researchers have examined the GCET; as highlighted by Fennell (2014), the GCET still has limitations, including a lack of regulations regarding animal ethics at tourist destinations. Fennell's article was subsequently criticized by Butcher (2014), who argued that although there is growing evidence regarding animal sensitivity and cognition, human consciousness is entirely distinct from even the most advanced animal consciousness.

Enumerated in its principles, the GCET contains 10 articles, namely: "*The contribution of tourism to mutual understanding and respect among communities and nations*" (1). "*Tourism as a means of achieving individual and collective satisfaction*" (2). "*Tourism as a factor in sustainable development*" (3). "*Tourism, a user of humanity's cultural heritage and a contributor to its enhancement*" (4). "*Tourism, an activity beneficial to the host country and society*" (5). "*The obligations of stakeholders in tourism development*" (6). "*The right to tourism*" (7). "*Freedom of movement for tourists*" (8). "*The rights of workers and employers in the tourism industry*" (9). And, "*The application of the principles of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism*" (10). Studying the GCET is essential to curb inappropriate behavior during tourism activities. Therefore, there is a need to strengthen implementation mechanisms, oversight, and integration with more binding regulations to ensure that global ethical principles are truly applied in the practice of sustainable tourism.

Moral Disengagement Theory

Although dark tourism continues to grow as part of the modern tourism industry, the concept also raises ethical debates because such activities are often viewed as the commodification of human tragedy. In this context, tourists may experience moral conflict when enjoying travel experiences at sites associated with collective grief or trauma. To explain how tourists can still accept and enjoy these experiences without feeling guilty, this study employs Moral Disengagement Theory developed by Bandura et al. (1996). This theory explains that individuals can deactivate internal moral control through various cognitive mechanisms, allowing behaviors that are actually contrary to moral values to remain psychologically acceptable (Bonner et al., 2016).

Moral disengagement operates through several mechanisms, such as moral justification, euphemistic labeling, distortion of consequences, diffusion of responsibility, and displacement of responsibility (Bonner et al., 2016). In the context of dark tourism, tourists may

justify their visits as a form of historical education, respect for victims, or reflection on humanity, thereby rendering such activities no longer considered unethical. Additionally, tourists may minimize the moral impact of their behavior by assuming that the visit does not directly harm anyone or because the destination has been officially managed and promoted by the tourism industry. Previous research indicates that moral disengagement can explain various morally ambiguous behaviors, such as workplace misconduct, cyberbullying, and support for violence (Moore, 2015). However, the application of this theory in the context of tourism particularly to understand tourists' acceptance of dark tourism from an ethical perspective remains very limited.

Therefore, this study aims to expand the application of Moral Disengagement Theory in tourism research by explaining how the mechanisms of moral disengagement influence tourists' acceptance of dark tourism. This study is important because most previous studies on dark tourism have focused more on tourist motivation, emotional experiences, and destination authenticity, while the aspect of tourists' moral rationalization regarding the consumption of tragedy has rarely been discussed in depth. Thus, this study is expected to provide a theoretical contribution by linking the perspectives of moral psychology and tourism studies to understand tourist behavior in the context of ethically ambiguous tourism.

METHOD

Research Design

This study employs a qualitative review analysis approach based on the constructivist paradigm. This approach is considered effective for analyzing tourists' experiences honestly because reviewers are given the option to remain anonymous (Li et al., 2024). This approach was chosen because it aligns with the study's objective of exploring the experiences of tourists who have visited Batu Lemo. Additionally, this approach is capable of analyzing large datasets from various tourists on the Internet (Song et al., 2026). The unit of analysis in this study is individual tourists who have visited Batu Lemo. Batu Lemo was selected because it is a well-known dark tourism destination that is unique and rich in culture.

Data Collection

Data collection was performed by scraping the API (263a6e7827db1c5ecac72349c9f5b1c0f6e62b70ec038c355ce73c3f2ca661c8) via the SerpAPI website platform (https://serpapi.com) and using the Python programming language. A total of 27 pages and 268 reviews from the past 8 years (2018–2026) and from different travelers were collected. The reviews analyzed were selected based on the criteria of containing at least two words, removing emoticons, and translating foreign languages. The complete coding details for scraping review data can be found in the Appendix 1.

Appendix 1. Scraping data code

```
from serpapi import GoogleSearch
from urllib.parse import urlsplit, parse_qsl
import json
import pandas as pd

params = {
  "api_key":
"263a6e7827db1c5ecac72349c9f5b1c0f6e62b70ec038c3
55ce73c3f2ca661c8",
  "engine": "google_maps_reviews",
  "hl": "id",
  "data_id":
"0x4716be32014dffa1:0xe8e173d6821a53c5"
}

search = GoogleSearch(params)

reviews = []

page_num = 0
while True:
   page_num += 1
   results = search.get_dict()

   print(f"Extracting reviews from {page_num} page.")

   if not "error" in results:
```

```
        for result in results.get("reviews", []):
            reviews.append({
                "page": page_num,
                "name": result.get("user").get("name"),
                "link": result.get("user").get("link"),
                "thumbnail": result.get("user").get("thumbnail"),
                "rating": result.get("rating"),
                "date": result.get("date"),
                "snippet": result.get("snippet"),
                "images": result.get("images"),
                "local_guide":
result.get("user").get("local_guide"),
            })
    else:
        print(results["error"])
        break

    if results.get("serpapi_pagination").get("next") and
results.get("serpapi_pagination").get("next_page_token"):
        search.params_dict.update(dict(parse_qsl(urlsplit(re
sults["serpapi_pagination"]["next"]).query)))
    else:
        break

print(json.dumps(reviews, indent=2, ensure_ascii=True))
df = pd.DataFrame(reviews)
df.to_csv(f"data.csv", index=False)
```

Technique Analysis

This study employs thematic analysis to address the research questions and examine ethical aspects of dark tourism. All stages of the analysis were conducted using NVIVO 12 software with a deductive reasoning approach, focusing on the development of the moral disengagement theory. Data were analyzed following Braun & Clarke (2021) step framework, with open coding performed initially, followed by the identification of recurring ethical narratives, and then axial coding to categorize themes according to the dimensions of the moral disengagement theory.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Batu Lemo Background

Batu Lemo is one of the oldest and most iconic cliff-side burial sites in the Tana Toraja region, representing a fusion of the Toraja people's belief system, social stratification, and cultural heritage. This site is located in Lemo Village, North Makale District, and is known as a complex of limestone (karst) tombs that have been manually carved into family burial chambers or Liang Pa' (see Figure 1a). Each chamber is generally about one to two meters in size and is used to house several family members within a single lineage. The placement of graves on the cliff also reflects the social structure of Toraja society, where the nobility or traditional leaders are placed in higher positions as a symbol of honor and social status. The carving process is carried out using traditional tools and can take anywhere from months to years, reflecting the high symbolic and spiritual significance of the Toraja funeral tradition.

The main feature of Batu Lemo lies in the presence of Tau-Tau (see Figure 1b), wooden statues resembling deceased individuals that are placed on cliff balconies. In the local Aluk Todolo belief system, Tau-Tau are not regarded as objects of worship, but rather as symbolic representations of ancestors whose role is to protect and watch over their living descendants. The creation of Tau-Tau is reserved exclusively for the nobility or individuals undergoing high-level funeral rites (Rambu Solo'), typically marked by the sacrifice of dozens of buffalo as symbols of social status and honor.

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Figure 1. Overview of Batu Lemo Cemetery



1a) A general view of the stone tombs in the village of Lemo; these tombs are known by the villagers as "*Liang Pa*," which are carved tombs; **1b)** "*Tau Tau*" statues, crafted to resemble the deceased and representing the descendants of nobility or important figures who have passed away; **1c)** Details of the stone tomb; the door of this tomb is made of wood adorned with traditional Toraja carvings (*Passura*) that hold deep symbolic meaning, **1d)** A miniature of a traditional Toraja house, commonly called "*Lakkian*," typically used as a temporary resting place for the deceased before being taken to the burial site (Source: Author's Ownwork, 2026)

Thematic Analysis

The findings of this study indicate that tourists at the Batu Lemo site actively employ various mechanisms of moral disengagement to navigate the tension between moral values and death-based tourism experiences (see Appendix 2).

Appendix 2. Thematic Analysis Result

Theory	**Dimension**	**Theme**	**Quotes**	**Original Language**
Moral Disengagement	Cognitive restructuring	Graves are only enjoyed as attractions	"*15–30 minutes is enough; any longer and you'll get bored*" [194]	English
		Graves as objects of visual consumption	"*Actually, this is disappointing. Because I thought what was outside was real. This is just a model. The actual human remains might be inside the rocks. You can't see them.*" [178]	Turkiye
		Mystical logic	"*There are many chests and skulls scattered about, but don't take them—if you do, it will lead to a life of misery.*" [6]	Indonesia
		The way society shows socio-economics	"*It is said that funeral ceremonies for the Toraja people are a way for them to show off their status in society.*" [45]	Indonesia
	Distortion of Conceqquences	Focus on economic transaction	"*The admission price is 20,000, but I haggled it down to 10,000, so do the same...*" [180]	English
		Many tourist come	"*Many people visit to*	Indonesia

		to take picture	*look around and take selfies*" [72]	
		Ignoring moral sensitivity	"*All the bodies are placed inside the cave without being buried, where you can touch the skulls and bones.* " [207]	English
	Dehumanization	There is no humanity	"*The most beautiful place to carve a corpse; we can touch the skull and bones*" [196]	English
Moral Engagement		Culture delegitimation	"*XYZ is a ridiculous concept*" [73]	Indonesia
		Enriching cultural understanding	"*I came here looking for something, and I didn't go home disappointed*" [199]	English
		Respecting acestor	"*Learning about this culture and its connection to the afterlife is truly enriching*" [193]	Spain
		Social ethics	"*Sorry, it's a bit rude to take photos at a cemetery where people are mourning*" [56]	English - Indonesia

(Source: Authors Ownwork, 2026)

Tourists who do not wish to be perceived as different tend to set aside the moral values established through collective memory and conform to the norms of their destination. These findings enrich the theory of moral disengagement; in one of its dimensions (cognitive restructuring), tourists tend to reduce the sacred meaning of a site to merely an object of entertainment or experiential consumption, as seen in the brief duration of visits or the reinterpretation of cultural practices as a form of "status display." Similar findings were reported by Sharma (2020), who noted that transgressive behavior among tourists tends to occur when they detach themselves from processes related to moral behavior by employing various moral disengagement mechanisms. Another

finding, reported by Jørgensen & Reichenberger (2023), emphasizes that the situational context that frequently arises influences whether and how respondents are able to justify negative behavior.

Another finding is that tourists disregard moral considerations and view death tourism merely as an object. This observation aligns with the dimension of moral disengagement theory known as dehumanization, in which corpses are no longer viewed as representations of human beings with value and dignity, but rather as physical objects that can be touched or observed, thereby widening the emotional distance between tourists and the subject of death. Tourists tend to disregard established moral norms and focus on conventional tourism objectives—such as recreation—even when these are linked to death. A survey conducted in the United States found that tourists often feel they possess individual privileges, which contributes to moral disengagement at a destination (Im & Kim, 2026). In the long term, this behavior risks causing environmental and social divisions within the local community at the destination (Rhama, 2023). Tourists' moral alignment tends to follow situational contexts, so destination managers need to anticipate such occurrence(Jørgensen & Reichenberger, 2023).

Another finding was that the ethical consequences of dark tourism are considered acceptable because they are perceived as part of the tourist attraction. This condition is reinforced by the existence of a distortion of consequences, where actions such as touching bones, taking selfies, or negotiating the commercial aspects of a visit are not considered within a broader framework of ethical consequences but are instead normalized as part of a reasonable tourist experience among tourists. These results align with the research by Su et al. (2022), which explains that there is a contagion effect when observing other tourists engaging in immoral behavior, but this effect is significantly smaller when it occurs during group travel. Additional findings by Im & Kim (2026) indicate that individual tourists feel entitled to evaluate a destination in a more negative manner.

Interestingly, no indications of a displacement of responsibility were found, suggesting that the process of moral disengagement in this context is more internal in nature and does not rely on shifting responsibility to others. However, the presence of statements rejecting rude behavior or emphasizing the reflective value of the visit indicates that not all tourists experience moral disengagement. Conversely, some retain their moral sensitivity and interpret the experience as a space for learning or reflection. Statements such as "patane is a ridiculous concept" or "sorry, it's a bit rude to take photos at a cemetery where people are mourning" reinforce this point. Thus, it can be understood that the tourism experience at Batu Lemo constitutes a dynamic arena of moral negotiation, where individuals selectively activate or withhold disengagement mechanisms depending on how they interpret their interactions with death.

Theoritical Implication

This study makes a theoretical contribution by expanding the application of Moral Disengagement Theory within the context of tourism, particularly in the field of dark tourism, which has thus far been dominated by discussions of tourist motivation, emotional experiences, authenticity, and destination image. The findings indicate that moral disengagement mechanisms do not only emerge in the context of general deviant behavior but are also employed by tourists to rationalize their interactions with death sites and

cultural sacred spaces. In the context of Batu Lemo, tourists tend to engage in cognitive restructuring by interpreting graves as visual attractions, entertainment experiences, or symbols of cultural status, thereby reducing moral sensitivity toward the meaning of death and the spiritual values of the Toraja people. These findings reinforce Bandura's argument that individuals are capable of deactivating internal moral control through the process of reframing social reality.

In addition, this study also shows that the dimensions of distortion of consequences and dehumanization are clearly evident in digital tourist reviews. Tourists tend to view actions such as touching bones, taking selfies, or treating corpses as visual objects as a normal part of the tourism experience. These findings expand upon previous literature by demonstrating that the process of moral disengagement in tourism is not only influenced by individual factors but is also shaped by the destination context, social normalization, and a digital culture rooted in online reviews. Thus, this study contributes to the integration of moral psychology, tourism ethics, and digital tourism studies through the use of traveler review data as a representation of moral constructions within virtual spaces.

Furthermore, this study also makes a methodological contribution to the field of dark tourism by utilizing Google Maps-based review analysis as its primary data source. This approach demonstrates that digital reviews can represent the dynamics of tourists' ethics more spontaneously and naturally than conventional methods such as interviews or surveys. Therefore, this study opens up opportunities for the development of digital data-based analytical approaches to understand tourists' moral behavior, particularly at destinations with cultural and death-related sensitivities.

Practical Implication

This study offers practical implications for destination managers, local governments, local communities, and tourism industry stakeholders in managing culturally and ethically sensitive dark tourism destinations. The findings indicate that some tourists tend to view burial sites as mere objects of visual entertainment, which risks diminishing respect for the sacred values and traditions of the Toraja people. Therefore, the managers of the Batu Lemo destination need to strengthen cultural interpretation through information boards, educational narratives, and tour guides capable of explaining the spiritual meaning, history, and cultural value of the Tau-Tau as well as Toraja burial traditions. This strategy is essential for fostering a more reflective and ethical tourism experience rather than merely visual consumption of the destination.

In addition, the research findings indicate that some tourists engage in behavior that disregards moral sensitivities, such as touching bones, taking inappropriate selfies, or treating burial sites as ordinary recreational spaces. This situation highlights the importance of implementing a clearer and more communicative tourist code of conduct in destination areas. Managers can adopt the principles of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism through tourist behavior guidelines, restrictions on sensitive areas, and responsible tourism campaigns on social media and digital platforms. This step is necessary to maintain a balance

between tourism needs, respect for local culture, and the social sustainability of local communities.

This study also shows that digital reviews can be used as a source for the continuous evaluation of destination management. Analysis of tourist reviews allows managers to understand tourists' perceptions, criticisms, and behaviors in real time without having to rely entirely on conventional surveys. Therefore, local governments and destination managers can utilize review analysis as a system for monitoring tourist ethics to detect potential behavior that disrespects local culture and to design more adaptive mitigation policies. Thus, the management of dark tourism is not only oriented toward increasing tourist visits but also toward protecting the cultural and moral values of the local community.

CLOSING

Conclusions

This study shows that tourists in Batu Lemo actively employ various mechanisms of moral disengagement in interpreting their dark tourism experiences, particularly through cognitive restructuring, distortion of consequences, and dehumanization, so that the cemetery is no longer perceived solely as a sacred space, but also as an object of entertainment, visual consumption, and a routine tourist experience. The findings reveal that tourists engage in dynamic moral negotiation, where some tourists exhibit behavior that is less sensitive to cultural values and death, while others maintain respect for the culture and ancestors of the Toraja people. This study expands the field of dark tourism by integrating perspectives from moral psychology, tourism ethics, and digital review analysis, while demonstrating that Google Maps-based review analysis can serve as an effective approach to understanding tourists' moral constructions at destinations that are culturally and ethically sensitive.

Suggestions

This study has several limitations that could serve as opportunities for future research, particularly because the data was sourced exclusively from Google Maps reviews and thus does not fully represent the overall experiences of tourists from other digital platforms such as TripAdvisor, Instagram, or TikTok. Additionally, this study focused solely on a single dark tourism destination, Batu Lemo, so the findings cannot yet be generalized to other destinations with different cultural characteristics. The review analysis approach also has limitations in deeply exploring tourists' psychological motivations because the data is limited to written narratives available online. Therefore, future research is recommended to use a multi-platform approach and conduct comparisons between dark tourism destinations in Indonesia and other countries to understand differences in tourists' moral constructions based on cultural contexts. The use of mixed-methods approaches, such as in-depth interviews, digital ethnography, and AI-based sentiment analysis, can also help provide a more comprehensive understanding of tourists' moral dynamics. For destination managers and local governments, this study emphasizes the importance of strengthening tourism ethics education through cultural interpretation, the provision of a tourist code of conduct, and monitoring of tourist behavior in sensitive areas so that the management of dark tourism is not only oriented toward

increasing tourist visits but also toward the protection of cultural values, respect for local communities, and the social sustainability of the destination.

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