

# Philosophical Value as Marketing Point Development of Religious Tourism Destination

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## ABSTRACT

Tourism is a business sector that has become a victim of the COVID-19 pandemic. Religious tourism as one part of the growing tourism business, must also experience a downturn. Nevertheless, the unique characteristics of religious tourism make this tourist destination still visited by many tourists during the COVID-19 pandemic. This study aims to analyze the philosophical value of religious tourism destinations that can be used as a marketing point to build relationships with tourists so as to create loyalty. This study uses a qualitative method, by taking the object of Pesarean Gunung Kawi, Malang Regency. The data processed were the results of in-depth interviews with informants, they were chosen because they still came to the tourist destinations studied during the covid-19 pandemic. This study took 6 (six) informants using purposive sampling method. Data analysis using NVIVO 12 Plus software. The results of data analysis show that the philosophy of ngalap berkah (looking for blessings/answers to the problems at hand), with the means of being assisted in praying/praying together, is something that encourages tourists to remain loyal and come to tourist destinations during the pandemic. Ngalap berkah is built through commitment, communication, mutual cooperation and facilities to build relationships with tourists. The results of this study can be used as a reference in developing other religious tourism destinations. Exploring philosophical values to be used as marketing points can create a personal relationship between tourists and tourist destinations.

**Keywords:** *Ngalap Berkah, Philosophical Values, Good Relations, Religious Tourists*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Religious tourism is part of cultural tourism and is often called a pilgrimage. As time goes by and the development of the era during the pandemic, religious tourism must continue to run. (Mubarak and Zin, 2020). Religious tourism exists because it is a reason for individual religious and spiritual beliefs, therefore religious tourism is still a tourist destination to visit during the COVID-19 pandemic. Based on information and also data related to the transmission of COVID-19 to tourists, it does not deter people and is afraid to keep visiting. This can be used to become one of the drivers for economic growth in the tourism sector.

The Malang area is also an area with the nickname of a tourist, educational and cultural area that has many characteristics, one of which is Javanese culture which is still very strong. This destination is in the form of a Confucian kletheng building adjacent to a mosque-style building. This place is the former Padepokan of R.M

Imam Soedjono (the residence and college of the propagator of Islam in the area) and the pesarean (tomb) of Eyang Jugo, teacher of R.M Imam Soedjono [3][5]. For religious tourists, these destinations contain a lot of meaning and also sacredness that brings blessings if they do alms in that place [6][7]. Because of this, many tourists still visit this tourist destination even though during the Covid-19 pandemic it was actually prohibited.

This phenomenon is interesting to study more deeply, what philosophy builds tourists to become loyal to attractive tourist destinations to be used as marketing points. In the process of developing other religious tourism destinations, this pattern can be imitated so as to obtain maximum results.

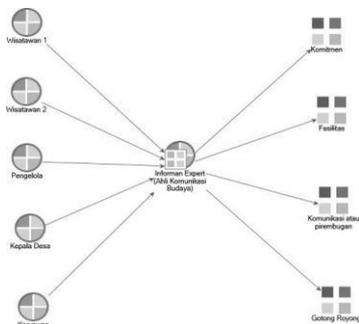
## 2. MATERIAL AND METHOD

This study uses a qualitative method, because it can be used to reveal an understanding of a topic from an individual point of view. Informants in this study were

tourists who were still dating during the COVID-19 pandemic. Data was collected through observation, in-depth interviews and literature study. Determination of informants by purposive sampling method based on specified criteria. There are 6 people who are willing to be interviewed in this study. Interviews were conducted with 3 interviews for each informant used as a credibility test (internal validity), transferability test (external validity), dependability testing and confirmability testing [34] [36][37].

**3. RESULT**

The results showed that Pesarean Gunung Kawi tourists were interested and decided to visit because they were driven by the philosophy of ngalap blessing through the following themes:



Source: Processed Primary Data, 2020

**Figure 1.** Indepth Interview Triangulation

**1. Trust**

Trust is considered as a level of loyalty or trust in a certain place or environment, where a person believes in the existence of supernatural powers. This trust is not only in tourists but also embedded in tourist destination managers. Willingness to work on behalf of/for the benefit of tourist destinations creates unity between tourists and managers (Buttle 2009: 30; Thompson 2020; Tunggal and Saadjad 2019). Pesarean Gunung Kawi tourists conveyed that they are committed to serving tourists very well. Shown by the presence of friendliness, attention and how to consider him as a brother.

Informant 2 (Meet at Location)

*“Yes, it’s true that we believe there is supernatural power there, because the place is easy to reach, so I still do rituals/prayer there. Precisely because of this covid there are many problems and I pray a lot there. (6-tourist informant)”*

**2. Communication**

Marketing communication is carried out by prioritizing a philosophy that attracts tourists. Ngalap blessing is a philosophy that exists in the Gunung Kawi

market and becomes a tourist attraction. Ngalap blessing which is interpreted as seeking blessings or luck is interpreted that when someone prays in this place, he will get an answer to his prayer. This philosophy is communicated in the form of marketing so that people are interested in dating this place. This marketing communication is a perception or description of the object being conveyed, so that the communicant becomes sure and agrees that the object is in accordance with what is conveyed. (Barry and Callen, 2010: 2; Sauniki and Lukiyanto, (2020). Communication carried out by the Village Government, Managers in marketing through interpersonal communication, word of mouth or word of mouth such as to relatives and other relatives and is considered more effective to achieve goals than such communication. Tourists also feel that the Village Government, managers and employees of Gunung Kawi Pesarean Tourism always clearly informs about the tour so that no information is missed.

Informant 6 (Meet at Location)

*“I know from a friend who has been here. I was invited to have a blessing here and it turned out that my prayers were answered. That’s why I often come here if I have a problem, or something I want. (Informant 6-Merchant)*

**3. Gotong Royong**

In the perspective of community development and cultural development, gotong royong is the direction of human labor without pay for a project or work that is beneficial to the public or useful for development. Gotong royong is interpreted as a concrete social behavior and is a value system of social life that is passed down from generation to generation in life in Indonesia. (Koentjaraningrat, 1974: 60; Bintarto, 1980: 11) Gotong royong according to the Management is part of the activities carried out by Pesarean Gunung Kawi Tourism. The difficulties or needs of tourists are assisted by the manager and the surrounding community. For example, completeness (uborampen) for rituals becomes a difficult problem for tourists from far away. This is overcome by being provided jointly by the manager or the surrounding community.

Informant 6 (Meet at the informant's house)

*“Yes, the existence of mutual cooperation and helping others also means helping oneself or the impact is sometimes indirect, which can be downloaded by posterity.” (6-Keeper Informant)*

**4. CONCLUSION**

Based on the discussion above, it can be concluded that the philosophy of ngalap blessing is the driving force for tourists to come to tourist destinations. Ngalap blessing which means seeking blessings/answers to prayers being said is built into a marketing point

through trust, communication and mutual cooperation. Belief puts forward the meaning of spirituality and supernatural powers that exist in that place. This needs to be communicated by all stakeholders to everyone. Communication as part of marketing can use all media, but in this case more use of word of mouth and social media. Then through gotong royong which always prioritizes the attitude of helping for the common good.

## 5. BENEFITS AND SUGGESTIONS

By knowing what philosophies exist in tourist destinations, it is easier to make the right marketing strategy. For the government, it can help to determine the direction of the development of tourist destinations in order to improve the economy of the local community. Researchers in the field of tourism and marketing can develop the results of this study as a reference for developing a religious-based tourism sector. Not limited to the Greater Malang area, as long as the characteristics of the community with developed beliefs adopt local culture, the results of this research can be utilized and relevant.

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