The Development of Nostalgia Tourism in Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Nurlena[1]*, Musadad[2]

[1]*Faculty of Applied Sciences, Telkom University, Bandung 40257, Indonesia*
[2] *Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Universitas Riau, Pekanbaru 28293, Indonesia*
*Corresponding author E-mail: nurlena@tass.telkomuniversity.ac.id

Abstract

Nostalgia is influential for the tourism industry as it revives the memories of the past. The hamlet of a very well-known gatekeeper of Merapi Volcano, Mbah Maridjan, was frequently visited by visitors as soon as the volcano eruption claimed his life. However, the instant tourist object needs an established formula to make it sustainable. Therefore, this study explored the tourism potential in the tourist object to formulate a development planning based on the concept of nostalgia tourism. The data, collected through interviews, field observation, and document review, were analyzed inductively. The analysis results suggest that the memorial site deserves to be the main attraction, which may be developed through a proposed framework (i.e., determination of the key attraction, identification of the tourism potential, and tourism development planning). This study contributes to the recent limited literature on the nostalgia tourism and to the concept's application to a tourism development, especially, in Indonesia.

Keywords: *Tourism development, nostalgia tourism, local participation, Indonesia*

1. Introduction

As one of the major tourist destinations in Indonesia, Yogyakarta Special Region has quite a promising potential for tourism development. This applies mainly to tourist objects which are newly or even suddenly created. Kinahrejo Hamlet, located near the top of Merapi Volcano, was home to Mbah Maridjan, the prominent gatekeeper of the deadly volcano. He was a well-known figure in Indonesia for his commitment (to being a gatekeeper), austerity, dignity, and religiosity. Unfortunately, Merapi eruption in 2010 claimed his life and devastated his home in Kinahrejo. Even the disaster caused serious impacts on several districts around the volcano. Lava avalanches had covered the slopes of the volcano in a very large scale.

The community of Kinahrejo hamlet did not despair over the devastating eruption. They took an initiative to turn their damage residence into a tourism site which they named "Lava Tour". The major icon for the tour package is the Petilasan (Memorial Site) Mbah Maridjan. However, the attractions offered by the locals do not follow an established planning process. Moreover, the lava tour package which highly depends on the lava remnants is very susceptible to environmental changes since the lava cannot exist for a long time. Therefore, this study was aimed at identifying the tourism potential and formulating a tourism development planning in the site so as to sustain the tourism activities.

In summary, the contributions of this paper include: (i) it applies the concept of nostalgia tourism to the development of a tourist attraction and (ii) it enriches the literature on nostalgia tourism, which is currently limited.

2. Related Works

2.1. Nostalgia tourism

Recently, not many scientific literature or studies on the application of tourism nostalgia are found, especially in Indonesia. However, according to the World Tourism Organization, this type of tourism is experiencing rapid growth and becomes the worldwide growing trend that has been developed in many countries such as England, America, South Africa, Australia, etc. (Planning Commission of Indian Government, 2007).

Nostalgia tourism is an evolving phenomenon in which visitors actively strive to recall their experiences and/or perceptions of former times (Amsden et al., 2010). Russell (2008) suggests that "sense of past" resonates with people on so many levels, tourism in which people attempt to feel some form of history has become one of the quickest rising segments of the industry. Meanwhile, Nilnoppakun and Ampavat (2015) successfully showed a positive result of the integration of cultural tourism and nostalgia tourism in improving the experience of the tourists traveled to Leuy Province, Thailand. In the field of sports tourism, Seifried and Meyer (2010) showed that the concept of nostalgia has managed to attract more basketball viewers by way of renovating buildings, facilities, announcement boards, etc. Leong et al., (2015) who studied the nostalgia tourism in Macau found that nostalgia plays a significant part in establishing destination

image and experiential value before a person had an opportunity to experience the destination. Hammoud (2016) suggested that more than 70% of Egyptian immigrants feel nostalgic when visiting Egypt to see their ancestral homeland.

A very positive impact generated by nostalgia tourism is the increase in local production (Morales et al., 2009), which will have a positive impact on the community because the existing tourist objects are managed independently by them. Although close to the community-based tourism, nostalgia tourism is also facing problems when it is already established, i.e. the short length of visitors' stay (Morales et al., 2009).

2.2. Tourism development

Inskeep (1991) claims that planning is organizing the future to accomplish certain purposes. So, planning is related to setting and achieving specific goals. Gartner (1996) proposes stages in developing a tourist attraction, including (i) inventory, (ii) assessment (quality, authenticity, uniqueness, activity expansion, drawing power), and (iii) attraction mix (organic bunching, thematic appeal). A successful tourist attraction will be strong on all three senses of place components (Pearce, 1991), including activities for visitors, physical setting/resource (environments/exhibits), and concepts/meaning which the visitor brings to the setting. In terms of stakeholders who should be involved in the development of tourism, Gunn (1994) suggests that tourism development must involve three sectors, i.e. business sectors, non-profit sectors, and public sectors.

3. Methodology

Data in this study was collected through interviews, document review, and observation. Interviews were conducted with the local community and the management. Document review was conducted to gain secondary data, including data on the number of visitors, the amount of income, etc. Lastly, the observation was conducted to find out potential tourist attractions.

In qualitative research, data analysis essentially involves preparing and organizing the data (i.e. text data as in transcripts, or image data as in photographs) for analysis, then reducing the data into themes through a process of coding and condensing the codes, and finally presenting the data in figures, tables, or a discussion (Creswell, 2013). The data was analyzed inductively, i.e. starting from the field or empirical facts, and then studying the phenomena existing in the field. Because using inductive reasoning, then the hypothesis formulation is not required. Inductive analysis, according to Miles and Huberman (1984) includes data reduction, data display, and decision-making or verification.

4. Results and Discussions

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4.1. Characteristics of attraction (strengths and weaknesses)

The first stage in developing a tourist attraction as proposed by Gartner (1996) is inventory (identifying attraction potencies), as presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Attraction Characteristics

Strengths	Weaknesses
Has beautiful panorama and landscapes.	Belong to a disaster-prone area.
Has the relics of the prominent figure.	Tourist facilities such as toilets, seating, etc. have not been available.
Close to some food and souvenir vendors.	
The location is a popular post for hiking.	The shape is still very simple (from bamboo), not specially-designed.
The community has a special traditional ceremony called Labuhan Merapi	
Close to a historical bunker where several people died due to the hot volcanic clouds.	The location is on an uphill slope, so it takes extra efforts to get there.
Has some terrifying, damaged relics like music instruments, house appliances, etc.	

Table 1 indicates that the strengths of the tourist attraction are very dominant, thus implying that the attraction deserves to be further developed. One of the weaknesses of nostalgia tourism is the short length of visitors' stay (Morales et al., 2009). Therefore, this paper proposes the tour package alternatives to lengthen the visitors' stay, i.e. Mount Pronojiwo Trekking, Goa Jepang Trekking, and Gandok Hill-Kuning River Trekking.

4.2. Characteristics of Potential Market

4.2.1. Existing Market

Kinahrejo is the most favorite site for visitors since the hamlet has the house relics of the deceased Mbah Maridjan. The visitors are not only from Yogyakarta Province but also from other provinces. Based on the information gained from the locals, the visitors could be categorized into four, namely: domestic visitors, foreign visitors, student nature lovers, and disaster volunteers.

4.2.2. Potential Market

In the domestic market, Mbah Maridjan is a very well-known figure in the eyes of the people of Indonesia. Moreover, since his appearance in several TV advertisements of beverage products, Mbah Maridjan was becoming popular as the gatekeeper of Merapi Volcano. Such a popularity can be utilized optimally by exploring the domestic market. Travelers (including foreign tourists) who are interested in the adventure like mountain climbing and culture can be targeted.

4.3. Strengths and Weaknesses of External Components

4.3.1. Amenity and Infrastructure

The location is on an uphill slope, so it takes extra efforts to get there. Although there is a motorcycle taxi, but most visitors reach the site on foot. Therefore, there should be several facilities like gazebo to a take a rest. In general, amenities available include a scenery view post, lodging/homestay, toilets, small mosques, food vendor, tourist information center, parking lot, and clean water.

4.3.2. Accessibility

The hamlet can only be reached using private vehicles since there is no public transportation. Therefore, a public transportation should be provided.

4.3.3. Management and Human Resources

To anticipate a conflict among the members which often occurs due to income distribution (Häusler, et al., 2002), the management must be transparent in terms of financial data. After the eruption of Merapi in 2010, the villagers turns their hamlet into a tourist area. Since the roads to get to the object pass through the residents' houses, the residents feel entitled to gain compensation and manage it. The weakness of the HR aspect is the lack of coordination with local government and private parties, lack of competent human resources, no fixed secretariat, and lack of coordination in handling the visitors.

4.3.4. Promotion and Marketing

Channels of promotion undertaken in Petilasan Mbah Maridjan include the Internet and brochures. The disadvantage is that the media campaigns via the Internet or via radio are still limited in terms of information and are not managed well. Promotional media such as brochures, leaflets, booklets, guide book are still limited, in addition to the lack of coordination with the local government, especially the Promotion and Marketing Section of the Department of Tourism.

4.3.5. Funding Sources

The strength is that the fund for the management of Petilasan Mbah Maridjan is sourced from entrance ticket fee and parking ticket fee. The disadvantage is that the funding source for the attraction development only relies on the collected fees. The Department of Tourism only provides support in the forms of training, counselling, socialization, etc.

Aspects to be developed in the tourism object can be categorized into two, namely physical and non-physical developments as displayed in Table 2.

Table 2: The development aspects of Petilasan Mbah Maridjan

No	Aspects	Development	Objective
A.		Physical Development	
1.	Attractions	Making the diversity of challenging and educational attractions	Lengthen the visit time and to increase the spending.
2.	Transportation Facilities	Providing adequate parking facilities Cooperation with public transport providers Providing more varied vehicle rental services	Increase the number of visitors and provide more satisfaction for them when enjoying the attractions
3.	Supporting Facilities	Providing public toilets in strategic points Building a health post Building a security post in co-operation with the local police Providing resting places along the route of trip	Visitors desperately need a health facility to make them feel more secure. The facilities to rest are needed because of the rugged terrain. Toilet and drinking water facilities are also very important to ensure their comfort.
B.		Non-Physical Development	
1.	Service	Providing a foreign language training	Foreign visitors can get information directly from the guide, and the guide itself gain benefits from this.
2.	Hospitality Application	Raising the awareness of tourism managers and staffs	Providing optimal service to visitors.
3.	Working Profile of Ki-nahrejo Community	Making cooperation with other stakeholders	Making cooperation with other stakeholders to develop the potential, thus improving the welfare of the community.

From Table 2, it can be seen that physical and non-physical aspects are strategic and viable to develop so as to support the development of nostalgia tourism. All the aspects development should engage the locals to make sure the success and empower them. They must be given opportunities to participate in, and gain financially from, tourism (Timothy, 1999).

Aspects in the application of nostalgia tourism concept are summarized in Fig. 1 as follows.

Fig.1 shows that the scheme begins with determining the key attraction (certain time, situation, figure, etc.) which has the most prominent feature(s) to revive the memories of the past. This stage is followed by tourism potential identification by engaging the local community, the management, and tourism officials and exploring the characteristics of attraction, potential market, external components, and supporting attractions. Accordingly, a development planning could be formulated. This model for nostalgia tourism may be adjusted to accommodate unique characteristics and practices at certain tourism objects.
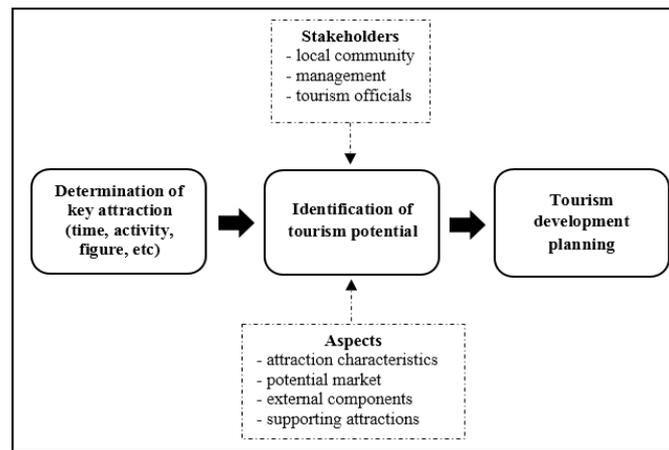
Fig.1: Development framework for nostalgia tourism

5. Conclusion

This paper successfully presents the application of nostalgia tourism concept to a tourist attraction development. This concept can revive the memory of the moments before the eruption and the presence of Mbah Maridjan. Based on the analysis of data, the tourist object is highly prospective and potential for tourism development. Such a development cannot be separated from the prominent gatekeeper of Merapi Volcano. In addition, the area around the site also has several objects that deserve to support the tourism development. Overall, all the tourism development planning must be done by engaging the local community. Their participation is the key to its success and sustainability.

Acknowledgement

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