

Identifying and Developing Cultural Tourism Objects in Bangkalan-Madura, Indonesia

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ABSTRACT: Bangkalan, the westernmost regency in Madura, offers a variety of potential cultural tourism objects. However, they have not been developed optimally due to a lack of knowledge and management skills. That is why it is not surprising if they have not yet contributed economically significantly to the tourism industry's development in the regency. The present study aims to explore, identify, and inventory cultural tourism resources in Bangkalan so that appropriate measures can be taken to develop them into cultural tourism objects that can contribute to its economy. The study uses a descriptive qualitative approach. The data are cultural tourism objects existing in Bangkalan. The data were analysed using interactive data analysis (Miles et al., 2014). Analyses primarily focus on identifying cultural tourism objects to determine if they can be developed into cultural tourism destinations. Other aspects that may hinder their development are also considered in the hope that solutions to develop and promote them can be proposed. Several strategies are also discussed to promote cultural tourism potential into cultural tourism objects that can add economic value.

KEYWORDS: cultural tourism, tourist destination, a cultural object, cultural resource.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Bangkalan Regency is one of the four regencies on the island of Madura in East Java Province, Indonesia. It is located in the westernmost part of the island. The regency is culturally and linguistically diverse as it is home to people of different ethnicities and languages. The cultural and linguistic diversities are particularly concentrated in the areas close to the Kamal Harbour, which used to be very busy with ferries transporting people and goods from Kamal to Surabaya and vice versa with its around-the-clock service operation. However, since the establishment and operation of the Suramadu Bridge that connects Madura and Java, the harbour is not as busy as it used to be twenty years ago or so. It no longer operates around the clock and its service operation has also decreased considerably since. The cause for this is clear; people prefer using the bridge because it is much faster, safer, and free of charge.

Bangkalan is also popular with its tourist destinations especially when it comes to cultural tourism. There is a variety of cultural tourism potential that can be explored and developed in Bangkalan. Cultural tourism can be physical and non-physical in form. Physical cultural tourism takes the form of buildings such as mosques and old historic buildings while non-physical cultural tourism is the one that takes the form of tradition, habit, festival, celebration, etc. Even though Bangkalan has a lot of cultural tourism potential, it has not developed well, making it unable to contribute to the economy of the regency.

In relation to that, defining cultural tourism has become an important topic of discussion among tourism scholars and bodies, including the organization that oversees world tourism (the World Tourism Organization). This happens because the term culture can be defined differently from scholar to scholar. For example, McIntosh and Goeldner (1986) define cultural tourism as encompassing all aspects of travel, where travellers learn about other people's history and heritage or their current way of life or thinking. Richards (1996) defines cultural tourism as the movement of people to cultural attractions far from their usual places of residence to gather new information and experiences to meet their cultural needs. In this case, cultural tourism does not only include the consumption of past cultural products but also contemporary cultural products or the way of life of a community or region. Therefore, cultural tourism can consist of heritage tourism and contemporary art tourism related to contemporary cultural production (McKercher et al., 2005). Richards (2018) further considers cultural tourism as a type of tourism activity in which the main motivation of visitors or tourists is to learn,

discover, experience, and consume both tangible and intangible cultural attractions and products (for more discussion about the definition of cultural tourism, see Mousavi et al. (2016)).

Cultural tourism has several sources or forms. ECTARC (1989), for example, mentions that there are eight sources of cultural tourism, namely (1) archaeological sites and museums, (2) architecture (remains of historic buildings, famous buildings, entire cities), (3) art, sculpture, crafts, galleries, festivals, events), (4) music and dance (classical, ethnic, contemporary), (5) drama (theatre, film), (6) language and literature studies, travel, (7) religious celebrations, religious pilgrimages, and (8) culture and sub-culture. From this, we can see that cultural tourism has very diverse sources and has great potential to be developed, including those existing in Bangkalan Regency.

Along with the increasing demand for cultural tourism offerings, new market spaces have begun to emerge that can be considered and planned to be offered to cultural tourists. These spaces include religious tourism (Griffin et al., 2012), gastronomic tourism (Hjalager & Richards, 2002), language tourism (Correia, 2011), health and spa tourism (Smith, 2009), spiritual and holistic tourism (Norman, 2012), volunteer tourism (Wearing, 2001), creative tourism (Richards & Wilson, 2006), and educational tourism (Abubakar et al., 2014). All these new spaces for cultural tourism are related to the desire of visitors or tourists to get a content experience from the products and services offered. In this regard, Richards and Wilson suggest (2006) that cultural tourism is developing and to a certain degree even transforming into creative tourism. This is a challenge and an opportunity for the government and tourism managers to increase tourism visits by offering various cultural tourism products and services.

Creative tourism can be defined as tourism that offers visitors or tourists the opportunity to develop their creative potential through active participation in course activities or learning experiences that are characteristic of the holiday destinations where these activities are carried out (Richards & Wilson, 2006). In this case, there has seemingly been a shift in emphasis from tangible to intangible culture, and the basic experience includes the exchange of knowledge and skills between hosts and guests.

Based on the background, the present study aims to identify and describe the cultural tourism potential in Bangkalan. Having identified and described the potential along with the problems in developing it, we follow up with discussions of several strategies by which each type of tourism potential can be further developed and managed into cultural tourism objects that are expected to contribute to the economy of Bangkalan Regency and likewise the welfare of its people.

II. METHODS

This study uses a descriptive-qualitative approach since the data are in the form of observation results related to cultural tourism objects in Bangkalan. The sources of data are both physical and non-physical cultural tourism potential while the data are both physical and non-physical cultural tourism objects found, identified, and described in the study.

The data were primarily collected by visiting and observing several tourist destinations in Bangkalan Regency in which cultural tourism potential may exist. In addition, unstructured interviews with people we met in the field were also conducted. Applying Miles et al (2014) interactive data analysis, the data were analyzed by particularly looking at potential cultural tourism resources and how they could be developed into cultural tourism objects. Afterwards, certain strategies were discussed to develop them into cultural tourism objects that may offer alternative economic benefits to Bangkalan Regency.

III. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the findings: cultural tourism objects found and identified in Bangkalan Regency. Each object is described and discussed from the perspective of its possible development into a cultural tourism object that expectedly adds economic value. For that purpose, we classify cultural tourism into four main objects, i.e., religious tourism, culinary tourism, handcraft tourism, which focuses on batik tourism, and bull race tourism.

Religious Tourism

Religious tourism can be defined as a type of tourism that involves the promotion of tourism sites that are related to religious activities or places where these activities usually take place. Examples of the world religious tourism sites are Mecca and Medina in Saudi Arabia, which are the places that Muslims around the world visit for pilgrimage every year, and the Vatican, which is the place Christians around the world visit.

Religious tourism has developed quite rapidly in Indonesia, especially in Java and Madura. This is for example shown by the fact that people on both islands make regular religious visits to the so-called Wali Songo, i.e. the nine prominent figures who spread Islamic teachings in Java and beyond. Wali Songo tourism sites that can be found in Javanese regencies have become cultural object destinations that are visited regularly. For example, in East Java, we can find the tomb complexes of Sunan Giri and Sunan Ampel; in Central Java, we can

visit the tomb complex of Sunan Kalijaga, and in West Java, we can visit the tomb complex of Sunan Gunung Jati. In general, Islamic religious tourism is prospective and gaining popularity in Indonesia. This is not surprising since the majority of the Indonesian population are Muslims. Thus, this tourism sector is expected to contribute to the economy of the country.

Just like Java, Madura also has religious tourism potential that can contribute more to the economy of the region if the local governments can manage it properly. Specifically, we can find several places that can be developed for religious tourism in Bangkalan, one of which is becoming popular now is the Syaichona Cholil tomb complex. Just like Wali Songo in Java, Syaichona Cholil was also known as a prominent Islamic figure in Madura and he was indeed the teacher of many prominent Islamic figures in Indonesia: KH. Hasyim Asy'ari, who was the founder of Nahdlatul Ulama, Kiai Abdul Wahab Hasbullah (Jombang), Kiai Bisri Syansuri (Jombang), Kiai Abdul Manaf (Lirboyo-Kediri), Kiai Maksum (Lasem), Kiai Munawir (Krapyak-Yogyakarta), Kiai Bisri Mustofa (Rembang Jateng), Kiai Nawawi (Sidogiri), Kiai Ahmad Shiddiq (Jember), Kiai As'ad Syamsul Arifin (Situbondo), Kiai Abdul Majjid (Bata-Bata Pamekasan), Kiai Toha (Bata-Bata Pamekasan), Kiai Abi Sujak (Astatinggi Kebun Agung, Sumenep), Kiai Usymuni (Pandian Sumenep), Kiai Muhammad Hasan (Genggong Probolinggo), Kiai Zaini Mun'im (Paiton Probolinggo), Kiai Khozin (Buduran Sidoarjo). Thus, it does not come as a surprise that Bangkalan can develop into a religious tourism destination besides Java.

There are some strategies that we can apply to make the Syaichona Cholil Tomb complex a cultural tourism destination, one of which is to develop facilities both inside and outside the complex. Inside the complex, the local government of Bangkalan can help build the complex so that it looks more interesting, attractive, and well-arranged for visitors or tourists. The main tomb complex, for example, may need to be decorated more properly and each of the main tombs should be named and provided with at least a short narration about the biographies of the figures. As for the Syaichona Cholil tomb, it needs to be provided with adequate narration about his biographical data and roles in the development of Islam in Madura and Indonesia in general. As visitors and tourists may come from different regions and even different countries, it would be good if the narration is also written in different languages such as English, Arabic, Indonesian, Javanese, and Madurese.

With the assistance of the local government, the site should also have tour guides who are well-prepared to serve guests. The tour guides are very important because their main jobs are to provide information about the complex and everything related to its history to visitors or tourists. Visitors or tourists may need to know more about the tomb complex, particularly the history of Syaichona Cholil. The guides in this case will play a pivotal role in telling the religious stories of Syaichona Cholil, especially his prominent role as the Islamic teacher and preacher during the early development of Islam in Java and Madura. In this case, the local government can provide training to tour guides that can increase their public speaking and other language-related skills.

In this regard, public speaking is very important for tour guides because they must deal with people in their jobs. Language skills are also necessary since they must speak fluently and clearly. Therefore, it would be good if they are given some training at least in three languages, i.e., Indonesian, Madurese, and English. This especially is important in anticipation of visitors or tourists coming from abroad in which case the ability to communicate in English will be a crucial requirement for the tour guides. In addition, their mastery of other foreign languages such as Arabic would be a competitive advantage for them because visitors or tourists are expected to come from Arabic-speaking countries such as Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Qatar.

Outside the complex, facilities such as a parking lot, a praying place, toilets, and places to eat and rest also need to be provided properly and adequately by complying with international standards. In this case, the local government also needs to build a comfortable shopping complex where visitors can drop by and shop for Madurese souvenirs, merchandise, goods, and traditional food. This shopping complex should be convenient enough for visitors or tourists so that they can shop for goods or food comfortably. The local government also has the responsibility to educate local sellers on how they should deal with or behave to their customers. For example, they need to be told how to deal with customers who like bargaining when buying Madurese goods or products. They must be trained and educated to behave politely to them and avoid charging more than the goods or services should reasonably cost. This is important as it will become a future shopping experience for visitors or tourists. If this condition is met, customers will have a good shopping experience. They will not feel or think that they are led into buying overpriced goods or services. Thus, this will be a free word-of-mouth promotion by which the customers who have had good shopping experiences in Bangkalan will spread their positive experiences to others they know, thus motivating others to come and visit Madura as well.

Another important element in developing this religion-based cultural tourism and other types of tourism is the role of local communities living in the vicinity of cultural tourism sites or destinations. Again, the local government should involve them at least indirectly, for example by raising awareness about the importance of maintaining a clean environment and social order and the need for the local community to be tourist-friendly. Maintaining social order can be manifested by keeping tourism sites and destinations safe and orderly. This

includes assuring that begging activities and other antisocial behaviours around the sites and destinations are eliminated. This commitment is worth doing because it can improve and increase the good image of Bangkalan as a prospective tourist destination worth visiting.

Culinary Tourism

Culinary tourism has been popular in Indonesia. This is because Indonesia is very diverse in terms of its ethnicities and this diversity in ethnic groups results in rich culinary activities. Madura, which is inhabited by the majority of the Madurese ethnic group, also has culinary specialities and activities that can be developed further into culinary-based cultural tourism. This is particularly evident if we look at Bangkalan, one of the four regencies in Madura. In the past twenty years, especially following the operation of the Suramadu Bridge, a bridge that connects Java and Madura, Bangkalan has demonstrated very busy culinary activities. These activities can particularly be found in the city centre and a district close to Suramadu Bridge, i.e., Burneh District. At least we can find three famous culinary outlets or restaurants in this area, i.e., Bebek Sinjay, Bebek Songkem, and Tera' Bulan. These restaurants are well known and have become culinary tourism destinations for many people both from Madura and outside Madura.

Culinary tourism in Bangkalan can be further developed to attract more visitors or tourists. This, for example, can be done by founding a culinary demonstration centre where visitors or tourists can experience culinary production. They can also learn how to process raw materials by attending cooking demonstrations provided by the centre. As Bangkalan is very famous for Bebek Sinjay and Bebek Songkem, it would be good if the local government of Bangkalan collaborates with their owners in providing cooking demonstrations for visitors or tourists. The demonstrations can be held in a cultural tourism centre provided or facilitated by the local government. Depending on agreements with the restaurant owners, however, they can also be carried out near or even within the restaurant complexes. The benefit of holding events such as this will double as this can help attract more visitors or tourists to come and eat at the restaurants. It can also introduce and popularize Bangkalan cuisine and culinary traditions to a larger number of prospective visitors or tourists. As a result, this also helps promote and develop cultural tourism in Madura.

Batik Tourism

Madura is also famous for its written batik handicraft. This tradition of batik production has lived for a long time and is still maintained from generation to generation. Each of the four regencies in Madura has its centre for batik handicrafts and each also has its unique batik patterns. In this regard, batik handicraft production in Bangkalan is in Tanjung Bumi District, a district of about 44 km to the north of Bangkalan City. Here we can find a variety of written batik patterns that are unique to Bangkalan, Madura. The price for each piece of batik ranges from IDR100,000 to IDR20,000,000, depending on the quality and pattern complexity of the batik products.

Batik lovers who visit Bangkalan should not miss the opportunity to drop by Tanjung Bumi. Although they can buy batik products in several batik outlets in the city of Bangkalan, some may be more interested in coming to the production centre themselves to know first-hand how batik is handcrafted; they can also choose more various patterns with prices that may be not as higher as those offered in the official batik outlets since they buy them directly from batik makers.

There are some reasons why the batik production centre can be developed into a prospective cultural tourism object. First, it has been known by batik lovers and now it has buyers as visitors or tourists. Second, it can be further developed and promoted by establishing a batik short training centre for visitors or tourists. This centre can offer short courses for interested visitors or tourists on how to make batik so that they can get first-hand experiences on how this handicraft is made.

Bangkalan Regency and the other three regencies in Madura have very large and diverse batik craft patterns and are well known to many people throughout Indonesia, arguably even in the world. The four regencies in Madura, namely Bangkalan Regency, Sampang Regency, Pamekasan Regency, and Sumenep Regency, have their batik centres. They have different batik patterns, indicating the unique characteristics of each regency. Batik enthusiasts and observers may be able to distinguish the batik patterns of the four regencies, but visitors or tourists who do not know the different patterns of the existing Madurese batik may need to gain knowledge about them so that they can get to know the culture of each regency better as projected in their respective batik patterns.

When visitors or tourists come to Bangkalan, they may be interested in buying souvenirs, one of which is batik, for example, the Tanjung Bumi batik. Through the promotion of batik, visitors or tourists can easily visit batik sales centres in Bangkalan to see, choose, and buy batiks with whatever motifs they prefer. From an economic perspective, the proceeds from the sales of batik can improve the welfare of the people of Bangkalan, especially the batik craftsmen. However, if such economic activities only stop at this stage, tourism activities will not develop beyond these buying and selling economic activities. This is where we need to develop a model or a strategy for batik-based cultural tourism.

The strategy that we can develop related to batik-based cultural tourism is to fully involve the batik community. Of course, this will not go well if we only rely on the batik-making community. To motivate and enact them, the active role of the local government of Bangkalan Regency determines the success of this batik-based tourism program. In this case, the local government must establish a working group that involves several batik craftsmen, who are organized and facilitate developing batik handcraft in their respective places. This is done so that they feel cared for by the local government and are convinced that their batik activities can contribute to the welfare of the batik-making community in particular and the people of Bangkalan in general.

After the approach and facilitation process with the batik-making community has been carried out, the local government also needs to provide a platform for the sales of their batik products. In this case, it needs to provide exhibition centres and batik sales in Bangkalan which can be used as outlets for the sales of batik handicrafts. Promotional activities need to be carried out on a wide scale by the local government through a variety of promotional channels such as social media that can be easily set up and used these days. Activities like this can help the sales of batik handicrafts and consequently increase the confidence of batik makers in their batik products as well as their trust in the local government which has been fostering and facilitating their batik production.

The activities mentioned above are still at the stage of motivating batik production and sales as well as increasing the confidence of batik craftsmen and their trust in the government's efforts to facilitate and develop batik production. The next important stage is how to make batik an interesting object of cultural tourism. To make it an object of cultural tourism, the role of the local government is particularly crucial and defining. The local government of Bangkalan should provide batik houses that are equipped with standardized batik production equipment. This equipment is required for the process of painting, colouring, drying, packaging, branding, and displaying the batik handicrafts. Hence, the batik house may function as a one-roof station for batik production and marketing.

In this case, the batik house can be occupied and used by local government-assisted batik craftsmen who have gone through and passed certain assessment processes and procedures for producing good quality batik handicrafts. The craftsmen are permitted to occupy and use the batik house to produce batik in that place. Because the purpose of the batik house is not only as a place to produce batik, those who have been selected and given permission to handcraft batik in it also need to be trained and equipped with knowledge, skills, and awareness that they also have other obligations or duties as ambassadors for batik cultural tourism.

Through scheduling and coordination, the local government can hold batik-based cultural tourism events. In this case, visitors or tourists can be invited or given the opportunity to directly observe the process of batik production. They will also be permitted to ask questions related to batik handicrafts. This is where the idea that batik can be developed as a promising cultural tourism object in Bangkalan. Of course, this tourism activity is expected to help stimulate tourism industries in Bangkalan Regency which can contribute to the increase of local revenue. Ultimately, the increase in local original income is supposed to increase the economic welfare of the people of Bangkalan Regency in general.

Bull Race Competitions

Madura is also popular for its bull race tradition. The major competition is held regularly in November and October every year. The participating competitors come from the four regencies in Madura, i.e., Bangkalan, Sampang, Pamekasan, and Sumenep. These competitors have gone through competitions themselves in their respective regencies. Therefore, each regency can only send four selected representatives to the annually held major competition.

The major competition is held in a rotating manner in the four regencies. This is done so that each regency in Madura has the opportunity to host the competition that can consequently attract visitors or tourists to come and see it. During this competition season, Madurese people in the host regency make use of it to gain more income from providing services and selling goods to visitors or tourists. As tourists outside the host may come two days or even several days before the event is held, this will also contribute more to the economy of the regency. The host regency usually holds a variety of activities during the days and nights before the event. This can also be used by the local people to earn more money by selling Madurese handicrafts, merchandise, batiks, traditional food, etc.

Bull races can be developed into a cultural tourism object in several ways. First, bull race events are only held in certain months of the year and this is particularly not sufficient from the cultural tourism perspective as cultural events such as this require regularity and frequency in their undertakings. Therefore, to develop bull races into a sustainable cultural tourism object, they should be held on a regular and frequent basis. This of course needs the involvement of the local government as the policy maker and planner of events such as this in their respective regency. In this case, the local government must actively plan, schedule, and promote bull race events. For example, to increase frequency, they can hold them every three months. In this case, they do not

have to involve a lot of participants; the most important thing is that cultural events can be done regularly and frequently.

Second, bull race events should not be held for the sake of bull races themselves; that is, other cultural aspects of the event should also be introduced, developed, promoted, and conducted in tandem. For example, the local government as the event organizer may design and plan a cultural session related to bull races. The cultural session, which can be held before the bull race event, can be in the form of a bull expo. In this session, the owners of bulls can be given some sessions in which they can provide information or demonstrations to visitors or tourists about how they choose bulls, raise and breed them, what kind of food and traditional medicine they give to their bulls, and what training or exercise their bulls must perform before a competition, etc. This can be another interesting session in addition to the bull race competition since visitors or tourists not only enjoy bull races but also get knowledge or valuable information about bulls and any aspects related to them.

Third, another interesting supporting event that can be conducted before the bull race competition is to display selected pictures of the previous winners of bull race competitions, for example within the last five to ten years. This event can be held in the city centre or the Bangkalan cultural centre. In this case, the event organizers need to provide visitors or tourists with cultural guides with adequate knowledge about the history and development of bull races. The guides should also be selected by considering their competence in foreign languages because they are expected to be able to communicate with foreign visitors or tourists. Thus, if this event is prepared and carried out properly, it will become one of the cultural tourism attractions in Bangkalan. In this case, the local government should consider it as one of the events that can go along with the major event of bull race competitions.

Fourth, bull races have been associated with violence against animals. This is an undebatable fact about Madurese bull races in general. For some people, this violence against animals may be something that has been taken for granted, but for others, it is something that can no longer be tolerated. As we want to attract more visitors and tourists to come and see bull race competitions, we need to think about ways by which we can eliminate or at least minimize any types of violence against animals. At first, this effort may be difficult to achieve because violence against animals during bull race competitions has occurred for such a long time; indeed, it is considered a norm or tradition by both bull race owners and lovers. Again, this is not an easy undertaking due to this ingrained belief and tradition among bull race owners; there will be protests or opposition here and there. However, with education and socialization provided for bull race owners, we believe that we can finally hold and showcase violence-free bull races. Thus, we will have bull race competitions that are more humane, more animal-friendly, and more civilized. This way we also support and care about animal welfare in our cultural tourism activities.

In this case, the role of the local government is crucial in training and educating bull race owners about how they should treat their bulls properly and how they can avoid hurting and torturing them before, during, and after a competition. Besides, the rules of the game must be made explicit and applied strictly, for example by stating that bull race owners must not apply any type of violence against their bulls in any competition. They are also forbidden to use both chemical and non-chemical substances that can hurt or endanger them. Those who do not abide by these rules can be disqualified from any competition for a certain period.

Thus, increasing bull race owners' awareness about eliminating violence against animals is very important. The absence of violence against animals in any bull race competitions is expected to attract more visitors or tourists to come and see them. This will in turn lead to the development of more civilized cultural tourism and more importantly increase the local government's income from this emerging and promising tourism sector. In addition, the increase in the local government's income is expected to further contribute to people's social and economic welfare within the regency.

IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussion in the previous section, it can be concluded that Bangkalan has a variety of cultural tourism potential that can be developed into tourism objects. The cultural tourism potential identified in the present study consists of religious tourism, culinary tourism, batik handicraft tourism, and bull race tourism. The results also indicate that these resources can be developed into cultural tourism objects that, if managed properly, can potentially contribute to the economy of Bangkalan Regency. To achieve this, however, the local government needs to take necessary measures by leading, motivating, and working together with respective tourism communities, tourism stakeholders, and local people. Thus, the role of the local government is particularly crucial and defining throughout the stages of cultural tourism development.

The data in the present study were mostly collected by an observation technique. To obtain a much deeper understanding of cultural tourism in Bangkalan, future studies also need to consider collecting a variety of data sources by employing different techniques such as interviews, focused group discussions, and

questionnaires. The methods can also be further expanded to the use of quantitative analysis. Thus, with various techniques in data collection, it is hoped that future studies can be more holistic and the results will also be more well-rounded and in-depth.

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