

Prospects of Wellness Tourism in Indonesia as Tourism Sector Recovery Effort Post Covid-19 Pandemic

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Abstract

Tourism in Indonesia has suffered a devastating blow during the COVID-19 pandemic, therefore various efforts need to be taken to restore tourism. The type of tourism that is becoming a trend today is tourism that accommodates the issue of improving the quality of healthy life to achieve a balance of body, mind, and spirit (wellness tourism). Indonesia as a country that is rich in natural resources and has a variety of traditional cultures in each region, should have good prospects for the development of wellness tourism. This study aims to explore tourist attractions in areas in Indonesia that have the potential to be developed as wellness tourism. This type of research is descriptive qualitative with data collection methods through literature study. The research instruments used are aspects of the body (physical wellness), mind (intellectual wellness, emotional wellness, social wellness), and soul (spiritual wellness). Research findings indicate that tourism objects in Indonesia contain wellness tourism aspects, namely: 1) Body aspects in the form of nature tourism (island tourism, hot spring tourism, and marine tourism) with attractiveness in the form of tourism activities related to tourism physical health; 2) Mind aspects in the form of educational tours (traditional medicine tours, unique village tours, and certain plant cultivation tours); 3) The soul aspect is in the form of religious and historical tourism (tours to historical places of worship, historical sites, and tombs of prominent figures, such as scholars and kings). From these findings, it can be concluded that tourism objects in Indonesia have the potential to be developed into wellness tourism. This research is important as a recommendation material for the government and stakeholders to develop a tourism recovery model by prioritizing tourism objects with the concept of wellness tourism.

Keywords

wellness tourism potential; body mind spirit wellness; wellness tourist attraction



I. Introduction

The tourism sector in Indonesia is one of the sectors affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. This is evident from the significant decrease in the number of local and foreign tourists (Egsgaum, 2021). This significant decline occurred in 2021 with a total of 937.75 thousand foreign tourist arrivals, a decrease of 71.42 percent from 2020 which amounted to 3.28 million visits (BPS, 2021). The decline in the tourism sector has prompted the government to undertake various recovery efforts so that the Indonesian economy can be boosted.

One of the efforts that can be taken is to change the concept of tourism to follow the current trend, namely the concept of wellness tourism. Wellness tourism is one of the special interest tours that aims to maintain fitness. This type of tourism has the potential to develop during the transition to the new normal (CNN Indonesia, 2021). This is because the current condition of society is experiencing stress due to restrictions on social activities

to minimize the covid-19 pandemic. This condition raises public awareness to appreciate every opportunity to improve physical and mental health. This awareness encourages people to look for holiday destinations that can improve physical and mental health (Kompas.com, 2021).

The outbreak of this virus has an impact of a nation and Globally (Ningrum *et al*, 2020). The presence of Covid-19 as a pandemic certainly has an economic, social and psychological impact on society (Saleh and Mujahiddin, 2020). Covid 19 pandemic caused all efforts not to be as maximal as expected (Sihombing and Nasib, 2020).

Wellness tourism can be an alternative solution for people who are tired of facing the COVID-19 pandemic. Wellness tourism focuses on the purpose of maintaining, managing, and improving overall health and body condition. The concept of wellness tourism is very suitable in restoring awareness and physical, psychological to spiritual health (Detikfinance, 2022).

Contrary to the potential of the concept of wellness tourism as an effort to restore tourism, according to several previous studies, the development of wellness tourism has not been widely recognized as a very potential business potential in Indonesia, even the existence of wellness tourism has not yet been developed (Darmawijaya *et al.*, 2019; Janapriati *et al.* ., 2014).

Wellness tourism has been studied before, where several researchers focused on the motivation of tourists visiting health tourism (Kessler *et al.*, 2020; Darmawijaya *et al.*, 2019; Medina-Muñoz & Medina-Muñoz, 2013). Other research discusses the experience of health tourism (Dillette *et al.*, 2020) and the image of health tourism as a recovery strategy after the COVID-19 pandemic (Abbaspour *et al.*, 2020). There are also studies that focus on issues such as the characteristics of health tourism (Voigt *et al.*, 2011) and the impact of health tourists on residential communities (Wang *et al.*, 2020). Then other researchers discussed the formation of tourist intentions to revisit health tourism destinations, especially spas and recommended health spa tourism to others (Han *et al.*, 2020).

From the several studies above, no research has been found that intends to explore tourism objects that have the potential to be developed as wellness tourism. Based on that statement, the purpose of this study is to explore tourist attractions in areas in Indonesia that have the potential to be developed as wellness tourism. This research is important to carry out, because the tourism sector needs time to recover, considering that the COVID-19 pandemic has been going on for two years, so more ideas about tourism recovery are needed. Therefore, this research can be used as a recommendation for the government and tourism management institutions in Indonesia in developing a tourism recovery model by maximizing the wellness tourism potential of existing tourist objects.

II. Review of Literature

Wellness tourism is one of the special interest tours that combines health and recreation tourism with the aim of enabling tourists to achieve a balance of body, mind and spirit to maintain health and achieve holistic well-being goals (Smith & Puczkó, 2003). 2009; Susanti & Wilyadewi, 2021; Voight *et al.*, 2010). This type of tourism offers preventive and alternative healing opportunities as well as various health facilities, sports facilities and fitness facilities to maintain health while traveling (Chabbra, 2021; Smith & Kelly, 2006).

Wellness tourism integrates the concept of tourism services with the concept of "rest" and health services during tourist trips. This tour is intended to maintain and restore physical and mental health by people who are healthy, not suffering from disease, or

people who are in recovery period with activities such as spa, reflexology, fitness massage, yoga, meditation, and others. (Meikassandra et al., 2020; Pratiwi, 2021).

Wellness tourism invites tourists to improve the quality of healthy life by building a new lifestyle, namely a comprehensive balance of the dimensions of wellness (Susanti & Wilyadewi, 2021). Wellness consists of several dimensions that are interrelated and affect each other (Meikassandra et al., 2020). Several dimensions of wellness are mental/spiritual wellness, emotional wellness, social wellness, physical wellness, intelligent/intellectual wellness (Corbin et al., 2006; Kessler et al., 2020; Meikassandra et al., 2020; Susanti & Wilyadewi, 2021), environmental wellness (Susanti & Wilyadewi, 2021), and occupational wellness (Nixon et al., 2021; Wickramamarathne et al., 2020).

To maintain or achieve optimal health, it is necessary to balance aspects of the body, mind, and spirit and fulfill the dimensions in it (Green et al., 2019; Meikassandra et al., 2020). In the body aspect there is a physical wellness dimension, the mind aspect has an emotional wellness, social wellness, and intellectual wellness dimension, while in the spirit aspect there is a spiritual wellness dimension (Meikassandra et al., 2020).

The first dimension, physical wellness which is directly related to the body (Corbin et al., 2006; Dillette et al., 2020), is when a person can go through the day with sufficient energy to work and play (Corbin et al., 2006), such as yoga, hiking, detox (Dillette et al., 2020; Meikassandra et al., 2020), meditation, diet (Meikassandra et al., 2020), spa, (Meikassandra et al., 2020; Han et al., 2020), hiking (Dillette et al., 2020), exercise/gym (Meikassandra et al., 2020; Nixon et al., 2021), traditional therapy (Nixon et al., 2021). Body care and appearance aimed at making the body firmer, controlling weight, improving appearance, taking good care of the body (Kessler et al., 2020). In addition, this dimension is also related to health behaviors such as consuming healthy nutritious foods, exercising regularly, avoiding risky behavior, and engaging in fitness sports (Green et al., 2019).

The second dimension, emotional wellness, relates to conditions where a person can be open to learning new things and accepting new ideas, so that it can help a person to deal with stressful situations and accept it as part of life or in other words, when a person can control and express emotions in the right way (Corbin et al., 2006). Emotional health relates to feelings about how one reacts to events by consulting health practitioners, healers, and so on (Corbin et al., 2006; Meikassandra et al., 2020).

Then the third dimension of social wellness which describes the condition when a person has friends and with that person discusses problems or with whom the person spends time (Corbin et al., 2006) or in other words this dimension describes interactions with other people as individuals, couples and groups (Corbin et al., 2006) Meikassandra et al., 2020). This dimension can also include advice or consultation with health professionals, hospitals, high-quality community services that allow people to connect with people and provide reliable information (Nixon et al., 2021).

The fourth dimension, intellectual wellness, relates to the mind (Nixon et al., 2021), namely when a person is open to experiences that will broaden the knowledge base (Corbin et al., 2006), experience something new, satisfy curiosity, help better understand themselves (Kessler et al., 2020), learn and use knowledge through workshops, training, coaching on nutrition, supplements, vitamins, and others (Meikassandra et al., 2020).

The fifth dimension, spiritual wellness, involves conditions when a person works to reach spiritual potential and find harmony in life (Corbin et al., 2006). Spiritual wellness is related to one's need for meaning and purpose in life with spiritual health experiences from Hinduism, Bali, Ubud, and others (Meikassandra et al., 2020).

III. Research Method

This study uses a qualitative research type with a descriptive approach. The data in this study were taken from journals and news articles that contain tourist attractions in Indonesia and their attractions. The data that has been collected was analyzed using Miles and Hubermann's qualitative data analysis which consists of three stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, and compilation of conclusions/verification (Miles et al., 2014). The instruments used in this study, among others: 1) Aspects of the body (body) with dimensions of physical wellness; 2) Aspects of the mind (mind) which consists of the dimensions of intellectual wellness, emotional wellness, social wellness; 3) Aspects of the soul (spirit) with the spiritual dimension of wellness.

IV. Results and Discussion

The results of the exploration of tourist objects in areas in Indonesia that have the potential to be developed as wellness tourism show how diverse the types of tourism objects are, ranging from natural tourism, religious tourism, and educational tourism. Tourist objects that have the potential as wellness tourism are studied based on aspects of the body (body), mind (mind), and soul (spirit).

4.1 Body Wellness Tourism in Indonesia

Viewed from the body aspect, tourism objects that have the potential to be developed into wellness tourism are more directed to natural attractions, including: Raja Ampat Islands, West Papua, Cibuni Rengganis West Java, Blue Lagoon Beach Bali, and Yoga Lagoon Tourism. Joy Bali. The Raja Ampat Islands are known as tourist destinations with natural potential under the sea and on land. Some of the tourist attractions that tourists can enjoy include: spots to see birds of paradise, bird watching, snorkeling (diving), tracking (walking), hiking (climbing), flute drumming culture, war dance, culinary arts, balobe (fishing with traditional way), feeding fish traditionally (Iriani, 2019). Then the Cibuni Rengganis tourist attraction is one of the natural tourist attractions with hot springs. The attraction that tourists can enjoy is the relaxation tour of hot springs (Fiona & Damayanti, 2020). Another tourist attraction is Blue Lagoon Beach, Karangasem Regency, Bali which is dubbed the 'blue lagoon', because it is in accordance with the natural beauty of the blue and clear sea and has a biodiversity of marine life. The attractions offered include: underwater diving, coral gardening, paddle boarding, spa treatments, yoga, meditation, cultural arts performances such as art performances of sekehe gong music and also the rejang dewa dance (Paramitha, 2022). Then La Joya Yoga tourism, Bali is a yoga tour located on the beach surrounded by lush green plants, so that tourists can do yoga activities while enjoying the natural scenery (Sindonews.com, 2022).

4.2 Mind Wellness Tourism in Indonesia

For the mind aspect, it leads to educational tourism objects, including: Yogyakarta Traditional Herbal Center, Banjarmasin City Green Village, Blitar Chocolate Village, and Astiri Tawangmangu House. The Province of the Special Region of Yogyakarta is a center for producing traditional herbs with raw materials from native Indonesian spices. Some of the well-known herbal medicine centers in Yogyakarta are the Gendong Kiringan Herbal Tourism Village, Argomulyo Traditional Herbal Medicine Center, and Gendong Gesik Herbal Center, Sleman Regency. Tourists can taste the freshness of herbal medicine, visitors are treated to direct experience seeing the whole process of making it. In addition,

tourists can learn how to make traditional herbal medicine (Hadi, 2022). Another tourist attraction in Kampung Hijau, Banjarmasin City is one of the new tourist destinations in Banjarmasin City, which was developed with a Community-based Tourism (CBT) approach offering a tourist attraction with a distinctive nuance of river-based Banjar culture. Besides being a tourist attraction along the river with the characteristics of each green house, to the fence and roof of the building it is also an educational tourist spot. This tourist attraction offers several tourist activities, such as counseling on how to live a clean and healthy lifestyle and plant cultivation, the practice of making and packaging organic fertilizers, learning to harvest, making culinary preparations from the harvest, planting plant seeds (Riadi et al., 2020). In addition, there is also Kampung Chocolate tourism which is located in Blitar. Kampung Chocolate is one of the potential creative economy businesses that is able to provide the most popular tourism education with several tourist activities consisting of cooking classes, growing cocoa beans, processing and packaging chocolate (Rifai et al., 2022). Then there is the Indonesian Astiri House Recreational Edu Tour, Tawangmangu which is able to provide new experiences for visiting tourists, for example the provision of workshops for making essential oils, hand sanitizers, aromatherapy candles, and others made from essential plants (Sindonews.com, 2022).



Figure 1. Aspects of Wellness Tourism in Indonesia

4.3 Spirit Wellness Tourism in Indonesia

The spiritual aspect leads to religious tourism objects, including: Historic Mosque and the Tomb of the King and Religious Leaders in Banjar Regency, Samarinda Islamic Center Mosque, Sam Poo Kong Temple, Central Java, Muaro Jambi Temple, Vihara Dharma Giri, Kupang Protestant Church, and the Sleeping Buddha Statue of Mojokerto Regency. One of the interesting religious tourism in Indonesia is located in Banjar Regency. The area is known as the "City of Santri and Veranda of Mecca" because there are many tombs of scholars and old mosques that have historical value. At this tourist attraction, tourists can find peace by visiting historic mosques and making pilgrimages to the graves of prominent figures, namely the ulama and king of Banjar (Anwar, 2019). Another religious tourism object is the Islamic Center Mosque, Samarinda, which is one of the grandest mosques in Southeast Asia and also the second largest mosque in Indonesia after the Istiqlal Mosque in Jakarta. It is said to be a religious-based tourist spot because it is not only used as a means of worship but also as a tourist place. At this tourist attraction, tourists can worship, relax near the Mahakam river, watch religious events such as festivals and Islamic holidays (Kasih, 2019). In addition, there is also the Sam Poo Kong Temple, Central Java, which is a cultural heritage in the form of architecture with the values contained in it as a place of worship for the Chinese people. Here there is a place of worship for a large pagoda, a place of worship for the tomb of Kyai Juru Mudi, a place of worship for Mbah Kyai Anchors, a unique chain tree shaped like a chain, Reliefs which are some of the history of Admiral Cheng Ho's journey (Isnain & Lokaprashida, 2020). Another tourist attraction in the Muaro Jambi Temple area is a strategic national tourism area, a national cultural heritage area with status as a national cultural heritage site and is also included in the tentative world heritage list. Here, tourists can follow the pradaksina ritual (ritual around the temple while reciting mantras) to respect the noble nature that is manifested from the object (Firsty & Suryasih, 2019). There is also a Vihara Dharma Giri tour which is famous for its uniqueness because apart from being a place of worship for Buddhists there is also a large and phenomenal sleeping Buddha statue and is supported by the natural atmosphere around it which is still beautiful and the weather is cool in the Vihara Dharma Giri area (Widyastuti, 2019). In other areas in Mojokerto Regency there are also religious tours of the Sleeping Buddha Statue. Here, tourists can learn about the histories of Buddhism in Indonesia (Novela et al., 2020). In addition, there is the Protestant Church of Kupang City (GPKK) which is one of the cultural heritages established by Ministerial Decree No. M.51/OT.007/MKP/2004. At this location, tourists can worship and visit the graves of religious leaders (Nugraha & Tadu, 2021).

Various tourism objects in Indonesia have implemented three aspects of wellness tourism which consist of aspects of *body*, *mind*, and *soul*. These three aspects contain the dimensions as presented in Figure 1. Tourism objects in Indonesia have fulfilled five dimensions of wellness which consist of physical wellness, intellectual wellness, emotional wellness, social wellness, and spiritual wellness (Corbin et al., 2006; Meikassandra et al. al., 2020). Each tourist attraction presents an attraction related to these dimensions.

V. Conclusion

There are various tourist objects in Indonesia with certain attractions containing three aspects of wellness tourism which consist of: 1) The body aspect contains the physical wellness dimension in the form of destinations in the form of natural tourism, such as island tourism, hot spring tourism, and marine tourism; 2) The mind aspect contains the dimensions of intellectual wellness, emotional wellness, and social wellness with the form of destinations in the form of educational tours, such as traditional medicine tours, unique village tours, and certain plant cultivation tours; 3) The soul aspect contains the spiritual dimension of wellness in the form of destinations in the form of religious and historical tourism, such as tours to historical places of worship, historical sites, and tombs of prominent figures. Based on these three aspects, wellness tourism in Indonesia has the potential to be developed. The most qualified potential for wellness tourism to be developed at this time is physical wellness, because since the COVID-19 pandemic, the lifestyle of the Indonesian people has increasingly changed. The community is more aware of maintaining health, so that wellness tourism in the form of natural tourism that involves physical activity is a solution for the community, besides being able to improve health, the stress felt by the community about the policy of limiting activities can also be reduced. Therefore, the government should cooperate with related parties to be able to develop tourism objects in areas in Indonesia that have the potential as wellness tourism, for example by tightening health protocols, providing medical check-up corners that are handled directly by medical personnel, improving tourist facilities, adding tourist attractions related to physical health, intensifying tourism promotion through digital marketing, and so on. As a follow-up to this research, further research can be conducted on strategies for developing tourism objects in Indonesia that have the potential as wellness tourism.

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