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Religious Tourism Development through Policy Formulation: Synergy of Myth, Tradition, and Entrepreneurial Communication

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ABSTRACT

Religious tourism is pilgrimages and visits to holy places for religious ceremonies. Considered a major pilgrimage site, the Tomb of Sheikh Quro in Karawang is visited often for spiritual reasons. Apart from its intrinsic value, religious travel boosts the local economy and helps small businesses and traders especially. It generates fresh business prospects, therefore helping nearby towns. The synergy between myths and entrepreneurial communication in maintaining religious tourism is investigated in this paper. It gathers data by participant observation, in-depth interviews, and surveys using a descriptive approach including quantitative and qualitative data. Results expose that stories about Sheikh Quro's miracles draw pilgrims and support economic development, especially in small trade, lodging, and transportation. The study emphasizes how religious beliefs and cultural narratives can define entrepreneurial communication. By involving the local community in the upkeep of Sheikh Quro's Tomb, spiritual relics are kept intact and economic gains are raised. By means of focused campaigns and outstanding services, strategic communication enables local businesses to maximize pilgrim arrivals, so increasing visitor happiness and tourist sustainability.

Keywords: Cultural narrative, entrepreneurial communication, local economy, sustainable tourism, tourism communication

ABSTRACT

Wisata religi adalah ziarah dan kunjungan ke tempat-tempat suci untuk upacara keagamaan. Dianggap sebagai situs ziarah utama, Makam Syekh Quro di Karawang sering dikunjungi karena alasan spiritual. Terlepas dari nilai intrinsiknya, perjalanan religius meningkatkan ekonomi lokal dan membantu usaha kecil dan pedagang khususnya. Hal ini menghasilkan prospek bisnis yang segar, sehingga membantu kota-kota di sekitarnya. Sinergi antara mitos dan komunikasi kewirausahaan dalam mempertahankan wisata religi diselidiki dalam makalah ini. Penelitian ini mengumpulkan data melalui observasi partisipan, wawancara mendalam, dan survei dengan menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif termasuk data kuantitatif dan kualitatif. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa cerita tentang mukjizat Syekh Quro menarik para peziarah dan mendukung pembangunan ekonomi, terutama dalam perdagangan kecil, penginapan, dan transportasi. Penelitian ini menekankan bagaimana kepercayaan agama dan narasi budaya dapat mendefinisikan komunikasi kewirausahaan. Dengan melibatkan masyarakat setempat dalam pemeliharaan Makam Syekh Quro, peninggalan spiritual tetap terjaga dan keuntungan ekonomi meningkat. Melalui kampanye

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yang terfokus dan layanan yang luar biasa, komunikasi strategis memungkinkan bisnis lokal untuk memaksimalkan kedatangan peziarah, sehingga meningkatkan kebahagiaan pengunjung dan keberlanjutan wisata.

Kata Kunci: Ekonomi lokal, komunikasi kewirausahaan, mitos, pariwisata berkelanjutan, wisata religi

INTRODUCTION

Religious tourism is a popular activity among Indonesians, but today the line between religious pilgrimage and tourism has become blurred, and often these two concepts overlap (Collins-Kreiner, 2018). Pilgrims often engage in activities that are synonymous with tourists, such as shopping, staying in hotels, and enjoying local cultural experiences. The shift from purely pilgrimage motives to religious tourism can be seen in West Java, where the tombs of the saints are not only places to pray, but also centers of economic and cultural activity. Religious tourism in this area offers great potential for local economic development, especially the combination of spiritual activities with the tourism sector, which includes lodging, restaurants, and the sale of religious goods.

Pilgrimage tourism is nothing new (Durán-Sánchez et al., 2018). It can be considered as one of the common forms of tourism such as natural, cultural, culinary tourism, etc. The only difference is the motive (Abad-Galzacorta et al., 2016). Tourists who come to visit places that are considered holy and sacred such as the tombs of the saints have different motives from tourists who visit natural, cultural and culinary attractions. Religious tourists are attracted to holy places because they are considered to enhance their religiosity, while cultural tourists are attracted to the cultural experience and historical value of these places. (Wisniewski, 2018).

This research is highly urgent from both academic and practical aspects. Academically, this research contributes to enriching the study of the synergy between myths and entrepreneurial communication in the context of religious tourism. So far, many studies have discussed religious tourism from sociological and historical perspectives, only a few have highlighted how myths that develop in society can play a role in shaping entrepreneurial communication and local business strategies. By examining this aspect, this study provides new insights into how myths are utilized as social capital that strengthens the religious-based economic sector.

These sacred places are often perceived as locations that can provide tranquility, peace and solace and feel they are closer to their God according to their respective beliefs. Cultural tourists, on the other hand, are more interested in the cultural experiences and historical

value offered by these places. They usually seek knowledge about local history, architecture and traditions, and enjoy interacting with the local community. As such, the motivations behind the visits of religious tourists and cultural tourists tend to differ, with one focusing more on spiritual experiences and the other emphasizing more on educational and aesthetic aspects. In addition, Smith (1992) states that there is a difference between tourists, religious tourists, and pilgrims (figure 1).

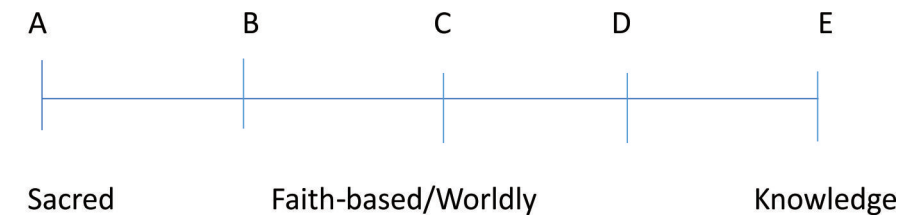


Figure 1. Differences between Tourists, Religious Travelers and Pilgrims

Source: Smith (1992)

- A : Pilgrim
- B : Pilgrims > Travelers
- C : Pilgrim = Traveler
- D : Pilgrims > Travelers
- E : Travelers

Pilgrims have a strong religious motivation to travel to sacred places, while tourists focus on worldly motivations, such as entertainment and culture (Amaro et al., 2018). Upon arrival at tourist sites, tourists will be more interested in buildings, culinary, facilities offered, and others, while pilgrims have a different attitude. Pilgrims will concentrate more on religious rituals and places that are considered sacred. Therefore, the expectations of tourists will be different from those of pilgrims. Simply put, religious tourists will faithfully come back to the sacred place again for reasons of strong faith and trust, so religious tourism has a strong potential to become one of the attractions that need to be developed and preserved.

Religious tourism can be defined as visits to sacred locations to participate in religious rituals and pilgrimages in the context of tourism (Heidar et al., 2018). Visitors to religious tourism often travel with family members, organized groups, or individually, but their trips are strongly influenced by times that are considered holy, such as Friday night Kliwon, Islamic New Year, Maulud Nabi Muhammad SAW, and the fasting month of Ramadan. One of the purposes of religious tourism is to fulfill one's religious needs.

Religious tourism has an impact on the lives of travelers (Shirmohammadi & Abyaran, 2019). According to (Galek et al., 2005) there are seven dimensions of spiritual needs that must be fulfilled by a person, namely: (1) finding the meaning and purpose of life, (2) giving and receiving love, both for oneself and others, (3) always being grateful, thankful, and having peace of mind, (4) praying, worshiping, and performing religious rituals according to beliefs, (5) forgiving and being forgiven in the context of solving problems or facing the fear of death, (6) appreciating art, beauty, and music, (7) having morals and living life well. This research focuses on religion-related spiritual needs, where a person needs God to fill the emptiness of the soul and foster peace of heart. One way to fulfill these needs is through religious tourism by performing pilgrimages or religious rituals. Religious tourism can provide a variety of experiences for each pilgrim, creating inner peace and self-definition (Farooq, 2011; Paraszthy, 2015)..

For a long time, tourism and religiosity have had a close relationship (Sharpley, 2016). Religious tourism, and pilgrimage has been recognized as one of the potential forms of tourism. According to the Ministry of Tourism's Pusdatin, religious and heritage tourism occupies the second position with 80% of foreign tourists visiting religious tourism destinations. (Arida, n.d.). Globally, the number of annual pilgrims is estimated to reach 155 million (Pilgrimage Statistics - Annual Figures, 2011). (Pilgrimage Statistics - Annual Figures, 2011), while the United Nations states that around 300-330 million pilgrims visit holy places around the world. (Tourism Can Protect and Promote Religious Heritage, 2014).

West Java offers various attractive tourist destinations for local and foreign tourists. Its natural tourism presents beautiful panoramas such as Kawah Putih at the top of Mount Patuha, Ciwidey, South Bandung; Stone Garden at Mount Masigit, Cipatat, Padalarang; Green Canyon in Kertayasa Village, Pangandaran; Ujung Genteng Beach in Sukabumi; Telaga Remis in Kuningan, and others. (Sari, 2019). In addition, cultural tourism in West Java offers history and arts such as Saung Angklung Udjo in Cibeunying Kidul, Bandung City; West Java Cultural Park Management Center which features theater performances and typical West Java arts; as well as Dutch Cave and Japanese Cave in Dago Pakar, Bandung City, and others (Putri, 2018).

Not only natural and cultural tourism, West Java Province also offers a variety of unique tours such as culinary tourism with a distinctive restaurant concept, and the last is religious tourism. Religious tourism is a religious journey that aims to fulfill one's spiritual needs. (Chotib, 2015). The attraction of religious tourism can be implemented in West Java because it has many diverse religious tourism objects, ranging from tombs, mountains, beaches, wells, and others that are considered sacred. Sacredness is a traditional belief that has

become part of the local tradition. An object is considered sacred if it is able to produce magical things. Magick arises from a person's expectation that something will happen to him or her, thus requiring a way to obtain benefits such as healing from chronic illness, protection from evil, abundant wealth, and the power to defend oneself.

Research on religious tourism has actually been done a lot (Kaiser & Kuckertz, 2023). Heidar et al. (2018) made a systematic mapping of recent publications in the field of religion and religious tourism. The results show that the number of publications continues to increase every year, indicating a growing interest in the field of religious tourism. In addition, Sirirat (2019) conducted research in Nakhon Phanom Province, Thailand, with the aim of studying the potential of religious tourism in the province, synthesizing spiritual tourism projects, and evaluating the effectiveness of religious tourism projects in terms of environmental education. In this research, the author will focus on the paradox of sustainable tourism development: a case study of the religious tourism development of Sheikh Quro's Tomb.

Before reviewing further, researchers will discuss the results of previous studies that examine the concept of sustainable religious tourism development with the same or different approaches and methods to find gaps so that novelty can be found from this research. Researchers conducted a study on journal articles related to sustainable tourism development and religious tourism.

This research aims to develop religious tourism as a form of sustainable tourism in Pasuruan City. Using a descriptive qualitative approach, this research involved various stakeholders, including local communities, local government, and tourism industry players. The focus of this research is on the importance of community involvement in the development and management of religious tourism (Arsvendo et al., 2022)..

Further research conducted by Nikmah (2024) introduced the concept of TRIPOT (*Three Integrated Potentials*) which unites three types of tourism potential: nature, religion, and culture. This research was conducted in the northern coastal area of Demak Regency by focusing on the development of religious-based halal tourism. This research illustrates that the importance of collaboration between stakeholders and tourism managers can ensure the sustainability of tourist destinations. In addition, this research also shows the value factors in religion that influence the development of religious-based halal tourism. In line with research conducted by Danarta et al. (2024) which shows that currently there is a tourism development that unites the elements of religion and tourism, especially in Indonesia.

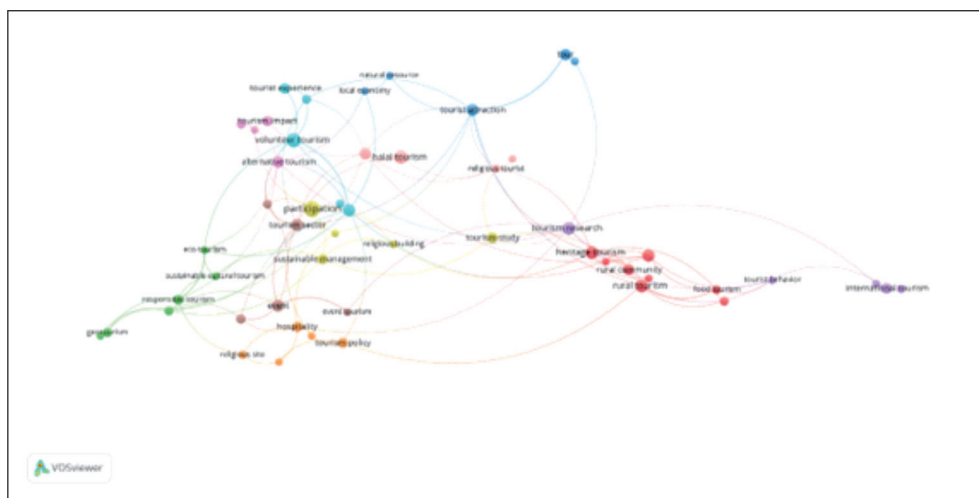


Figure 2. Sustainable Tourism Research Trend

Source: VOSviewer

The figure shows a network map generated using VOSviewer, a visualization tool for bibliometric analysis. The map depicts the linkages between various topics or keywords related to tourism. Some of the main keywords that stand out in this map are “*tourist attraction*”, “*halal tourism*”, “*participation*”, “*sustainable management*”, “*rural tourism*,” and “*tourism research*”. These keywords have larger nodes and more connections, indicating that these topics are frequently discussed and have strong linkages with various other topics.

Currently, research on sustainable tourism development in religious tourism remains limited. This gap in the literature presents an opportunity to explore how sustainability principles can be effectively applied to religious tourism. Given the significance of religious tourism for many communities and its potential effects on local economies, as well as cultural and environmental preservation, there is an urgent need for more detailed research in this area. Such research could guide the development of sustainable management practices. (Luz, 2020).

In West Java, for example, religious tourism sites such as sacred tombs become centers of local economic activity, especially during the commemoration of religious holidays such as Ramadan, Maulid Nabi, or Isra Mi’raj. The surrounding communities take advantage of this moment to sell various local products such as specialty foods, handicrafts, and religious items. This not only provides additional income for locals, but also promotes local products and maintains the sustainability of the micro-economy in the area (Subekti et al., 2023).

The grave of Sheikh Quro Karawang is one of the sacred tombs that is routinely visited by pilgrims with a specific purpose (Religious Tourism, 2010). Sheikh Quro was one of the great

scholars who played a role in spreading Islam in Karawang. (Karawang Regency, n.d.). Sheikh Quro aka Sheikh Hasanuddin went to Karawang and established a pesantren in 1418 AD named Pondok Quro, it is said that the pesantren was the first in West Java (Tomb of Sheikh Quro Karawang, 2012). Sheikh Quro's strength in spreading Islam was peaceful, without coercion and violence where at that time the community was under the rule of King Pajajaran with the majority being Hindu. In addition, the method used by Sheikh Quro in spreading the teachings of Islam also followed the teachings of the prophet Muhammad SAW, namely by building a mosque first and then preaching (Kusuma, 2019; Nuary, 2019; Uli, 2008).

Prior studies on religious tourism have mostly concentrated on its historical, cultural, and financial effects (Chaidir At Tajdidi et al., 2024; Collins-Kreiner, 2018; Pucau, 2015; Shinde & Olsen, 2023). Although studies on trade, services, and accommodation sectors (Graburn, 2024; Hassan et al., 2024) have underlined their importance, knowledge of how myths about religious tourism sites affect entrepreneurial communication remains lacking. This paper fills this void by investigating how local business strategies and tourist behavior are shaped by beliefs regarding the form of Sheikh Quro's tomb. Employing both qualitative and quantitative methods, it provides a fresh understanding of the junction of religious narratives and enterprise, therefore augmenting the larger conversation on sustainable tourism management.

Religious tourism not only brings spiritual impact to pilgrims, but also has a significant contribution to the local economy (Joo et al., 2019). One of the most visible aspects of this impact is on small traders and local entrepreneurship around religious tourism sites. Pilgrims and religious tourists often spend quite a long time at holy sites, which creates a need for various goods and services, such as food, drinks, souvenirs, and daily necessities. As a result, small traders in the vicinity of religious tourism sites often see an increase in income during times of pilgrimage or major religious rituals.

An increase in the number of religious tourism visits can spur the growth of the small trade sector, because pilgrims not only need basic needs but also tend to buy souvenirs to take home as a memento. According to research from Shirmohammadi & Abyaran (2019), economic activities that occur around religious tourism sites can encourage the emergence of small businesses such as souvenir shops, food stalls, and transportation service providers. With the increasing demand from tourists, many local communities are involved in entrepreneurship, both formally and informally, to meet the needs of visitors.

Furthermore, the existence of religious tourism can encourage the creation of new business opportunities for local communities. Local entrepreneurship develops through the provision of supporting services such as lodging, tour guide services, and transportation for pilgrims. Thus, religious tourism contributes to the diversification of the local economy, where people are not only dependent on the agricultural sector or other industries, but can also earn income from the tourism sector (Leppäkari, 2008; Lyu & Suwandej, 2024). One of the things that makes religious tourism flourish in Indonesia is because the demand never subsides, because it is as if a sacred place is identical to a place of worship so that there are several groups of people who routinely come to visit religious-based tourist attractions. This makes religious tourism a blessing for traders and local communities because they get a relatively stable income thanks to its arrival. This is reinforced by research conducted by Farooq (2011) which shows that pilgrims have an emotional attachment to their place of pilgrimage, so they tend to come back to the same location every year. As explained by one of the pilgrims at the tomb of Sheikh Quro, that they have a special activity that is a pilgrimage to the tomb of the saints (not only to the tomb of Sheikh Quro) every year, with the reason for *ngalap blessings*. This provides sustainable economic opportunities for local communities involved in the trade and tourism services sectors.

However, it should be noted that the existence of Sheikh Quro's meal that provides a positive economic impact is not always appropriate and equitable among local communities. This is related to regulation, income distribution, and infrastructure management in the area of Sheikh Quro's tomb. Therefore, the right policy is needed from the Government that can regulate and support local entrepreneurship, by preserving religious cultural heritage so that religious tourism can be sustainable (Subekti et al., 2022). With the role of the government that participates in managing pilgrimage tourism, there will be written and formal rules that can protect and improve the economic welfare of the local community. Policies from the government can maximize opportunities and opportunities for small traders and local communities so that a sustainable religious-based economy can be created.

From the above background, this research aims to identify the synergy between myth and entrepreneurial communication in supporting the development of sustainable religious tourism. The results of this study are also expected to provide policy recommendations to the government and stakeholders in the management of religious tourism that not only supports local entrepreneurship but also maintains cultural and environmental sustainability.

RESEARCH METHOD

This paper uses a descriptive approach combining qualitative and quantitative techniques. Focusing on modern difficulties in real-life settings, the research is carried out as a case study as proposed by Yin (2011), which answers important questions including “how” and “why” parts. By means of thorough exploration, the case study approach offers a complete knowledge of people, groups, companies, and societal circumstances. This study is to investigate the symbiosis among myths, customs, and entrepreneurial communication in maintaining religious tourism at the Tomb of Sheikh Quro. It also looks at how religious tourism might provide new commercial prospects and raise the welfare of nearby areas.

Using a purposive sample approach, this study chooses informants depending on their significance for the evolution of religious tourism at the Tomb of Sheikh Quro (Rakhmat, 2017). Twelve informants in all were selected to reflect important stakeholders, therefore guaranteeing a wide and fair viewpoint. Direct participation, experience in religious tourism, and knowledge of local economic and cultural dynamics comprise the selection criteria. Six people total—two tomb caretakers, chosen for their great knowledge of myths, customs, and religious practices surrounding Sheikh Quro; two tomb managers, chosen for their role in planning religious tourism and site operations; and two representatives from the tourism office, included for their experience in policy-making and tourism development. Six other informants—three local traders chosen based on their direct economic involvement in religious tourism, especially in souvenir sales and services for pilgrims—as well as three visitors who reflect visitor experiences, perceptions, and expectations were chosen as additional sources. Forty respondents were asked to evaluate visitor satisfaction, economic impact, and readiness to return in order to gauge the quantitative elements. Standard qualitative-quantitative integration allowed this number to be judged sufficient to guarantee a balanced presentation of points of view.

Using several data collecting techniques helps this study guarantee authenticity and dependability. While participatory observation was done on-site to grasp the social and economic interactions among visitors, traders, and site management, in-depth interviews with open-ended questions were undertaken for qualitative data collecting to get thorough perspectives from informants. Document analysis was also conducted to place myths and customs in perspective by means of an examination of archives, historical records, and other documentation. Structured questionnaires were sent to forty guests to evaluate tourist pleasure, local economic contributions, and review objectives for quantitative data collecting. Moreover, secondary data analysis was done with statistical data from local government organizations in order to measure the financial influence of religious tourism.

This study uses triangulation—which consists of—to guarantee the quality and credibility of conclusions: 1) Comparing data from several informant groups—caretakers, traders, visitors, managers, and government officials—allows one to assure consistency; 2) Combining qualitative (interviews, observations) and quantitative (surveys, statistical analysis) methods for a complete study is known as methodological triangulation; 3) Interview results were verified again using informants to support interpretations and reduce researcher bias.

A manual thematic analysis was conducted for qualitative data analysis. Group responses were thematically coded according to themes that emerged in the myths, communication techniques, and entrepreneurial approaches. The data was carefully examined, organised into developing themes, and checked for relevance to the growth of religious tourism. The survey findings were handled through quantitative data analysis using descriptive statistics to measure visitor happiness, economic contribution, and intentions to revisit. Tables and graphs displaying the data highlighted trends and relationships. This study employed a comprehensive and methodical strategy to understand the function of myth and entrepreneurial communication in religious tourism using manual thematic analysis together with triangulation.

DISCUSSION

Speaking of religious tourism in West Java, pilgrimage to the tombs of the saints is one of the popular religious tours and is usually done in the months of Shaban and Muharram. They believe that in that month, their prayers and hopes will be quickly granted especially if done in places that are considered holy. One of the religious tourist attractions that is often visited by pilgrims is the Tomb of Sheikh Quro in Karawang which offers a spiritual, historical and cultural experience. The Tomb of Sheikh Quro was built with a blend of Javanese and Islamic architecture so that it can provide an atmosphere of peace, solemnity, calm and be an ideal place to pray. Visitors who come will be led by the kuncen or manager of the tomb to make a pilgrimage, follow the prayer together, read the Koran, and listen to lectures about the teachings and life of Sheikh Quro, which will further give them confidence and spiritual tranquility.



Figure 3. Front Gate of Sheikh Quro's Tomb

Source: Researcher documentation

As one of the religious tourism destinations in West Java, the Tomb of Sheikh Quro is not only a place of pilgrimage for Sulamites, but also an educational facility for tourists who want to know more about the history and traditions of Islam in Indonesia (Rejeki et al., 2021). At the Tomb of Sheikh Quro, when leading pilgrimages and prayers, the caretaker of the tomb will provide a story about the history, traditions carried and stories about the guardianship of Sheikh Quro, thus the caretaker plays a role in maintaining and promoting cultural and religious heritage.

The myths that have developed around Sheikh Quro's divinity include stories of miracles, mystical experiences, and the fulfillment of prayers and hopes of pilgrims. This has caused the tomb of Sheikh Quro to attract a lot of attention and attraction for other pilgrims from various regions. For example how one of the karomahs owned by Sheikh Quro is able to cure various diseases, able to grant and help realize the desire. These myths developed among the pilgrims that caused them to come a lot in the hope of asking for healing, granted wishes and hopes, but there are some of them who did come with the pure intention of pilgrimage, to remember the struggle of Sheikh Quro in spreading the teachings of Islam.



Figure 4. Tawasulan area
Source: Researcher Documentation

As told by Abah Anom, the caretaker of the Tomb of Sheikh Quro, in an interview conducted on February 23, 2024, there are many stories about pilgrims who come with great hope, especially those who are facing serious illnesses. One story that is often told is about a mother whose child suffers from a chronic illness. After making a pilgrimage to the tomb, the mother brought home water and soil from around the tomb that had been prayed over, then gave the water to her son to drink and applied the soil to his sore body parts. Over time, her son's condition reportedly began to improve. Abah Anom emphasized that stories like this are often heard from pilgrims who come with similar hopes.

The belief that the water and soil around the tomb have healing powers has been passed down from generation to generation in the local community. This is also corroborated by the confession of one of the visitors, Ari Joko Susilo, in an interview on February 23, 2024. He explained that his family has long believed that making a pilgrimage and praying at the Tomb of Sheikh Quro in addition to blessings also brings healing. This belief is reinforced by his own experience, namely when his son was seriously ill even though he had been taken to the doctor, to the hospital but did not recover. One of his relatives suggested to come and pray to Allah at the Tomb of Sheikh Quro because according to the myths circulating can help cure the disease. After making a pilgrimage to the Tomb of Sheikh Quro and praying, and returning home with water and soil, his son's condition gradually improved. Thanks to this experience, every year he diligently made a pilgrimage with his family to the Tomb of

Sheikh Quro, he added that those who have proven the validity of this meal are not only ida but also many of the people he knows.

This myth or story is one of the main factors that influence in increasing tourist visits to visit the Tomb of Sheikh Quo. A strong belief in the healing power and reinforced by stories of other people's experiences who succeeded in their desires, makes people or people who have similar problems interested in coming and making pilgrimages. They hope that in addition to getting spiritual peace, they will also get healing and fulfillment of their wishes.

One of the advantages of this myth is that it has a positive economic impact on the local community around the tomb, which plays a role in providing various facilities and needs of pilgrims. Small merchants who provide various needs of pilgrims such as religious knick-knacks, tomb history books, culinary and souvenirs and pilgrimage guide services that can provide additional income for them. There are even some of the traders who make their profession trading in the Tomb of Sheikh Quro into their main income. One of the things that is often sold by small traders is water in a bottle that is believed to have healing powers.

From these data we can categorize the aspects of the religious tourism development aspects of the Tomb of Sheikh Quro in Table 1.

Table 1. Categorization of Aspects of Religious Tourism Development of Sheikh Quro's Tomb

Categorization	Description
Cultural and Mythical Aspects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healing myths become aspiritual attraction for tourists. • Myths and legendary stories are part of local cultural identity and cultural heritage.
Aspects of Religious Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Myths and healing stories reinforce the Tomb of Sheikh Quro as a religious tourism destination. • Pilgrimages provide a unique spiritual and physical experience for visitors.
Economic Aspects	The presence of tourists boosts the local economy through informal businesses such as souvenir sales, food, and tour guide services.
Entrepreneurial Communication	Myths support entrepreneurial communication by creating cultural narratives that impact tourism -based economic development.
Aspects of Sustainable Tourism	Religious tourism contributes to the well -being of local communities by encouraging the preservation of traditions, culture and history while boosting local economic activity

Source: 2024 research results

From table 1 we can see a clear division of cultural, economic, and sustainability aspects that support the development of religious tourism in the Tomb of Sheikh Quro. In the context of entrepreneurial communication, myths around the tomb of Sheikh Quro play an important role in entrepreneurial communication strategies. The stories that develop through storytelling by the caretaker about the healing and the stories of Sheikh Quro's greatness are used as a promotional tool to attract tourists. Entrepreneurship around this tomb reflects a form of creative economy that utilizes cultural narratives to build local businesses. Tomb managers work with the local community to create synergies in the provision of services needed by visitors, such as parking lots, accommodation, and tour guides.

In addition, there is a strong understanding among traders that the myths surrounding the tomb, such as the blessings that can be obtained from making a pilgrimage to the Tomb of Sheikh Quro, influence the level of visitation and contribute to the economic welfare of the community. This suggests that myths not only function as part of cultural identity, but also support entrepreneurial communication in the area.

On the other hand, friendly and informative services from the tour staff not only enhance the spiritual and educational experience of the pilgrims, but also encourage the desire to return, which is critical for the sustainability of religious tourism in this place. The following are opinions on the services of the tour staff (kuncen, manager, parking attendants, vendors) at the Tomb of Sheikh Quro.

Table 2. Tourist Officer Services at the Tomb of Sheikh Quro

	Frequency	Percent
satisfactory	39	97,5
unsatisfactory	1	2,5
Total	40	100

Source: 2024 research results

In table 2, 39 respondents, representing 97.5% of the total respondents, felt that the service provided was satisfactory. While only 1 respondent (2.5%) felt that the service was not satisfactory. This data shows that most visitors were satisfied with the services provided during their visit. This high satisfaction can be interpreted as a positive indicator of the quality of the religious tourism experience at the site. The Tomb of Sheikh Quro, as an important pilgrimage site, is likely to gain a good word-of-mouth reputation based on high levels of visitor satisfaction.

Furthermore, thanks to the stories of the pilgrims who felt satisfied with the benefits and efficacy of the sacredness of the tomb of Sheikh Quro, this has an impact on increasing the interest and desire of the pilgrims to return to the tomb. This can be seen from the following table:

Table 3 Desire to Revisit the Tomb of Sheikh Quro

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	39	97,5
No	1	2,5
Total	40	100

Source: 2024 Research Results

The data in table 3 shows that most visitors, 39 out of 40 people or 97.5%, expressed a desire to return to visit the tomb. Only 1 person, or 2.5%, stated that they did not want to return. From the data, it can be said that most of the pilgrims expressed their desire to come back for a pilgrimage because they had received the benefits and efficacy they felt themselves. Small traders who provide food and drinks also benefit from the high demand from pilgrims, especially since many visitors need snacks or drinks during the pilgrimage. Small stalls managed by the local community are a favorite place for visitors to rest and recharge before or after performing pilgrimage rituals.

The existence of religious tourism of the Tomb of Sheikh Quro is not only felt by traders around the tomb but also by other sectors such as the emergence of local motorcycle taxi drivers, local craftsmen who sell souvenirs such as prayer beads, sarongs, prayer mats to pilgrims. In addition, there are several local community groups that have begun to cooperate with travel and tour operators related to religious events in the context of pilgrimage, usually this package includes accommodation, food, and pilgrimage activities. Collaboration between local communities and tourists plays an important role in the development of sustainable tourism. (Zeny Setyaningrum et al., 2022).. Small traders around the Tomb of Sheikh Quro directly feel the increase in income from pilgrim visits. They sell various goods related to pilgrimage rituals, such as water believed to have healing powers, religious souvenirs, and prayer kits. Other products such as food and beverages to fulfill visitors' basic needs are also part of the growing economic activity. With a steady flow of pilgrims, especially at certain times such as Islamic holidays, small traders are able to maintain or even increase their income. For more details, see the following table:

Table 4 Improvement of Religion-Based Entrepreneurship at the Tomb of Sheikh Quro

Category	Description
Improved Economic Activity of Small Traders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small vendors sell items related to pilgrimage rituals such as water considered to have healing powers, religious souvenirs, and prayer kits. Food and beverage products are also sold to cater to the needs of visitors.
Business Opportunities Based on Healing Myths	Myths about the healing power of water and soil from around the tomb created new opportunities, such as the sale of bottled water and soil believed to have been prayed over as part of a healing ritual.
Positive Impact on Community Income	The pilgrims who come regularly every year, especially in the months of Shaban and Muharram, are positive for the sustainability of local entrepreneurship.

Source: 2024 research results

Table 4 shows how religious-based entrepreneurship in the Tomb of Sheikh Quro not only focuses on economic improvement, but also supports the preservation of religious culture. As the number of pilgrims increases, the need for supporting facilities such as parking lots, simple lodging, and local guide services also increases. Many local residents take advantage of this opportunity by providing parking services, cheap lodging, and offering services as pilgrimage guides. The management of these services adds to the residents' daily income and increases their capacity to welcome large numbers of tourists, especially at certain times such as religious holidays.

With increased tourist visits, local residents have the opportunity to increase their income through small businesses involving local products and tourism services. In addition, local residents' participation in tourism helps in cultural and environmental preservation, as they have an incentive to keep the area around Sheikh Quro's Tomb clean and beautiful. Increased interaction between residents and tourists can also trigger investment in local infrastructure (Kurniasari, 2021), such as roads and public facilities, which not only benefit tourists but also improve the quality of life of local residents. Thus, there is a mutually beneficial relationship between the local community and the tourists who come to keep the development of religious-based tourism optimal.

According to Maharani et al. (2021) harmonious relationships between local communities and tourists can encourage inclusive entrepreneurship in the Tomb of Sheikh Quro, where both support each other and contribute to improving welfare. Tourists who feel welcome and well served by the local community will be more likely to return for a pilgrimage and

recommend it to their friends. In the end, stories will spread about the hospitality of the local community, local merchants and managers apart from the myth of Sheikh Quro's greatness which will eventually bring more pilgrims which of course brings greater economic opportunities. This is in line with what is said Haryeni & Yendra Nofri (2022) that a good relationship between local communities and tourists, especially bridged by mutually beneficial relationships such as trade, pilgrimage guides and sales of culinary and handicrafts will increase the positive image of the place of pilgrimage Tomb of Sheikh Quro, which in turn will bring many other pilgrims or that investors who can build infrastructure and public facilities to be better.

In the context of religious-based tourism at the Tomb of Sheikh Quri, entrepreneurial communication plays a very important role in the development of sustainable tourism by building mutually beneficial relationships between local communities and pilgrims (Invernizzi et al., 2015). This entrepreneurial communication serves as a means to meet the needs of pilgrims and local communities by interacting by offering merchandise, providing information about the grandeur of Sheikh Quro's Tomb, as well as offering accommodation and transportation services. Through effective communication strategies, entrepreneurial local communities can develop products and services relevant to tourists' preferences, such as souvenirs, specialty foods, guide services, and accommodation. This allows local residents to not only increase their economic income but also better capitalize on market opportunities, impacting local economic growth.

Entrepreneurial communication also plays a role in building the reputation and positive image of tourist destinations (Gossel, 2024). With good interactions between locals and tourists, through friendly attitudes, satisfying services, and offering quality local products, tourists will tend to give positive testimonials or recommend the place to others. This is in line with the concept of inclusive social development, where everyone is involved in promoting the destination through communication that supports shared prosperity. These entrepreneurial communication strategies may include the use of social media, local marketing campaigns, or personalized approaches through tour guides who act as liaisons between destination managers and visitors.

In addition, effective entrepreneurial communication can help increase the attractiveness of religious tourism at the Tomb of Sheikh Quri through cooperation between local communities, tomb managers, local government and the pilgrims themselves. Local communities can communicate the cultural and spiritual values that exist around the Tomb of Sheikh Quro to pilgrims. In this process, pilgrims are also encouraged to maintain cleanliness and environmental sustainability as part of a communication strategy that

emphasizes the importance of sustainability. Thus, entrepreneurial communication plays a central role in creating a harmonious relationship between local communities and pilgrims, where each party supports the other and contributes to the development of sustainable religious tourism.

Local traders directly benefit from the influx of tourists in Karawang's Sheikh Quro Mausoleum through increased opportunities to trade (Hasanah & Gravitiani, 2021). Tourists who come to visit these historical sites often require food, drinks, souvenirs, and other local products. This opportunity has a direct positive impact on the local economy, as traders can increase their income by selling these goods. In the context of sustainable tourism development, this increased trade activity can spur inclusive and sustainable economic growth. With a steady flow of tourists, traders have an incentive to continue innovating and improving the quality of their products, which in turn can increase the attractiveness of tourist destinations. In addition, the economic benefits derived from trade can be used to support environmental and cultural preservation around the Tomb of Sheikh Quro, ensuring that natural resources and cultural heritage are preserved for future generations to enjoy. The mutually beneficial relationship between traders and tourists is an important element in creating a sustainable tourism ecosystem that positively impacts local communities (Rista Ilhami, 2021)

The economic impact of tourist visits to the Tomb of Sheikh Quro Karawang extends to increasing Pulokalapa's Original Village Revenue (PADesa), particularly through income from portal retribution and vehicle parking tickets. This increase in village revenue plays an important role in sustainable tourism development (Marwan & Isnaeni, 2022). With the additional revenue from retribution, the village can allocate the funds for infrastructure development and maintenance, such as road repairs, public facility improvements, and environmental management around tourist sites.

Improved infrastructure and public facilities not only increase tourist convenience, but also improve the quality of life for villagers. Road improvements ease access to Sheikh Quro's Tomb, which can attract more pilgrims and further stimulate the local economy. In addition, better public facilities, such as parking lots, toilets, and rest areas, provide a more pleasant experience for visitors, encouraging them to spend more time and money in the village.

Thus, revenues from portal retribution and vehicle parking tickets become a sustainable source of funds for village development. This creates a positive cycle where improved infrastructure and public facilities attract more pilgrims, which in turn generates more income for the village. In the context of sustainable tourism development, this strategy ensures that the economic benefits of tourism are not only felt by a few individuals, but also contribute to the well-being of the entire Pulokalapa village community.

Local communities feel the direct benefits of the existence of religious tourism sites Sheikh Quro through entrepreneurial opportunities by becoming a tomb keeper, cleaning team, security team, accommodation and transportation services, as well as being a trader. These employment opportunities not only increase employment opportunities but also participate in improving economic welfare in the region (Tilar & Alwin, 2022). In the context of sustainable tourism development, this increase in additional employment plays an important role because it can reduce unemployment and improve the economic conditions of the local community.

First, with more jobs, local residents can be directly involved in tourism activities, which strengthens the bond between the community and tourist sites. For example, kuncen not only provide ritual services for tourists, but also become guardians of local traditions and culture, ensuring that cultural heritage is kept alive and respected. Tomb-keepers and cleaning teams ensure that sites are kept well-maintained, which is important for tourists' comfort and safety, as well as environmental preservation.

Secondly, trained local security teams can provide a sense of security for tourists, which is important for increasing the number of visits and visitor satisfaction. With increased visitation, village revenue from retribution and other economic activities will also increase, allowing further investment in infrastructure and public facilities.

In the long run, the active involvement of local residents in various aspects of tourism helps to create a more inclusive and sustainable economy. By distributing the economic benefits of tourism equitably, Pulokalapa village can ensure that development does not only benefit a few, but also improves the well-being of the entire community. This supports the goal of sustainable tourism development, which emphasizes a balance between economic, social, and environmental benefits.

Local merchants around the Tomb of Sheikh Quro benefit directly from the influx of tourists through increased trade opportunities. However, despite the economic benefits, this relationship is often characterized by inequality. Small traders may face pressure to lower prices to attract tourists, while huge profits are taken by big players in the tourism industry. This creates an exploitative economy where local merchants work hard but only receive a fraction of the profits generated.

The following is a categorization table that summarizes the impact, economic activities, and the role of entrepreneurial communication in the development of religious tourism at the Tomb of Sheikh Quro:

Table 5. Economic Activity, and The Role of Entrepreneurial Communication

Category	Activities	Impact
Economic Impact	Increased sales of myth-based products, souvenirs, and regional specialties by small traders	Increased income for local communities, especially small traders
New Business Opportunities	Services related to pilgrimage activities (prayer services, motorcycle taxis, prayer water vendors)	Emergence of new businesses based on spiritual beliefs, supporting pilgrimage and religious tourism activities
Advanced Economic Activity	Chain effect on other local economic sectors, such as hospitality, transportation, and culinary	Growing other economic sectors in the area around the cemetery
The Role of Entrepreneurial Communication	Merchants use storytelling techniques to associate products (souvenirs, food) with the historical narrative and spirituality of Sheikh Quro's Tomb.	Enhance product appeal, strengthen travelers' religious experience, and enlarge sales opportunities
Collaboration for Sustainability	Cemetery managers, the community, TNI, and Linmas work together in the jumsih (community service) program to maintain cleanliness and environmental sustainability.	Assist in cultural and environmental preservation while encouraging economic benefits
Promotion Through Social Media	Tourism managers use social media platforms to promote Sheikh Quro's Tomb by combining spiritual, historical, and cultural aspects.	Attract more tourists, support local economic growth, and ensure tourism sustainability
Sustainable Development	Good communication strategies between local communities, government, and tourists to ensure tourism develops in a balanced way between economic, social, and environmental needs	Ensure tourism remains relevant for future generations, without compromising the cultural and environmental values that are the main attraction.

Source: 2024 research results

Table 5 reflects the synergy between economic, entrepreneurial communication, and sustainability efforts in the development of religious tourism at the Tomb of Sheikh Quro. The findings from this research have several social and practical implications. These implications can be recommended to policy makers related to the development of the religious

tourism area at the Tomb of Sheikh Quro, including: arrangement of the area, actors and scale of entrepreneurship around the tomb to provide economic opportunities for local communities to gain benefits from the existence of religious tourist attractions in their area. This is in line with the statement that tourism can promote the continued employment of both local residents and migrant employees, who help to maintain stable population levels in rural areas (Bayona & Gill Alonso, 2013; Lupi et al., 2017).

Infrastructure plans that support tourist accessibility—in terms of transportation and lodging—including for visitors who need particular facilities including the elderly, disabled wheelchair users, and mothers with children using strollers (Š•astná & Vaishar, 2017a) also help to shape other policies. Modern infrastructure in line with technology developments can complement the spiritual experience of visitors and increase the attraction of religious tourism (Qurashi, 2017). Furthermore, very important is the growth of service-based companies and technologies to assist visitor amenities. This is in keeping with advice on the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and the evolution of technological innovation in the travel industry to improve the tourist experience (Oleksenko et al., 2021).

Moreover, sustaining visitor satisfaction and sustainability of the travel industry depends much on control of elements of security, organization, and cleanliness. To therefore cooperate in forming good impressions and a sense of security for visitors while in tourist places, all actors in the tourism process—including local inhabitants, tour guides, and the media—should be involved (Murti, 2020). This study also emphasizes how the cultural narratives created by tourism operators in developing tourist attractions determine the sustainability of religious tourism in addition to its financial features. According to a mixed-method approach, the qualitative results reveal that local legends and customs significantly draw tourists; the quantitative data enhances by indicating the degree of satisfaction and the wish of visitors to come back.

This study brings freshness to the field of religious tourism by showing how the synergy among infrastructure development, entrepreneurial communication, and myth-building could raise the appeal of religious tourism locations. This study offers a whole knowledge of how policies and facilities management support the sustainability of religious tourism and how narrative communication can be applied in tourism marketing strategies using a mixed method approach. Consequently, the findings of this research not only offer intellectual analysis but also provide useful suggestions for companies, legislators, and tourist managers establishing more efficient and sustainable religious tourism policies.

All of these policies are expected to mitigate the economic impact of the crisis in rural employment, urbanization, and strengthen the economy in rural areas. (Simón-Isidoro & Álvarez-Herranz, 2023), strengthening sustainable tourism development (Š•astná & Vaishar, 2017b), and ensuring social collaboration between government, business and civil society, as well as encouraging collaborative action with citizens and tourism actors (Hayati et al., 2020).

CONCLUSION

This study highlights the crucial role of the synergy between myth and entrepreneurial communication in developing religious tourism at the Tomb of Sheikh Quro, Karawang. The myths surrounding the sanctity and miracles associated with Sheikh Quro attract pilgrims and create economic opportunities for local communities, particularly in the small trade, accommodation, and transportation sectors. The active involvement of local communities in managing the tomb helps preserve spiritual artifacts while boosting the local economy.

Findings from this research reinforce the importance of entrepreneurial communication by emphasizing the effectiveness of myth-based marketing strategies in enhancing the appeal of religious tourism. With well-structured communication efforts, local businesses can optimize pilgrim visits through targeted promotions and intensified service quality. Quantitative data in this study indicates that a significant portion of surveyed tourists expressed satisfaction with the services provided by tourism officers at the Tomb of Sheikh Quro and showed a strong inclination to revisit, underscoring the role of communication in fostering tourist loyalty.

Moreover, this study sheds light on the influence of social media in attracting religious tourists. The findings reveal that platforms like Facebook and Instagram have become essential tools for pilgrims and local entrepreneurs to share their experiences and promote religious tourism-related products and services. However, a more comprehensive and strategic communication approach is necessary to maximize the impact of social media marketing in enhancing the visibility and reputation of religious tourism at the Tomb of Sheikh Quro.

To fully leverage the economic potential of religious tourism, stronger collaboration between local authorities, community members, and business stakeholders is essential. Enhancing infrastructure, expanding promotional efforts, and providing communication training for merchants and tour guides will empower them to better market their products and services. Through sustainable development initiatives, religious tourism at the Tomb of

Sheikh Quro has the potential to thrive, benefiting the local economy while enriching the spiritual experience of visiting pilgrims.

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