

Clean and Healthy Public Toilet in Amenities Development in Surakarta Tourist Destinations

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the importance of clean and healthy public toilet to the development of amenities in Surakarta tourist destinations using Structural Functional theory. The target of this explorative research consisted of tourism stakeholders in Surakarta. Observation, in-depth interview and focus group discussion were used as techniques of collecting data. Interactive analysis model was used to analyze the data. Toilet is needed for promoting the tourism and a part of sanitation and service; thus tourism stakeholders' treatment and responsible commitment to clean and healthy toilet are required in tourist destination. Toilet facilities and accessories are public facilities to support tourist attractions. The clean and healthy toilet revitalizing program is compatible to trend tourists currently, because sanitation and health factors are important to improve the tourists' trust.

Keywords

Revitalization, Public Toilet, Amenities, Health, Tourist Destination.

1. Introduction

Indonesian tourism is the promising superior sector to Indonesian people before Covid-19 pandemic era, but in fact it in worse condition due to the lowering economic ability and the decreasing number of global tourist visits. The Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report released by World Economic Forum in 2019 shows that Indonesian tourism's competitiveness in the world increases from 42nd to 40th ranking in 2017. The pillars valued are business environment, safety, health and sanitation, human resource and job opportunity, environmental sustainability and etc. hygiene pillar is an aspect improved and valued good by Indonesia (Camilleri, 2018; Firdaus *et al*, 2020).

Toilet symbolizes amenity, service, and modern civilization. Without a good clean toilet, perception on tourist object and attraction's amenity and beauty will fall down. As an indicator of tourism, toilet should be proper, with its fulfilled need for water and cleanliness according to standard foreign guest (Wilkinson *et al*, 1995; Sang, 2017). However, the condition of toilet has not been proper in various Indonesian tourist objects and attractions. Even a global survey shows that Indonesian toilets score 40 out of scale 100. Meanwhile, toilet is a very important facility to foreigners. Therefore, the organizer of tourist objects and attractions pay more attention to toilet condition. The condition of toilet should actually be comfortable and clean not only in tourist destinations but also in people's houses entirely.

In recent years, tourism industry has been an extraordinary global phenomenon. Some reports released by Global and national institutions state that this industry becomes the largest one, viewed from geographical spread, growth, interrelation to other industry, labor, and economic coverage generated. In the last 25 years, UNWTO records tourist journey growth by 500%. The fact within society shows the shift in need for tour. Having tour constituting primary need some years ago now shifts to secondary need. Having tour also represents an individual's social status within society. Such phenomena indicate that tourism has been promising giant industry today and in the following years. Considering the phenomena, government, private, and people should begin prepare well and correctly the aspects underlying this industry creation.

Generally, tourism industry is a combination of product and service. The consumers of tourism industry, usually called tourist, buy not only products like food, beverage, and souvenir, but also experience with how they enjoy the tourist destination. Even, the products including tourist attraction, hotel room, and plane seat sold purely are service, because tourist may enjoy them only but they may not bring them home.

The heart of tourism product is tourist destination. This is the core business of tourism industry. Destination is related to a place or region with superiority and typical characteristic, either geographically or culturally, and thereby can make the tourists visit and enjoy them. All products related to journey before, during, and after visiting a destination are products supporting tourism industry. Those products are integrated into and inseparable from each other to create “satisfactory” experience for the tourists. If one of products makes the tourist disappointed, all tourists will be disappointed with the destination. To make a tourist destination superior, a study should be conducted first on 4 (four) basic aspects to be owned: *attraction, accessibility, amenity* and *ancillary* before a destination is introduced and sold (Ismail & Rohman, 2019; Djuwendah, 2021).

In preparing potential tourist destination, some requirements called 3A should be met. Firstly, access to tourist destination should be easy. Secondly, the attractions existing in tourist destination should be interesting to make the tourists stay there longer. Thirdly, amenities should be provided including facilities supporting the tourists’ need when they are in the location, such as inn, food court, local souvenir shopping center, and healthy and clean toilet. Ancillary is an institution organizing tourist travel involving tour guide, ticketing, travel agent, and information center. In addition, ancillary is a service provided by government by providing infrastructures in tourist object (Wan, 2015; Andrianto & Sugiyama, 2016; Ernawati et al, 2017; Mengko et al, 2018).

In addition to complementing the facilities of inn, food court, and healthy and clean shopping center, public toilet often becomes the weakness of a series of tourism activities, constructed either specifically or integrated into other facilities. Toilet facilities affect very significantly the reputation and the image of Indonesian tourism. Public toilet is one of weaknesses in a tourist destination, because some Indonesian tourist destinations have inadequate amenities (Sunarsa & Andiani, 2019). Some points should be considered in the amenities development system of tourist destination: adaptation, goal attainment, intersystem integration and latent maintenance (Parsons, 2017).

In the attempt of recovering tourism during Covid-19 pandemic era, tourist spots and quality of supporting facilities should be improved, including toilet. Toilet is a very important supporting facility in tourism industry. Generally, the one getting off the plane will look for clean hygienic comfortable toilet first. In addition, tourist will surely find and use toilet, because they are far away from home, and thereby there is substantial possibility of toilet use. When tourists need toilet, they will find it in the proximate area. Therefore, Toilet can be an important aspect, as it represents the condition of tourist spots visited by tourist because toilet is the indicator of its cleanliness or quality (Chang et al, 2017).

The existence of public toilet becomes a basic topic to tourism business actors, because it is inseparable from the below-standard condition of public toilet, viewed from hygiene, sanitation, building quality, and facility. Such condition of public toilet is still found widely in tourist objects managed by local Regional Government, including those in Surakarta. It is different from the condition of toilets provided by hotel and airport that is managed well and cleaner. The difficulty in finding accessible location and the unqualified toilet design often reduces the attempt of promoting tourism, because toilet is still considered as a trivial matter (Cheng et al, 2018). Many aspects should be taken into account in optimizing this construction of toilet to support tourism sector. In addition, collaboration is required between government, tourism sector employers, and community to optimize this target achievement. This research is aimed at describing the importance of public toilet as one of infrastructures in amenities development in Surakarta tourist destinations.

2. Methods

This research employed a qualitative approach with explorative research to generalize some ideas and to develop them tentatively with the phenomenon of public toilet existence as facilities in developing amenities in tourist destinations in Surakarta, Indonesia (Stebbins, 2001; Swedberg, 2020). This research finding is expected to be used to develop the mindset of people and stakeholders in tourism development, particularly in Surakarta. The groups targeted in this study were tourism stakeholders in Surakarta, including domestic and foreign tourists, travel, hotel, and restaurant employers, recreation and tourist destination managers, and development policy makers in Surakarta, architects, interior designers, students, and tourism observers (Table 1).

Table 1. Research Informant

No.	Informant	Quantity
1.	Destination and Tourism Marketing Staff of Surakarta City Culture and Tourism Office	1
2.	Development policy makers in Surakarta	1
3.	Hotel manager	1
4.	Travel biro staff	1
5.	Restaurant employers	2
6.	Recreation and tourist destination manager	1
7.	Architect	1
8.	Interior designer	1
9.	Students	2
10.	Tourism observers	3
11.	Domestic tourists	4
12.	Foreign tourists	2
Total		20

Source: Processed Primary Data, September 2020

Techniques of collecting data used were observation, in-depth interview, and focus group discussion (Krueger & Casey, 2000). Data was validated using source and method triangulations. Data analysis was carried out using interactive analysis model, including data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing (Miles et al, 2014; Creswell & Creswell, 2018) (Figure 1).

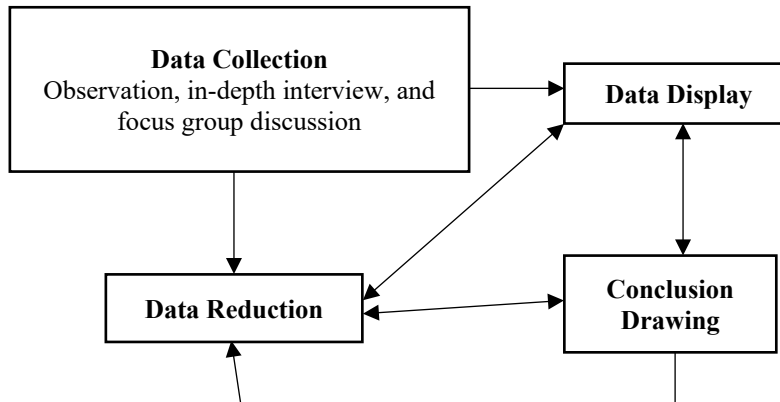


Figure 1. Interactive Analysis Model (Source : Miles et al, 2014)

3. Results and Discussion

In tourism perspective, toilet is a showcase of tourist object or destination. Toilet cleanliness and adequate sanitation are included into the aspect of *Tourism Consciousness* (Sadar Wisata) because they are considered as important in building tourist destinations in Indonesia. Generally, tourists visiting tourist destinations in Surakarta such as Surakarta Palace (Keraton Surakarta), Mangkunegaran Palace (Keraton Mangkunegaran), Kriss Museum (Museum Keris), Kauman Batik Center (Kampung Batik Kauman), and Laweyan Batik Industry state that toilet is a part of sanitation. Toilet should not only be considered as a place for defecating or urinating, but it is also a part of sanitation and service. Toilet problem is related to its maintenance. Tourists state that not-flowing water, scattered tissue, dirty footprint on the floor and no light or lamp are a series of description found easily in toilet/*water closet* (WC) of various tourist destination in Surakarta during vacation. A tourist coming from Bandung states that the factor leading to bad sanitation and cleanliness is, among others, the inadequate facilities of clean toilet in various tourist objects.

A batik industry owner in Laweyan said that a clean toilet is needed by the tourism world. Even a beautiful place will not be meaningful without a clean toilet. Imagine if we have had a long journey, we suddenly should defecate or urinate in a stinking and dirty toilet. Our mood will be bad, of course. A place's image will be bad too. Toilet is a part of *Sapta Pesona* (seven charms). Thus, a good clean toilet will give the tourists a good image on Indonesia.

Toilet affects indirectly a tourist destination's selling rate. It is suggested by a travel agent manager in Surakarta. There are at least 3 (three) spots the toilet of which needs to be considered in the tourism world: airport, tourist destination, and public toilet. Despite some improvement in toilet facilities, some other supporting factors should be improved as well in the tourism sector. They are bus terminal, food court, and etc. Tourist objects or restaurants with good sanitation will be crowded by visitors, as it gives added value to the comfort of sanitation.

A member of the toilet task force in Surakarta Palace argues that to maintain the toilet at least it should be cleaned, no chemicals are needed, and it needs water only. A Dutch tourist visiting Mangkunegaran Palace Surakarta said that in addition to the provider's commitment, local culture should also be constructed. Users should be so responsible that not leaving traces in the toilet. Meanwhile, in relation to maintenance cost, tourists want to pay any cost as long as the toilet is clean. In addition, advertisement can also be posted about the toilet. Many toilet providers have not been aware of the advertising that is promoted. In addition to quality, the number of toilets should be taken into account, including the position of toilet.

In improving toilet in tourist objects, local wisdom of the area where toilet is located should not be forgotten. The Chairperson of Surakarta Tourism Office said that toilet should use local wisdom, but with international standard. The tourist object provider technically should prioritize standard hygiene and sanitation, moreover during Covid-19 pandemic. If the location of toilet is in the area with typical Javanese-style building or located in Java area, joglo-shaped toilet can be constructed with international standard quality. Facilities supporting toilet cleanliness such as toilet paper, toilet seat or squat toilet should be adjusted. Hand washing facilities should be provided outside toilet. There are some types of tissues: toilet paper (tissue), napkin tissue, face tissue, towel tissue, kitchen tissue, and wet tissue. Each of tissue types has different fiber type, thickness, and solvability in the water. People often use tissue incorrectly, e.g. toilet tissue is used as napkin tissue or towel tissue is used as toilet tissue. The use of thick towel tissue after defecation, for example, can make the toilet drain plugged.

Toilet can be designed in such a way that tourists using can minimize contact with toilet facilities. Tourism should combine international standard with local wisdom to maintain Indonesian culture identity. During Covid-19 pandemic, the officers clean toilet facilities with social distancing stickers in some tourist destinations in Surakarta. In new normal operation, in addition to applying health protocols strictly, a number of shopping centers in Surakarta also provide facilities supporting physical distancing like automatic hand washing machine, mask vending machine, temperature detector, and social distancing stickers.

The strategy of developing amenities in tourist destinations is implemented by improving the existence of more qualified toilets for tourists and establishing Toilet Task Force in tourist destinations in Surakarta. The existence of clean good toilets is a joint responsibility. Clean Toilet Movement is an early measure to create toilets as the front veranda of tourism. Toilet facilities and accessories are public facilities supporting the tourist attraction. Toilet is so important to the tourism region in Surakarta that many constraints are encountered by the provider, including the attempt of changing its users' mindset. Toilet is everyone's need and a part of the tourist region's service. If tourists have first bad impressions on dirty toilets, they will value badly the management of the region directly.

An architect in Surakarta argued that some requirements should be fulfilled in constructing public toilet facilities in recreational and tourist regions. In addition to cubical (closet) area, toilet should be equipped with washbasin area providing such accessories as mirror, hand washing faucet, soap dispenser, and hand dryer. This is supported by tourists, tourism activists in Surakarta, college students, and policy maker. Equally important is toilet facilities for disabled and family toilets. For disabled toilets, use at least 1-m sliding door, even and non-slippery floor, 43-45 cm-high closet, and alarm beside closet and lamp on the door.

A living environment activist in Surakarta said that it is important to save water. The earth surface is largely covered with water, 97.5% of which is saltwater and only 2.5% is freshwater. The need for water is expected to be 40% more than the one that can be available in 2030. That is why water is a very valuable resource. Public toilets in tourist destinations in Surakarta are designed by featuring local identity/place making. The typical characteristics of a region

are a part of a building like toilet in tourist destination. The informants of research said that the facilities to be available in toilet areas in tourist object and attraction are presented in the Table 2 below.

Table 2. Facilities in Toilet

No.	Facilities	Availability
1.	Flowing clean water	√
2.	Wash basin and faucet	√
3.	Liquid soap	√
4.	Rubbish bin	√
5.	High speed UV Hand drier or tissue	√
6.	Mirror	√
7.	Cleaning schedule	√
8.	Suggestion box	√
9.	Air freshener	√
10.	Room light	√
11.	Ventilation	√
12.	Non glossy and non slippery floor	√
13.	“No Smoking” information	√
14.	Exit window	√

Source: Processed Primary Data, September 2020

Covid-19 pandemic has required us to adapt to the implementation of health protocol or CHSE (Cleanliness, Health, Safety and Environment Sustainability) principle strictly including providing high-quality toilet in tourist destinations. Toilet cleanliness in each of tourist spots will be the symbol of service. In the context of tourism, high-quality toilet will be remembered as an impression along journey. Therefore, the development of amenities, including the availability of clean toilet in tourist destinations, is a must (Wang & Luo, 2019).

Tourist trend will change in the future. Tourists will look for tourist destination that provides the feeling of secure and comfortable, and maintains its cleanliness and environment conservation. Toilet is the symbol of service, dedication, and modern civilization (Guanet al, 2017). Without clean and good toilet, perception on Parangtritis Beach of Yogyakarta’s service and cleanliness will be broken. Toilet is the indicator of tourism, thereby it should be feasible, provide water and international-standardized cleanliness.

Defecation or urination is an important need that cannot be delegated; thus, toilet should be comfortable, safe, and healthy. Toilet is the starting point of human health (Nevelyn & Aruan, 2020). Although it has only 2 x 1 meter dimension, it can generate so many problems, particularly health problem including self health and surrounding environment health (Zhang et al, 2020). Three basic problems are often found in public toilet: design, users, and cleanliness and maintenance. Design is very important because if a toilet is designed incorrectly (e.g. toilet is designed to be dark), the users will lose their feeling of secure (Langer & Car, 2014).

Viewed from comfort aspect, toilet has certain types and sizes of closet or washbasin, the use of which is adjusted with sex, age, and disability (Wan, 2015). Users are the severest problem, because they are affected by culture, education, and understanding level. Public toilet users should be made aware of others who will also use the toilet. Thus, they should not leave any traces in the toilet.

The problem of cleanliness and maintenance needs no further thinking. If it is conducted periodically daily, the cleanliness will be maintained and the damage of toilet can be monitored; as such, toilet will be well maintained. The clean healthy toilet revitalizing program is very appropriate to the trend of tourists today, because cleanliness and health factors are important in improving the tourists’ trust. Toilet is a public facility very desirable to tourists. It should be luxurious unnecessarily, but it should provide complete facilities and function well (Sang, 2017).

Following the improvement, both tourist destination managements and tourists should maintain toilet cleanliness and beauty jointly. Everyone should be intelligence of health, because if the tourists’ first impression on toilet in a destination is bad, they will value that the management is bad. It can occur in all tourist destinations. The high-quality

condition of toilet in tourist object is not only the real implementation of religion tenet mentioning that cleanliness is a part of faith. An approach should be taken to make toilets in tourist object in high quality. So the phrase “cleanliness is a part of faith” is not merely lip service, but it should be proven that tourist object is a clean, safe, and comfortable place. Indonesian tourism will not revive and incapable of selling high quality and sustainable tourism with low quality toilet. Destination will not be a priority, when it has low-quality toilet.

The existence of toilet in tourist objects and attractions are an important part of tourists’ need not only to defecate but to do some other things. This public facility should be managed as well as possible by tourist destination provider by considering some aspects: saving, making healthy, securing, comforting, and facilitating both users and providers.

The tourists who have ever visited a tourist destination are surely aware of the public toilet-related problems existing in tourist object. The problem is related to the cleanliness of public toilet or called hygiene and sanitation of public toilet. Public toilet in tourist objects is important because this facility indicates personality or self identity of nation or surrounding community. The visiting tourists will view the surrounding people from the cleanliness of public toilet. It is because every tourist will think that tourist object providers, in this case surrounding people, have failed in creating a clean public toilet. Moreover, if the tourists are foreigners, the provider of tourist object will feel shy with the non-well-managed toilet because foreign tourists have bad experience and they will tell others in their state about it. The management of public toilet in tourist objects, particularly in Surakarta, still belongs to low category. The providers of tourist object and people as users have low awareness of the importance of public toilet.

The provider of tourist destinations in Surakarta state that there are some reasons why the management of public toilet is still poor in tourist objects in Surakarta: limited fund to build public toilet, people’s poor knowledge on how to manage public toilet, and high cost of public toilet development and treatment, and public toilet users’ low awareness of using it duly. In addition, socialization has not been made adequately about the knowledge on the importance of public toilet cleanliness, government has not paid maximum attention to the facility of public toilet, and clean water is not available or available in limited amount.

Three aspects important to consider in managing public toilet in tourist destination: profitability, sustainability, and acceptability to local people. The management system selected should be profitable to the providers, as it becomes the main appeal to the provider to be willing to manage the toilet. It should also be able to ensure routine supervision system; thus, the provider will do the job seriously and sustainably. Public participation, in this case people’s sense of belonging will be really helpful to the maintenance of toilet facilities. Public participation highly determines whether or not the facilities of public toilet built by the government are actually desirable. In addition, people should be habituated to have clean and healthy life behavior, including in using public toilet. It can be accomplished through giving socialization and to appeal to family, RT (neighborhood association), RW (citizen association), *kelurahan* (village) and Tourism Service Office to change people’s life behavior into the cleaner and healthier one.

4. Conclusion

An indicator of clean, beautiful, and comfortable tourist destination is the supporting toilet. All parties should care about the facilities supporting tourism realm that absorb foreign tourists’ visit to Indonesia. Revitalizing activity is an activity of improving amenities in a number of tourist attractions, including revitalizing toilet and adding other facilities to support cleanliness, and tourists’ health, safety, and comfort by implementing health protocol strictly. Revitalization can improve the tourist destinations’ service and competitiveness. The revitalization of tourist destination should be adjusted with each of tourist destinations’ priority and need. Cleanliness and health are very important to tourists currently.

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