

Tourism Business Model Formulation Based on Spiritual Enrichment with Business Canvas Model Dhamma Visata Model in Central Java

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ABSTRACT

Tourism has long been a main sector in global economy as well as for Indonesia. Aside from Bali as the most famous tourists' destination, Central Java has well-known with its cultural heritage and enchanting its natural beauty, as well as for its religions and spiritual traditions. Central Java offers a great potential for spiritually immersive tourism experiences. The objective of this article is to formulate tourism strategy for Central Java area in spiritual enrichment based which can explored more in the area. This article applied business model canvas (BMC) framework to formulate the strategy. Data were explored through secondary sources such as articles, publications and government sites. And, data were analysed to find the pattern and preferences of the stakeholders. The result revealed that there are market segments for spiritual based tourism for Central Java with value proposition to give spiritual richness and personal recovery and transformation experience through Javanese Buddhism wisdom and blend of Central Java cultural heritage. In supporting the business model, tourism ecosystem such as local governments, religious institutions, local communities, tours operators, hotels and accommodations, transportation providers, and even cross-sector partners such as technology companies for booking platforms and digital promotion should work together and integrated to gain effective and efficient result.

Keywords: *Spiritual based tourism, Business Model Canvas, Tourism ecosystem,*

1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of main sectors to sustain a country economy such as Indonesia aside of e-commerce (Wareza, 2018), moreover after Covid-19 pandemic was end. Social and cultural dimensions have changed tourism paradigm, moreover in the recent modern lifestyle which caused more stressed. More people have look for cultural and spiritual experiences as part of their tourism experiences (Brian et al., 2023; Fedorova, 2016; Timothy & Olsen, 2006). Central Java has long been famous of having rich cultural heritage such as wayang, Javanese dance, Jamu, Kejawen values, and many more with enchanting scenery. Competition, however, has demand innovative and strategies from the businesses players to have sustainable business. (Christie, 1999; Norman, 2011; Wareza, 2018).

Central Java, with its religious diversity and spiritual traditions, offers great potential for spiritual tourism experiences. The region offers sites could enrich the soul and experiences for reflection and contemplation for people (tourists) such as Borobudur Temple and mystical charm of Mount Merapi (Fedorova, 2016; Marni & Lucas, 1989). Buddhism spirituality routes from its long Indonesian history in Central Java when Mataram Kingdom and Sailendra Kingdom until present. One of the most exceptional heritages is Borobudur Temple which one of the heritages for Buddhists people, Central Java region, and Indonesia. In addition to Borobudur, there are some smaller temples such as Mendut, Pawon, Ngawen, Sajiwan, and Ngepon. All of these are part of the rich cultural and historical heritage of Central Java, reflecting the importance of Buddhism in shaping the identity and culture of the region (Fedorova, 2016; Marni & Lucas, 1989; Sutarya, 2024). Aside of the sites, Central Java also offers Javanese Buddhist beliefs which is a unique form of Buddhism. It is the blend of Buddhism teachings with Javanese local beliefs and traditions. Javanese Buddhism tends to emphasize the concept of familial ties and reverence for ancestors and often view ancestors as influential figures in their daily lives and hold ceremonies to honour them. Practices of meditation and worship of Buddha and bodhisattvas remain important parts of Javanese Buddhism. Despite local influences, these practices still emphasize spiritual enlightenment and wisdom (Reichle, 2007).

Spirituality enrichment in the context of tourism is not just about offering religious experiences to tourists but also about helping them connect with themselves, nature, and the local community in meaningful ways. This can be done through various activities such as meditation at sacred sites, participating in religious rituals, or learning about local philosophy and spiritual traditions (Rifa'i & Kamaludin, 2021; Timothy & Olsen, 2006). By integrating the spiritual dimension into tourism experiences, tourism industry players in Central Java can create significant value added

for tourists, differentiate their destinations from competitors, and enhance the region's attractiveness as a sustainable tourism destination (Fedorova, 2016; Timothy & Olsen, 2006).

In developing effective business strategies, it is important to have a comprehensive understanding of the business models being developed or implemented. A business model required a knowledge of its ecosystem to build a strong and sustainable model and strategies. Previous research shows some stakeholders to build a strong ecosystem, such as (1) local government in providing regulatory support, infrastructure and promotion (Brian et al., 2023; Fedorova, 2016; Halim et al., 2021; Nair & Dileep, 2021; Rifa'i & Kamaludin, 2021); (2) religious and cultural institutions in accessing sacred and traditional sites and enriching spiritual experiences (Fedorova, 2016; Halim et al., 2021; Nair & Dileep, 2021); (3) local communities in increasing participations and positive impact on experiences (Halim et al., 2021; Nair & Dileep, 2021); (4) travel and accommodation industry in providing adequate services (Brian et al., 2023; Fedorova, 2016); (5) education and training in developing human resources and knowledge to improve the quality of experiences (Nair & Dileep, 2021; Timothy & Olsen, 2006); (6) media and promotion in enhancing visibility and attractiveness of tourism destinations (Brian et al., 2023; Timothy & Olsen, 2006) and (7) research and education centers in development of research and education for better understanding of spiritual tourism (Nair & Dileep, 2021; Rifa'i & Kamaludin, 2021).

This article explored the concept of formulating a spiritual based tourism business model and strategies in Central Java using the Business Model Canvas (BMC). As the model is a useful tool to integrated the framework and allows business players to identify opportunities, measure risks, and design strategies based on a deep understanding of their business models (Osterwalder et al., 2015; Osterwalder & Pigneur, 2002, 2010). The proposed model hopefully gives benefit to tourism industry players in Central Java, as well as for community, the cultural heritage itself, environment, and local government tersebut (Pramudita, 2018; Rifa'i & Kamaludin, 2021; Timothy & Olsen, 2006).

2. RESEARCH METHODS

This study is a descriptive research, data were collected based on secondary sources from articles, scientific publications, dan Central Java governments publications. The The collected data were analysed to identify emerging trends, patterns, and preferences. Subsequently, the results of the analysis were used to formulate strategic recommendations and summarized in the BMC (Osterwalder et al., 2015; Osterwalder & Pigneur, 2002, 2010; Pramudita, 2018; Wijaya, 2019). The BMC is framework consists nine elements are customer segments, value propositions, customer relationships, channels, key activities, key resources, key partnerships, revenue streams and cost structure. The framework could be visualised in a form of a canvas painting to be easily understood and comprehended. The benefits of BMC in research or business ideation are (1) the model comprehensively describing how a business operates; (2) identifying gaps and opportunities; (3) visualisation the key elements could assisting in strategic decision-making.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

Central Statistics Agency of Semarang Regency reported there were 1,223 foreign tourists visit Central Java through Tanjung Emas Port and Adi Sumarmo in December 2023. There were also reported Hotel Room Occupancy Rate in Central Java in 2023 was 42.08 percent, with 56.77 percent stayed at starred hotels and 26.67 percent for non-starred hotels. In 2021, accommodation services were of 4,011 places with 35 percent of hotels and 65% lodgings. The accommodation mostly in main cities of Central Java which are Semarang and Surakarta. The other facts are Buddhists temples in Central Java mostly are closed to Yogyakarta area such as Borobudur, Mendut, Pawon, Ngawen, and Sajiwan which were probably the centre of Buddhist Mataram Kingdom in the past. And, another one, Ngempon Temple is located at Ambarawa near Semarang.

Pramudita (2018) and Wijaya (2019) showed there are specific market segments which look for personal recovery or transformation through intensive tourism experiences. Hence, there are opportunities for these kinds of tourists to learn about Java Buddhism and local traditions and values to get better understanding of oneself while having leisure. Moreover, Buddhism practice such as meditation, yoga, dan vegetarian diet is becoming more popular among the people. It could be blended with Javanese culture such as wayang kulit and learning traditional dance, and enjoying Javanese traditional Spa. Spiritual tourism in Central Java has opportunities to gain these market segments as well as there is annual ritual for Buddhism in Borobudur Temple.

Based on accommodation and market segments data, it was found that there is an imbalance of infrastructure among the sites for spiritual tourism in Central Java. Hence, the study proposed the BMC model such as figure 1 to have sustainable and better spiritual based tourism for Central Java. The industry players such as hotels can targeted two kinds of segments are domestic and international tourists who pursued spiritual experiences for their wellness and tourists who like to have new experiences because of the traditional tourism experience were bored them. Javanese

Buddhism practice and wisdom could be offered as value proposition for tourists to experience spiritual richness and personal recovery and transformation. The hotels also could add Buddhism practice such as meditation, yoga, and vegetarian diet and blend them in a wellness program package with temples visit, learn Javanese culture, and having Javanese traditional Spa.

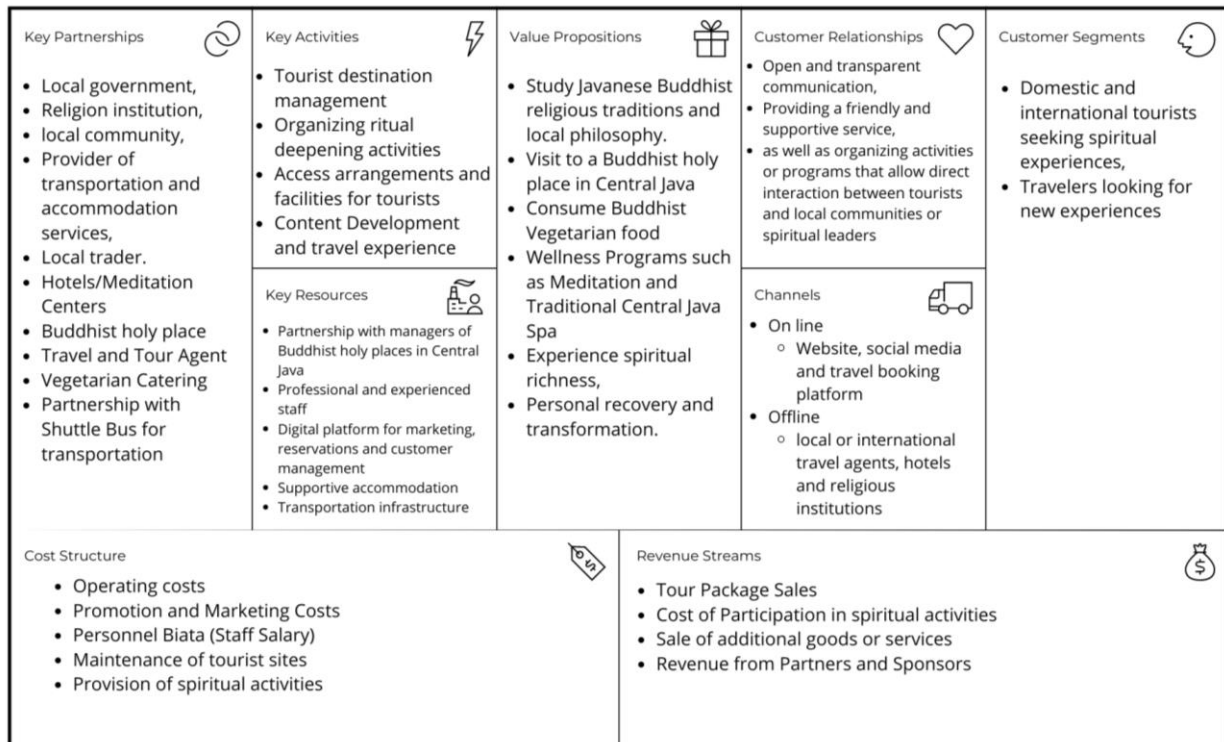


Figure 1. Business Model Canvas Spiritual based Tourism

Customer relationships describe the type of relationship the company builds with customers. In the context of enrichment, relationships with customers become crucial (Hermawan & Pravitasari, 2013; Osterwalder et al., 2015; Osterwalder & Pigneur, 2002, 2010). Industry players need to build strong relationships with tourists, not only as consumers but also as seekers of meaningful and profound experiences. This can be done through open and transparent communication, providing friendly and supportive services, and arranging activities or programs that allow direct interaction between tourists and the local community or spiritual leaders (Pramudita, 2018; Wijaya, 2019). While distribution channels in the type of tourism business could include both online and offline channels. Industry players such as hotels and other accommodations services can use websites, social media, and tourism booking platforms to promote and sell their tour packages. While in offline mode, they can collaborate with local or international travel agencies, hotels, and religious institutions to reach a wider audience and create mutually beneficial partnerships.

Revenue model for spiritual based tourism could be generated from those two customer segments, through some products and services packages. The stream could be created from tour packages sales, participation fees in the spiritual activities, sales from goods and additional services, and probably from partners and sponsors. By leveraging these various sources of revenue, industry players can create sustainable and profitable business models.

Some activities should be prepared to get the value propositions delivered to customers in products and services. Key activities for spiritual enrichment propositions are integrated destination management, organizing spiritual enrichment programs, development of tourism contents and experiences for marketing and promotions, as well as integrated operational management to make tourists satisfy. Destination management includes the maintenance and development of spiritual sites, as well as arranging access and facilities for tourists. Spiritual enrichment programs may include training for tour guides or organizing meditation, retreat, or religious ritual events. Developing tourism content and experiences involves creating attractive and in-depth tour packages, while marketing and promotion aim to create awareness and interest in spiritual tourism experiences in Central Java.

To support the key activities, some key resources should be set up and are crucial for the business model to serve its function. Key resources in this spiritual tourism model includes physical assets such as historical sites and beautiful natural environments, trained human resources such as tour guides, accommodation and transportation support, and

spiritual teachers, as well as information technology for digital marketing and operational management. It is important to manage and utilize these resources efficiently to provide quality tourism experiences and achieve sustainable profits

Key partners is an important element for the spiritual based tourism to be able have sustainable operations. Industry players need to consider the roles, contributions, and integration of the partners to build holistic ecosystem. In this context, the partners may include local governments (province and regency administration), religious institutions (Buddhism and others), local communities, tours operators, hotels and accommodations, transportation providers, and even cross-sector partners such as technology companies for booking platforms and digital promotion. Local governments are important partners in providing infrastructure, regulations, and tourism promotion. Religious institutions can play a role in providing access to spiritual sites and facilitating ritual or meditation activities. Local communities have deep knowledge of local culture and spiritual traditions, thus can be partners in developing authentic and sustainable tourism programs.

When operating the business model, the cost would be incurred. The structure costs, however, should be different one business to another. In the spiritual based tourism would born some costs such as destination management costs, tourism content and experience development costs, marketing and promotion costs, operational costs, as well as partner and supplier costs. It is important to manage costs carefully to achieve adequate profits while maintaining the quality and sustainability of business operations.

4. CONCLUSION

The fact that lower hotel's occupancy ratio in 2023 (42.08 percent) in Central Java, the local government could be promoted spiritual based tourism. Central Java has long been Buddhism spiritual site with the famous Borobudur temple could adopt Java Buddhism as value proposition to domestic and international tourists who pursued spiritual experiences for their wellness. Integrating Java Buddhism wisdom and blend with Javanese tradition and culture would create significant value added to the stakeholders. Through the use of Business Model Canvas, industry players such as hotels could designed suitable customer-centric strategies. A holistic approach, however, would be needed to build a sustainable ecosystem with the key partners. The article proposed an example for designing the strategy formulation specifically on spiritual based tourism. Limitation of the study is data was collected through secondary data, future research could be done to find more data and evidences to make the article would be better. The design, however, could be applied in other type of tourism businesses.

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