

How Soerakarta Walking Tour Engages Muslim Fashion Community in Green Tourism

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Abstract

The Soerakarta Walking Tour (SWT) is an innovative urban tourism initiative that integrates cultural preservation, environmental sustainability, and inclusivity. This study examines how SWT promotes green tourism through a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews with participants. The quantitative findings reveal high levels of participant satisfaction, including understanding green tourism principles and satisfaction with cultural storytelling. Qualitative data complement these results, highlighting participants' appreciation for Muslim-friendly facilities, opportunities for cultural learning, and the promotion of local economic and environmental sustainability. The study applies the frameworks of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) and Social Marketing to analyze how SWT delivers consistent and engaging messages while fostering behavioral change. The findings show that SWT successfully inspires participants to adopt sustainable practices, though some variability in the visibility of green tourism principles suggests room for improvement.

Keywords

Green Tourism ; Community; Soerakarta Walking Tour

INTRODUCTION

Tourism has evolved into a multifaceted industry, impacting the global economy, culture, and environment. Green tourism, a subset of sustainable tourism, has emerged as a critical response to the ecological and cultural challenges posed by conventional tourism. Defined as a tourism model that promotes environmental preservation, social equity, and economic sustainability, green tourism seeks to create a harmonious balance between tourism activities and the preservation of natural and cultural resources (Ahmad, 2021).

Globally, the relevance of green tourism has been amplified by initiatives such as the United Nations' declaration of the International Year of Sustainable Tourism in 2017, emphasizing its role in addressing pressing environmental issues (Ibnou-Laaroussi et al., 2020).

Despite its promise, the implementation of green tourism in Indonesia faces significant challenges. As a country endowed with rich cultural heritage and biodiversity, Indonesia has the potential to become a global leader in sustainable tourism. However, issues such as low public awareness, insufficient eco-friendly infrastructure,

and limited integration of local communities into tourism activities continue to hinder progress (Amalia et al., 2023). These challenges are particularly evident in urban tourism destinations like Soerakarta, where tourism often focuses on cultural experiences without adequately addressing sustainability principles. Existing studies on green tourism in Indonesia predominantly focus on natural and rural destinations, leaving urban-based green tourism initiatives underexplored. This research seeks to fill this gap by examining how green tourism can be implemented effectively in an urban setting while integrating cultural and social sustainability elements.

While green tourism is gaining traction globally, its adoption in Indonesia remains fragmented. Many destinations prioritize economic gains over environmental and cultural preservation, leading to environmental degradation and the marginalization of local communities. Additionally, existing tourism packages often fail to incorporate inclusive approaches, such as Muslim-friendly tourism, which is increasingly demanded by the global Muslim travel market (Sugandi, 2024). To address these challenges, it is crucial to explore how green tourism initiatives, particularly in urban areas, can align sustainability goals with market expectations while maintaining inclusivity and cultural sensitivity.

According to the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, one of the primary functions of developing green tourism lies in its significant

potential in the tourism and creative economy sectors. This encompasses approaches to environmental, economic, social, and cultural resources while addressing issues such as air pollution. Additionally, green tourism aims to enhance natural ecotourism and provide social benefits for local communities in each region (Antara News, 2023).. In this context, the Soerakarta Walking Tour offers a unique solution by combining cultural exploration with sustainable practices. This initiative not only highlights the historical and cultural richness of Soerakarta but also aligns with global green tourism standards, making it a potential benchmark for sustainable urban tourism in Indonesia. However, the effectiveness of such initiatives depends on strategic communication and engagement with target audiences, particularly through well-structured marketing efforts.

An innovative aspect of the Soerakarta Walking Tour is its collaboration with fashion communities, such as BSLady, a group of Muslim women dedicated to sustainable fashion and lifestyle. This collaboration addresses two critical gaps: the underrepresentation of fashion communities in green tourism and the lack of initiatives that combine Muslim-friendly tourism with sustainability. By engaging BSLady, the tour promotes eco-friendly practices while showcasing the intersection of fashion, culture, and sustainability, thereby enriching the tourist experience.

Muslim-friendly tourism (MFT) plays a significant role in this initiative. As a tourism model designed to

accommodate the needs of Muslim travelers, MFT emphasizes halal food, prayer facilities, and culturally sensitive experiences (Battour, 2016). The Soerakarta Walking Tour integrates these principles into its green tourism framework, ensuring inclusivity while promoting environmental consciousness. This approach not only attracts a broader demographic of tourists but also strengthens Soerakarta's position as a leading destination for sustainable and inclusive tourism.

From a theoretical perspective, the study draws on Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) and Social Marketing Campaign frameworks to analyze how the Soerakarta Walking Tour communicates its green tourism values. IMC provides a strategic approach to delivering consistent messages across various channels, ensuring that the tour's sustainability principles resonate with its audience. Meanwhile, Social Marketing Campaigns focus on influencing behavior for social and environmental benefits, making them instrumental in promoting green tourism as a lifestyle choice (Kotler & Zaltman, 1971).

Therefore, this study seeks to answer the following research questions: (1) How does the Soerakarta Walking Tour engage the Muslim fashion community in green tourism? and (2) How effective are Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) and Social Marketing strategies in promoting sustainable tourism practices? Through a mixed-methods approach, this research explores participants' perceptions, experiences, and levels of satisfaction,

providing insights into the role of community-based tourism in supporting sustainable development in Indonesia. The findings of this study also offer practical implications for enhancing marketing communication strategies, strengthening engagement with Muslim-friendly tourism markets, and improving sustainable tourism policies at both local and national levels.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a mixed-methods approach to investigate how the Soerakarta Walking Tour integrates Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) and Social Marketing Campaigns to promote green tourism. The research is structured into three phases: (1) a quantitative survey to measure participant perceptions, behaviors, and satisfaction; (2) qualitative interviews with key stakeholders, including organizers, community members, and tourists, to gain deeper insights into the communication strategies.

The study is grounded in two key theoretical frameworks. First, Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) emphasizes the importance of delivering consistent messages across multiple communication channels. This framework is used to analyze how the Soerakarta Walking Tour engages its audience through coordinated and coherent messaging to promote green tourism. Second, Social Marketing Campaigns focus on influencing individual and collective behaviors for societal and environmental benefits. By combining these frameworks, the research examines the effectiveness of

communication strategies in driving awareness and behavior change.

The population of this study comprises participants of the Soerakarta Walking Tour, with a specific focus on the BSLady community, a group actively involved in sustainable fashion and tourism initiatives. Using purposive sampling, the study includes 100 survey respondents and 10 interviewees, comprising tour participants, BSLady members, organizers, and other stakeholders engaged in promoting green tourism.

Data collection involves three primary methods. Quantitative data is gathered through structured surveys, which use a Likert scale to measure awareness and understanding of green tourism, perceived effectiveness of promotional strategies, and behavioral intentions related to sustainability. Qualitative data is collected through semi-structured interviews designed to explore participants' motivations, experiences, and feedback on IMC and Social Marketing efforts. Additionally, promotional materials, such as social media posts and brochures, are analyzed to assess their alignment with IMC and Social Marketing principles.

Data analysis is conducted in several steps. Quantitative data is analyzed using descriptive statistics to summarize participants' perceptions and behaviors, and correlation analysis is applied to examine the relationship between promotional efforts and behavior change. Qualitative data is subjected to thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns in stakeholder feedback and perceptions. Finally, a

content analysis of promotional materials is performed to evaluate their consistency and adherence to IMC and Social Marketing components, such as target audience focus, message coherence, and behavior change emphasis.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the study, instruments are pre-tested with a small sample to refine questions and improve clarity. Triangulation is employed by integrating data from surveys, interviews, and content analysis to provide a comprehensive understanding of the research objectives. Ethical considerations, including informed consent, confidentiality, and anonymity, are prioritized throughout the research process to maintain integrity and participant trust.

This research aims to provide valuable insights into how IMC and Social Marketing strategies can effectively promote green tourism. Additionally, it highlights the role of fashion communities like BSLady in supporting sustainability initiatives, offering practical recommendations for improving communication strategies in similar tourism campaigns. By addressing gaps in the existing literature, this study contributes to the growing discourse on sustainable urban tourism and its potential to empower communities and preserve cultural heritage.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Overview of Soerakarta Walking Tour

Soerakarta Walking Tour (SWT) is a community initiative aimed at revitalizing historical narratives and cultural heritage in the city of Solo, Indonesia. Founded in 2012 as Blusukan Solo, the community later evolved into Laku Lampah in 2015 before adopting the name Soerakarta Walking Tour in 2017. This rebranding marked a shift toward a more engaging and accessible approach to exploring Solo's historical sites. SWT focuses on introducing participants to historical landmarks and narratives through storytelling that is simple, captivating, and easy to understand.

The primary goal of SWT is to revive memories of Solo's urban corners, both through storytelling and visual documentation. Each tour is organized around specific themes, such as the exploration of Javanese script or architectural heritage, and typically includes visits to 4–5 locations within a session. The community limits the number of participants to 30–35 per session to ensure effective engagement and storytelling. SWT also implements a voluntary payment system, reflecting its inclusive and community-oriented ethos. This initiative aligns with the principles of green tourism by emphasizing cultural preservation and sustainable urban exploration.

Quantitative Data Analysis of Participant Survey

The survey results, based on responses from 40 participants, indicate a high level of understanding and positive perception of green tourism. For the question assessing understanding of the concept of green tourism (Q1), the mean score was 4.45, while Q2, evaluating the perceived benefits of green tourism for environmental preservation, received the highest mean score of 4.9. This demonstrates a shared awareness among participants about the importance of green tourism principles.

The descriptive statistics for the survey responses are summarized in Table 1. The mean scores across all questions are consistently above 4.0, with the highest mean observed for Question 2 (4.9), indicating a strong consensus on the benefits of green tourism for environmental preservation.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Survey Responses

Question	Mean	Median	Standard Deviation
1	4,45	5	0,67
2	4,9	5	0,3
3	4,55	5	0,5
4	4,475	5	0,67
5	4,55	5	0,67
6	4,6	5	0,49
7	4,575	5	0,54
8	4,45	5	0,77
9	4,6	5	0,62

Source: obtained from primary data, 2024.

The median score of 5 across all questions highlights the dominant positive perception among participants. However, the standard deviation for Question 8 (0.77) suggests greater variability in participant recognition of green tourism implementation, compared to other questions with lower standard deviations, such as Question 2 (0.3)

Motivation to adopt green tourism practices in daily life (Q3) was also highly rated, with a mean score of 4.55. Similarly, the alignment of green tourism with participants' personal values, including fashion and Muslim-friendly principles (Q4), recorded a mean score of 4.475. These results suggest that SWT effectively resonates with the participants' values and inspires sustainable behaviors.

The frequency distribution analysis further highlights these positive trends. For Q1, 90% of respondents selected scores of 4 or 5, reflecting strong agreement regarding their understanding of green tourism. For Q2, 97.5% of participants selected the highest rating (5), indicating overwhelming consensus on the environmental benefits of green tourism. Similar patterns were observed across other questions, with most participants rating their experiences positively, particularly for Q5 (satisfaction with travel routes) and Q6 (informativeness of cultural storytelling), both of which recorded over 90% of responses in the top two categories (4 or 5).

However, slightly more variability was noted for Q8, which evaluates the

visibility of green tourism implementation. While 62.5% of participants selected the highest score (5), 25% selected 4, and a small minority gave lower ratings. This suggests that while most participants recognized the implementation of green tourism principles, some may not have fully perceived or experienced these efforts during the tour.

The overall satisfaction with the Soerakarta Walking Tour (Q9) was exceptionally high, with a mean score of 4.6. A total of 92.5% of respondents selected scores of 4 or 5, confirming that SWT effectively meets participant expectations and delivers a positive, enriching experience. The findings also highlight SWT's success in combining sustainability, cultural preservation, and inclusivity.

Opportunities for Improvement

Despite the positive responses, the variability observed in Q8 suggests an opportunity to enhance the visibility of green tourism practices during the tour. This could be achieved through more interactive demonstrations or clearer explanations of sustainable practices. Addressing these gaps will further strengthen SWT's impact and its alignment with green tourism principles.

The quantitative survey results provide a broad understanding of participants' perceptions and satisfaction with the Soerakarta Walking Tour, revealing consistent positive feedback across various dimensions such as understanding green tourism, cultural education, and overall satisfaction. These findings highlight the tour's effectiveness in meeting participant expectations and

promoting its core principles of sustainability and inclusivity.

However, to gain deeper insights into the experiences and motivations of participants, qualitative data from interviews were analyzed. These qualitative findings complement the quantitative results by providing rich, nuanced perspectives on participants' interactions with the tour. While the survey results quantify satisfaction and perceptions, the interview responses capture the personal and emotional connections participants felt during the tour, particularly regarding its Muslim-friendly approach, green tourism elements, and opportunities for cultural learning.

The integration of these two approaches allows for a comprehensive understanding of the Soerakarta Walking Tour's impact. While the quantitative data establish overarching trends, the qualitative insights illuminate the specific aspects that resonate most strongly with participants and highlight areas for improvement. Together, these results form a cohesive narrative about the effectiveness and future potential of the tour.

Qualitative Data Analysis

Experience of Participating in the Soerakarta Walking Tour from a Muslim-Friendly Perspective

Participants described their experience with the Soerakarta Walking Tour as positive and enriching. The most frequently mentioned aspects included the welcoming and inclusive nature of

the tour, which participants described as "friendly" and creating a "new atmosphere." The tour was also praised for enhancing their understanding of the cultural heritage of Surakarta, reflecting the success of its educational and Muslim-friendly approach. This aligns with the goals of Muslim-friendly tourism, which aims to create a culturally sensitive and accommodating experience. The combination of a welcoming environment and opportunities for cultural learning demonstrates the tour's effectiveness in meeting the needs of Muslim participants.

Participants highlighted several key aspects of green tourism that left a lasting impression. The most common themes include sense of community and collaboration that many participants appreciated the tour's emphasis on "togetherness," "cooperation with local residents," and fostering a shared sense of purpose. This reflects the tour's ability to build connections not only between participants but also with the local community.

Secondly, understanding green tourism principles. Respondents mentioned gaining insights into "environmentally friendly concepts" and "local economic support." They appreciated how the tour emphasized sustainability by promoting eco-friendly practices, supporting local economies, and encouraging the appreciation of local products such as batik fashion.

Third, cultural and social learning. Participants noted the value of experiencing Surakarta from a "different perspective" and learning about its

"social, cultural, and economic" dimensions. These aspects illustrate how the tour successfully integrates education with sustainability.

Finally, direct experience, where the hands-on approach of the tour, including learning about environmental sustainability and engaging with local products, stood out as particularly impactful. This indicates the effectiveness of experiential learning in enhancing participants' appreciation of green tourism.

Suggestions for Enhancing Green Tourism in the Tour

Participants provided valuable recommendations to improve the green tourism aspects of the Soerakarta Walking Tour. Key suggestions included: 1) Expanding Public Awareness: Participants emphasized the need to "introduce the concept to a wider audience" to increase its reach and impact; 2) Sustainability and Education: Many suggested incorporating more educational elements, such as "teaching the importance of environmental conservation" and offering "more information about green tourism." Specific ideas included providing recommendations for "appropriate and comfortable outfits for the tour routes," aligning with the tour's focus on sustainability and fashion; 3) Continuous Innovation: Respondents expressed a desire for "new innovations" to enhance the tour experience while maintaining its commitment to environmental and cultural sustainability; 4) Promoting Environmental and Social Benefits: Some participants suggested further efforts to

"preserve the environment and society," reflecting their appreciation for the tour's role in supporting local communities and sustainability.

Integrated Marketing Communication in Soerakarta Walking Tour

Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) plays a pivotal role in ensuring the effectiveness of promotional strategies, particularly in initiatives like the Soerakarta Walking Tour (SWT). IMC is defined as a communication process that involves planning, creating, integrating, and implementing various forms of marketing communications, including advertising, sales promotions, publications, and events (Shimp, 2010). Furthermore, IMC acts as an integrated analytical framework capable of anticipating increasingly personalized consumer behavior while leveraging multiple media channels in synergy. This synergy amplifies the impact of marketing communication activities, creating a cohesive and effective whole (Kotler & Keller, 2016). In the context of SWT, the integration of storytelling, digital promotions, and partnerships with local communities exemplifies how IMC principles can enhance the visibility and appeal of green tourism while maintaining consistent messaging across channels.

In addition to IMC, the concept of the marketing mix is crucial in understanding how various elements work together to influence participant engagement and satisfaction. The marketing mix, which includes product, price, place, and promotion, provides a

set of tools that management can utilize to navigate competitive markets (Kotler, 2003). In the case of SWT, the "product" comprises the unique cultural and green tourism experiences offered during the tour. The "price," represented by its voluntary payment system, ensures accessibility for diverse audiences while emphasizing inclusivity. The "place" is the historical and cultural landmarks in Surakarta, carefully curated to align with green tourism principles. Lastly, "promotion" involves strategic communication efforts, such as social media campaigns and partnerships, to broaden the tour's reach and influence.

By integrating IMC and marketing mix strategies, SWT demonstrates how synergy between communication processes and marketing elements can effectively promote sustainable tourism. This approach not only enhances participant experiences but also contributes to the broader goals of environmental conservation, cultural preservation, and local community empowerment.

The IMC framework is also evident in the tour's ability to tailor its messaging to specific audience segments, particularly by integrating Muslim-friendly elements. Participants described the tour as "welcoming" and "aligned with their values," which is further supported by the high mean score for Muslim-friendly facilities (4.575). This highlights how the tour successfully builds trust and engagement by addressing the cultural and religious sensitivities of its audience. Consistent reinforcement of key messages about

sustainability, cultural heritage, and inclusivity across the tour's components contributes to its effectiveness in attracting and satisfying participants.

In addition to IMC, the principles of Social Marketing are reflected in the behavioral impact reported by participants. The high mean score for motivation to adopt green tourism practices in daily life (4.55) indicates that the tour goes beyond awareness by inspiring tangible behavioral changes. Interview responses further support this, with participants expressing an enhanced understanding of environmentally friendly practices and their role in supporting local economies. By linking individual actions, such as appreciating local products and conserving resources, to broader societal benefits, the tour demonstrates the effectiveness of social marketing in driving positive environmental and social outcomes.

The synergy between IMC and Social Marketing is particularly evident in how the tour fosters emotional and behavioral engagement. While IMC ensures consistent and culturally tailored messaging, Social Marketing strengthens the tour's impact by connecting participants' experiences to actionable outcomes. However, variability in responses to the visibility of green tourism practices (mean = 4.45, SD = 0.77) suggests room for improvement in showcasing these elements. Addressing this gap through IMC strategies, such as pre-tour briefings, visual aids, or interactive demonstrations, could further enhance participants' recognition of

green tourism principles, thereby reinforcing the behavioral goals of social marketing.

Overall, the integration of IMC and Social Marketing within the Soerakarta Walking Tour highlights its potential as a model for sustainable urban tourism. By maintaining consistent messaging and fostering actionable change, the tour not only meets its immediate objectives but also contributes to broader efforts in promoting sustainability, cultural preservation, and inclusivity.

The findings of this study demonstrate how the Soerakarta Walking Tour effectively integrates the principles of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) and Social Marketing to promote green tourism while fostering cultural appreciation and inclusivity. The high participant satisfaction across multiple dimensions reflects the success of IMC in delivering consistent and engaging messages. For instance, the positive ratings for understanding green tourism (mean = 4.45) and satisfaction with cultural storytelling (mean = 4.6) indicate that the tour's communication strategy resonates well with its audience. This aligns with the IMC principle of creating synergy across various touchpoints, such as storytelling, themed tours, and visual elements, to ensure a cohesive participant experience.

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Table 2. SWOT Analysis of Soerakarta Walking Tour

SWOT	Price	Products	Place	Promotion
Strengths	Voluntary payment system makes the tour accessible to a wide range of participants.	Unique cultural and green tourism experiences emphasizing storytelling and sustainability.	Carefully curated destinations highlighting Surakarta's cultural heritage and historical landmarks.	Active use of social media and digital platforms to promote the tour effectively.
Weaknesses	Lack of clear pricing structure may lead to undervaluation of the tour's worth.	Limited thematic variations may reduce appeal for repeat participants.	Reliance on a fixed geographical area may limit expansion to other regions.	Limited promotional reach beyond local and digital communities.
Opportunities	Introducing flexible pricing tiers could attract both budget-conscious and premium audiences.	Expanding product offerings with new themes or interactive elements like augmented reality.	Collaborations with local businesses to diversify and enrich destination options.	Partnering with educational institutions or travel agencies to broaden promotional efforts.
Threats	Economic uncertainties could affect participants' willingness to contribute voluntarily.	Competition from other tourism initiatives offering similar cultural experiences.	Potential environmental degradation from over-tourism in key locations.	Oversaturation of digital marketing could dilute the uniqueness of the tour's message

Source: obtained from primary data, 2024.

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CONCLUSION

This study confirms that the Soerakarta Walking Tour effectively integrates green tourism principles, cultural heritage, and inclusivity. Findings indicate that participants have a strong understanding of and appreciation for green tourism, with high

satisfaction regarding its implementation. The research highlights the role of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) in delivering consistent and engaging messages and the impact of Social Marketing in fostering behavioral change toward sustainability.

The results show the importance of strategic communication in promoting sustainable tourism and encouraging participant involvement. The study also identifies areas for improvement, particularly in enhancing the visibility of green tourism practices and expanding educational initiatives. Strengthening partnerships with local stakeholders and increasing outreach efforts can further amplify the tour's impact.

By offering insights into how urban tourism can be aligned with sustainability goals, this study provides a model for similar initiatives in other regions. Future research can explore additional strategies to optimize marketing communication and deepen engagement with diverse participant demographics. This research contributes to the broader discourse on sustainable tourism and offers practical implications for policy development in Indonesia's tourism sector.

Based on the findings, several recommendations can enhance the impact of the Soerakarta Walking Tour (SWT) as a model for sustainable tourism. First, improving the visibility of green tourism practices is crucial, which can be achieved through visual aids, interactive demonstrations, and pre-tour briefings that clearly connect activities to sustainability principles. Expanding

educational efforts is also essential, such as incorporating workshops or discussions that highlight the importance of environmental conservation and support for local products like batik fashion. Additionally, promoting SWT more extensively through digital platforms, collaborations with educational institutions, and local communities can help reach a broader audience, including younger generations. Strengthening Muslim-friendly features, such as accessible prayer spaces and halal refreshments, while emphasizing these aspects in promotional materials, can attract a larger market segment. Finally, introducing innovations in tour themes and destinations, along with interactive technologies like augmented reality, can keep the experience fresh and engaging for participants. Implementing these strategies will not only enhance SWT's impact but also solidify its role as a pioneer in sustainable urban tourism, contributing to environmental conservation, cultural preservation, and community empowerment.

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