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The Development of Taman Sari Waterfall as A Spiritual-Based Natural Tourist Attraction in Banjar Adat Ngenjung Sari, Bakbakan Village, Gianyar District

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Abstract. The tourism industry in Bali has experienced rapid growth over time. This study focuses on the development of Taman Sari Waterfall as a spiritual-based natural tourist attraction in Banjar Adat Ngenjung Sari, Bakbakan Village, Gianyar District. The research addresses the following problems: (1) What is the potential of Taman Sari Waterfall as a spiritual-based natural tourist attraction in Banjar Adat Ngenjung Sari, Bakbakan Village, Gianyar District? (2) How is Taman Sari Waterfall marketed as a spiritual-based natural tourist attraction? (3) What development strategies are applied to enhance Taman Sari Waterfall as a spiritual-based natural tourist attraction?. This research employs a qualitative approach using purposive sampling. Data were collected through observation, interviews, literature study, and documentation. Data analysis was conducted through data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The findings of the study include: (1) The potential of Taman Sari Waterfall as a spiritual-based natural tourist attraction is analyzed using the 4A framework: Attraction, Amenity, Accessibility, and Ancillary services; (2) The marketing approach is based on the 4P analysis: Product, Price, Place, and Promotion; (3) The development strategy utilizes a SWOT analysis encompassing Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats.

Keywords: Waterfall Development, Spiritual-Based Tourism, Natural Tourist Attraction

1. INTRODUCTION

The term "pariwisata" (tourism) originates from the Sanskrit words *pari* and *wisata*. *Pari* means repeatedly, and *wisata* means traveling. Thus, *pariwisata* refers to travel that is undertaken repeatedly to a destination. Generally, tourism can be understood as a series of repeated journeys from one place to another—usually to beautiful and enjoyable locations—which help refresh the mind and uplift the mood after a period of stressful work or activity.

Bali is a favorite tourism destination for both domestic and international travelers. According to many tourists, Bali is known as the “Island of a Thousand Temples” and a paradise that must be visited. For some, if one has not visited Bali, it means they have not yet found paradise. Bali’s tourism sector has experienced rapid growth. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, domestic and international tourists visited Bali continuously. However, when the pandemic struck globally—particularly affecting Bali—it severely impacted the tourism industry on the island.

During the pandemic, tourist visits dropped drastically. Many tourism workers were laid off or shifted to alternative occupations, with most becoming traders. However, following

the official declaration of the pandemic's end and the transition to the new normal era, Bali's tourism industry began to slowly recover. Tourist visits have gradually increased during this period. Former tourism workers who had been laid off during the pandemic have now returned to work in the tourism sector.

Bali's global tourism appeal stems from its variety of tourism experiences that cater to diverse interests. These include:

- **Spiritual Tourism:** Tourists can visit iconic temples such as Uluwatu Temple, Tanah Lot Temple, and Besakih Temple.
- **Cultural Tourism:** Visitors can explore Balinese culture, traditions, and religious ceremonies, such as the Geret Panda tradition in Tenganan village, Tawur Kesanga or Nyepi ceremony, the Kecak dance at Uluwatu Temple, and various wood carving art practices in Gianyar.
- **Sports Tourism:** Activities include flying fox rides on Nusa Ceningan Island, white-water rafting on the Ayung River in Ubud, and off-road jeep adventures in the Kintamani area.
- **Mental Health Tourism:** Tourists can engage in meditation and yoga, and visit Tirta Empul Temple for melukat (spiritual cleansing).
- **Agrotourism:** Visitors can tour Luwak coffee plantations, guided through the coffee-picking process and coffee production.
- **Marine Tourism:** Bali offers access to numerous beaches, such as Kuta Beach, Pandawa Beach, Lovina Beach, and others.
- **Nature Tourism:** Tourists can visit natural attractions such as Bedugul, Taman Sari Waterfall in Ngenjung Sari Traditional Village, Gianyar, and many more.

Taman Sari Waterfall, in particular, is a spiritually rooted natural attraction located approximately ten minutes from the city of Gianyar and thirty minutes from Ubud. The name "Taman Sari Waterfall" is derived from the name of the nearby temple "Taman" and the village suffix "Sari," which symbolizes blessings and prosperity. The site was established on April 18, 2018, and officially opened to the public on September 28, 2018.

Initially, Taman Sari Waterfall was relatively unknown, especially during the pandemic, when visitor numbers declined drastically. Despite this, the site's management persisted in promoting the destination through word-of-mouth, social media platforms (Instagram, Facebook, Google Maps), and collaborations with travel agents and tour guides. After the pandemic ended, the waterfall began to receive increasing attention from tourists once again.

Taman Sari Waterfall's location is highly strategic, situated near the main road and surrounded by other waterfall attractions such as Tibumana, Bangkiang Sidem, Goa Rang Reng, Titi, Ulun Cangkir, and Kanto Lampo Waterfalls. Many tourists heading to Tibumana or tourist spots in Bangli Regency often pass by Taman Sari Waterfall, leading to increased interest and visits, particularly from foreign tourists. Over time, Taman Sari Waterfall has gained popularity, with international visitors becoming the dominant group.

In addition to its waterfall, the site offers other attractions such as a natural pool and spiritual cleansing (*melukat*), which set it apart from other waterfall destinations. These unique features are actively promoted by the site's management. The researcher is particularly interested in studying Taman Sari Waterfall due to its untapped potential, especially the combination of its natural pool and *melukat* activities, which enhance the visitor experience.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Purnata (2022), in his research titled "Management Strategy of Peguyangan Waterfall as a Spiritual Tourism Attraction in Batukandik Village, Nusa Penida District, Klungkung Regency," explains that Peguyangan Waterfall is a spiritual tourism destination with primary and supporting facilities, such as *melukat* rituals and temples serving as worship sites for Hindus.

Sutamiati (2023), in her research "Development of Bukit Tengah Segara Agung as a Tourist Attraction in Pesinggahan Village, Dawan District, Klungkung Regency," describes the natural, cultural, and man-made potentials of the area. These include scenic views, sunrise and sunset panoramas, traditional rituals such as *Nyegara Gunung*, local crafts, traditional Balinese salt production, and photo spots like Joglo houses and concrete benches with ocean views.

Yasa (2018), in his study titled "The Spiritual Nature Tourism Object of Tamba Sunshine Waterfall in Tambakan Village, Kubutambahan District, Buleleng Regency," states that the waterfall has a height of 30 meters and covers an area of 50 are. There are seven water sources, which are considered potential spiritual tourism attractions. Several facilities, such as gardens, pathways, and scenic viewpoints, have been constructed, with future plans to build a restaurant and meditation/yoga facilities.

3. METHOD

This study employs a qualitative research approach. According to Sugiyono (2018:213), qualitative research is grounded in philosophical principles and is used to

investigate natural conditions, where the researcher acts as the key instrument. Data collection techniques and analysis are qualitative in nature, emphasizing meaning. This research will produce data that will be described descriptively in the form of verbal explanations related to field observations.

This study uses a purposive sampling technique. Data collection methods include observation, interviews, literature studies, and documentation. Data analysis involves data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The Potential of Taman Sari Waterfall as a Spiritual-Based Natural Tourist Attraction in Ngenjung Sari Traditional Village, Bakbakan Village, Gianyar District

Taman Sari Waterfall is located very close to Gianyar City, approximately ten minutes from the city center and thirty minutes from the Ubud tourist area. The name “Taman Sari Waterfall” is derived from the nearby Pura Taman temple and the word “Sari,” which comes from the village’s name. As a spiritual-based natural attraction, Taman Sari Waterfall possesses significant potential. Budiasih (2017: 77) states that spiritual tourism is a form of travel undertaken by individuals seeking tranquility, peace, and harmony with nature. Therefore, tourists can engage in spiritual tourism at any place that offers these experiences — serenity, peace, and harmony with nature or the Divine in a broader sense. Tourists visiting Taman Sari Waterfall as a spiritual tourism destination aim to find inner peace and harmony after the fatigue of daily routines. This form of tourism offers the opportunity for holistic personal restoration.

Taman Sari Waterfall not only features a waterfall but also includes a natural pool and melukat (a Balinese cleansing ritual) as additional attractions. Upon arrival, visitors are greeted with natural scenery and the beauty of the surroundings. The waterfall is located at the topmost part of the area, while the natural pool lies beneath it. In the vicinity, there is also Pura Beji and a sacred fountain used for melukat by visitors.

Tourists may enjoy the waterfall by taking photos or videos with the waterfall as a background. The waterfall itself is approximately 20 meters high, surrounded by lush vegetation such as moss and tropical plants, and large rocks that enhance its pristine and natural appeal. Besides the waterfall, the natural pool is a major attraction. It is circular in shape, surrounded by large stones that support the water flow from the main waterfall, creating a secondary waterfall around five meters high, which further enriches the visitor experience. A signboard indicates the depth of the natural pool to inform non-swimming visitors. Tourists

may take photos, swim, or bathe while enjoying the refreshing and green natural scenery. Additionally, the melukat ritual adds cultural and spiritual value to the site. Visitors can perform melukat at three sacred fountains for spiritual and physical purification. The term melukat comes from sulukat, where su means “good” and lukat refers to spiritual cleansing of the mind.

The Taman Sari Waterfall tourist site was officially opened in early 2018. During its initial phase, the site was relatively unknown, and the COVID-19 pandemic significantly reduced visitor numbers, especially in Bali. However, the management of Taman Sari Waterfall remained committed to its development by continuously promoting the site through word-of-mouth, social media (Instagram, Facebook, Google Maps), and collaboration with travel agents, tour guides, and tourism communities. Following the end of the pandemic, the number of visitors gradually increased.

This study utilizes the 4A tourism analysis framework as follows:

- a. Attraction:** Attractions refer to the features offered by the destination to attract visitors. At Taman Sari Waterfall, the main attractions include the waterfall, the natural pool, and the melukat ritual.
- b. Amenity:** Amenities are facilities provided by the tourism management to support and satisfy tourists. Taman Sari Waterfall offers various facilities such as a spacious (though unpaved) parking lot, three clean toilets, two comfortable changing rooms, depth indicator boards for the natural pool, and a clear, well-maintained fish pond.
- c. Accessibility:** Accessibility refers to how easy it is to reach the tourist site. Taman Sari Waterfall is strategically located, approximately ten minutes from Gianyar City and thirty minutes from Ubud. From the parking lot to the waterfall, visitors only need to descend stairs for about five minutes, making it easy to access.
- d. Ancillary Services:** Ancillary services are additional services provided by the management. At Taman Sari Waterfall, these include a ticket counter for visitors.

Marketing Strategies for Taman Sari Waterfall as a Spiritual-Based Natural Tourist Attraction in Ngenjung Sari Traditional Village, Bakbakan Village, Gianyar District

Marketing refers to the strategies employed by businesses to introduce their products or services to potential customers. Taman Sari Waterfall employs the 4P marketing mix as follows:

- a. Product:** Products are goods or services offered to consumers. The core products at Taman Sari Waterfall are the waterfall (main attraction), the natural pool, and the melukat ritual.

- b. Price:** Price refers to the amount paid by customers. Entrance fees at Taman Sari Waterfall are IDR 15,000 for domestic children, IDR 20,000 for domestic adults, IDR 20,000 for international children, and IDR 25,000 for international adults. The average number of daily visitors fluctuates depending on the season.
- c. Place:** Place refers to the physical location of the tourism activity. Taman Sari Waterfall is located in Ngenjung Sari Traditional Village, Bakbakan Village, Gianyar District, near the border with Bangli Regency. The area is lush and serene, surrounded by greenery, and visitors must descend a staircase through a canopy of trees. The water in the waterfall, natural pool, and sacred fountain is clear, and the natural sounds enhance the visitor's sense of connection with nature.
- d. Promotion:** Promotion refers to the methods used to raise awareness about the product. The management of Taman Sari Waterfall uses promotional channels such as social media (Instagram, Facebook, website, Google Maps), and partnerships with tourism communities, tour guides, and travel agents to promote and attract visitors.

Development Strategy for Taman Sari Waterfall as a Spiritual-Based Natural Tourist Attraction in Ngenjung Sari Traditional Village, Bakbakan Village, Gianyar District

To determine development strategies for Taman Sari Waterfall as a spiritual-based natural tourist destination, this study employs a SWOT analysis as proposed by Rangkuti (2014), which systematically identifies internal and external strategic factors:

- a. Strengths:** Taman Sari Waterfall boasts natural beauty surrounded by lush trees, offering a peaceful environment for visitors. Entrance fees are affordable. The attractions include a waterfall, natural pool, and melukat. Available facilities include clean toilets, spacious changing rooms, a fish pond, sacred fountains, ample parking space, strategic location, and a well-maintained pathway to the waterfall.
- b. Weaknesses:** During the rainy season, the waterfall may become murky and the water flow strong, posing risks to visitors, staff, and guides. The parking area, though spacious, remains unpaved, causing muddiness during rains and dust during dry seasons. Management hesitates to renovate due to rumors that the land may be repurposed by the local government for a new sports center. A new parking area owned by the traditional village has been developed near the waterfall to address this issue. The site currently lacks souvenir shops, restaurants, bars, bungalows, villas, or hotels, with only a few small stalls near the parking lot.
- c. Opportunities:** Currently, there are limited tourist attractions near Taman Sari Waterfall, but future development plans include installing swings, tubing facilities, an organic bar,

additional gazebos, and more melukat spots. If realized, these plans could significantly increase the area's appeal and open opportunities for Ngenjung Sari to be recognized as an official nature-based tourist village.

d. Threats: Taman Sari Waterfall offers a unique spiritual-based natural tourism attraction for visitors. However, potential threats may arise from the presence of several nearby waterfalls, as Taman Sari Waterfall is surrounded by six other waterfall attractions. To the northeast lies Tibumana Waterfall, which is already well-known among tourists. To the south, there are Bangkiang Jaran Waterfall, Goa Rang Reng Waterfall, Titi Waterfall, and Ulu Cangkir Waterfall, all of which possess captivating natural beauty. Additionally, Kanto Lampo Waterfall presents a significant competitive threat due to its visually striking waterfall surrounded by large and scenic rock formations. Despite these challenges, the management of Taman Sari Waterfall remains confident, as the site uniquely features a natural pool and a melukat (spiritual purification) site—attributes that serve as the main branding elements and distinct attractions for visitors.

5. CONCLUSION

The potential of Taman Sari Waterfall needs to be further developed by the management in order to increase the number of tourist visits. The more well-developed the potentials are—ranging from tourist attractions, facilities, access, and services—the more tourists are likely to come. In terms of promotion, the marketing division has already made excellent efforts in promoting Taman Sari Waterfall through both online and offline channels. Affordable entrance fees, the natural setting, and the absence of overcrowding are added advantages. The management also has the opportunity to introduce new attractions to keep the visitor experience fresh and engaging. The main strengths of Taman Sari Waterfall lie in its waterfall, natural pool, and melukat (spiritual purification) ritual site. Although there are some weaknesses and threats, these have already been anticipated by the management.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The management of Taman Sari Waterfall is encouraged to continue innovating and developing the destination by adding new tourist attractions, facilities, activities, packages, additional services, improving access, and enhancing overall management to attract more visitors.

2. The researcher hopes that the findings of this study will be useful for the entire management team of Taman Sari Waterfall in further developing it as a spiritual-based natural tourism attraction in Banjar Adat Ngenjung Sari.
3. The researcher also hopes that this study may serve as a reference for future researchers who wish to explore the development of Taman Sari Waterfall as a spiritual-based natural tourism destination in Banjar Adat Ngenjung Sari.
4. It is recommended that the government support the promotion of Taman Sari Waterfall as a spiritual-based natural tourism attraction in Banjar Adat Ngenjung Sari.

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