





## Case Report

# Reviving an Unpopular Tourism Destination through the Placemaking Approach: Case Study of Ngawen Temple, Indonesia

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**Abstract:** Changes in tourists' behavior in recent times have been considered a driving force for emphasizing the importance of unpopular tourism destinations as one of the key potentials in the tourism industry in any nation. On the road to reviving unpopular tourism destinations, this study aims to identify the potential tourism aspect and development of the Ngawen Temple in Indonesia. This research applies the placemaking approach as the main strategy for resurrecting Ngawen Temple. By using visitor surveys, visitor flows, and community surveys, this research obtains a clearer assessment for determining the planning development of Ngawen Temple. The research results revealed that unpopular destinations still have the potential to be developed and bring more benefits to the local economy by conducting a comprehensive placemaking approach. Accordingly, possible strategies based on various literature and field observations can provide clues to stakeholders on how to use their tourism assets to improve local communities' economies. Some of the most frequently proposed strategies are the following: link the unpopular destination with other popular ones through structured tourism trips; design a "tourist trap," which is a created place to hold tourists longer in a destination using new additional facilities; improve the infrastructure; and establish more creative tourism spaces, such as tourism centers.

**Keywords:** heritage; rural tourism; tourism development; tourism planning; community-based tourism



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## 1. Introduction

Tourists' behaviors change over time, from visiting gorgeous and spectacular tourism attractions, to finding locations off the beaten track and avoiding those hotspots packed with visitors seeking to witness the same amazing adventure [1–3]. Living in the social media era, communities of tourists and travelers, driven by digital platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter, try to find novel tourist locations that are unpopular "hidden gems" and take pictures of them, which in turn leads to an increase in the crowds in these places and improves the local surrounding area's economy.

Places with tourism potential that are relatively unpopular do not bring economic benefits to the local community. In some particular cases, places that contain historical values are even more prone to damage, loss, or ruin of their capabilities. To reap the benefits of using these cultural heritage buildings and ancient sites as tourist attractions for the community, an appropriate strategy is needed. Thus, finding a development strategy to achieve a balance between the unpopular tourism destination, the surrounding community's income, and the preservation of the tourism site itself is mandatory.

In general, the tourism business is a part of the economic revival of many developing countries [4]. For instance, Indonesia has tourist destinations that are very popular not only

among domestic tourists, but also among foreign ones. These highly valued destinations have, of course, brought economic benefits to the residents surrounding them. On the other side, it cannot be denied that among these popular destinations, other unpopular destinations exist. Some are not popular enough to bring in enough visitors for various reasons, which in turn leads to different implications both for the sustainability of these destinations and for the local economy.

Indonesia's Magelang Regency is no exception here. In general, it has many tourist attractions, and in particular, much heritage-based tourism. In Indonesia, Borobudur Temple is still the main magnet for Magelang visitors. In 2019, the number of tourists to Borobudur Temple was 3,989,839. Domestic tourists totaled 3,747,757 visitors (93.9%), while foreign tourists totaled 242,082 visitors (6.1%) [5]. This enormous number of visitors confirms the strong potential to develop capital resources by establishing cultural-heritage-based tourism in the surrounding area.

Near Borobudur Temple, less than 4 km away, there are the tombs of a religious Islamic sheikh. These tombs consist of two main monuments, namely the tomb of Gunung Pring Hill and the Santren Tomb, which are believed to be the saints' cemeteries. According to the data gathered from Magelang district tourism, the number of visitors to Gunung Pring Hill and the Santren Tomb cemetery reached more than 900,000 visitors in 2018 [6]. Close to the route traversed by tourists to Borobudur and the two tombs, there is a heritage site called Ngawen Temple (the primary case study). Ngawen temple is not popular enough to receive a significant number of visits or optimal economic value for tourism activities in several popular destinations in the vicinity.

Ngawen temple and its surroundings, which are located in Ngawen Village, Muntilan District, Indonesia, have an important meaning to locals in Magelang Regency. The importance of culture and heritage is becoming more and more obvious, both in local and regional development, and they directly affect economic performance and its development [7]. With the various existing domestic- and foreign-oriented tourist attractions in Indonesia, these tourism attractions have a significant economic and social impact on the surrounding local communities. The main economic impact is increasing local community income, while the social ones are creating jobs opportunities and reducing the unemployment rate. In the long term, it is hoped that poverty can be reduced and welfare can be increased by tourism business activities conducted in these unpopular tourism destinations.

Consequently, it is time for tourists and visitors to ditch the busy attractions and find other overlooked vacation spots. Although frequent travelers may not be familiar with these unpopular destinations and may not pay attention to them, these destinations are still united by one shared theme: "underrated, must-see, and potential tourism destinations".

The overall purpose of this research is to analyze the condition of the unpopular heritage destination and provide ideas for the area's development to receive benefits from the surrounding popular destinations, so that local people can take advantage of their near-home tourism potential. By relying on famous tourism destinations, the planning and development of unpopular tourism destinations are expected to provide more equitable benefits for the local communities through comprehensive placemaking planning.

Accordingly, this study aims to identify the best possible policies to enhance the touristic role of one of the underrated tourism destinations in Indonesia: Ngawen Temple. In order to achieve this objective, the study opted for the placemaking approach, and it is divided into seven sections. Firstly, the introduction section focuses on presenting an overall view of the unpopular tourism destinations and sheds light on the situation in Indonesia. Secondly, the literature review section illustrates the role of tourist flows in promoting unpopular tourism destinations. In addition, this section presents a literature review about the placemaking approach in the tourism discipline. Thirdly, the research methodology section defines the main case study in this paper, Ngawen Temple, and presents a hierarchical analysis process to determine the best policies for reviving Ngawen Temple to be a more popular tourism destination in Indonesia. This hierarchical analysis process used three main data inputs: visitors survey, visitors flow, and community survey.

Fourthly, results for analyzing the three previous data input are presented, followed by a discussion section, which focuses on identifying the problem and introducing proposed development policies. Finally, the conclusion and implications of the study are presented.

## 2. Literature Review

Tourism is the activity of visiting a certain place under certain conditions, and this place is called a tourism destination. The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) also states that a tourist destination is a physical area where visitors stay for at least for a one night [8]. This covers tourism products, as well as support services and attractions. A tourism destination also combines various stakeholders, including local communities, who come together to form a network to form a bigger and wider destination [9]. In this context, the cultural landscape is distinguished as the balanced connection between ecological structure and human influence [10]. As a result, conservation should move from “conserving historic structures itself” to “assisting in the preservation of areas that people enjoy regardless of its classification” [11].

In the process of creating a popular tourism destination, contentment impression is likely to have a constructive and predictive impact on overall vacation experience satisfaction [12]. That creation of a good visitor’s impression can be achieved by improving the visitor participation in the various dimensions of the tourism process, such as economic, social, and cultural aspects [13]. Although tourism has proven its great contribution in achieving local and regional growth in different geographical areas with other socio-economic sectors, there are urgent tourism development issues in a variety of other spatial settings [14]. Furthermore, in many tourism events and activities, the economic advantages and the negative effects on the environment are occurring simultaneously, mainly due to the high strain on the capacity of the environment by the number and type of visitors’ activities [13].

Visitors usually buy goods and services during their visit to any tourism destination, which in turn leads to direct impacts in growing the income of locals; in the long term, this boosts the local economy and achieves sustainable tourism development [15]. Tourism is thus a suitable way to merge even remote areas under a globalized economy, which greatly increases available local cash income and contributes to building up physical wealth [16]. Tourism can also be a significant opportunity to end social, demographic, and economic disparities (evident from many rural regions) [17]. However, caution is needed, because all this renewed interest in the ecosphere and the local culture creates a dynamic economic motor that can push better economic growth in underdeveloped areas, but can also cause unsustainable growth followed by rapid downtrends, called “boom-bust” cycles [18].

Most tourism places are using, for example, the country of the visitor’s origin as a segmentation point of reference, and developing adjusted marketing strategies for each one [19]. Thus, this segmentation can be used as a tool to develop tourism products and shape the market, especially in slow tourism activities. Slow tourism activities are those emphasizing genuine experiences, environmental sustainability, and taking a step back from frantic lifestyles [20].

Based on the previous literature, this study proposed the first research question as follows: “Q1: How would the prominent tourist spots which succeed in attracting a large number of visitors be able to influence tourist visits to other nearby unpopular locations, resulting in economic benefits to the local community?”

Tourism is characterized by collective consumption, while slow tourism promises that slow use on the part of some allows the same form of consumption by others; that happens to activate a virtuous cycle of responsible touristic behavior and adequate environmental and social factors [21]. The idea of a deeper and more meaningful connection between tourists and locals at a destination place, through longer stays and a more relaxed appreciation of locality leading to a more fulfilling and memorable vacation experience, is the purpose of slow tourism, especially as it relates to environment and heritage sites [22]. This is especially so given the fact that heritage is something that should be prolonged from

generation to generation, because generally, it has a value that should be maintained or preserved through its presence [23].

Besides authenticity, integrity, and outstanding universal values, cultural relativism and the participation and involvement of the locals are also important requisites in the evaluation processes of tourism development [24]. Furthermore, at heritage sites, visitors are attached with an active sense of developing social links or relationships with locals [25]. This will make visitors and locals mediate and negotiate affections, memories and cultural/historical meanings, which are thus made and remade during the visit, providing a deeper cognition of the agency of both visitors and locals [25]. This in-depth understanding of the natural relationship between visitors and locals makes heritage tourism a positive force for social change anywhere in general, and in Asian society in particular [26].

Moving to unpopular tourism destinations, according to previous scholarly studies, some reasons which lead to these destinations receiving a low number of visitors can be solved by linking them with other popular ones [24]. These studies recommend escalating community participation and collaboration with the local actors, which, it is believed, could push the tourism development to be more sustainable [27]. Sustainable ecotourism development in destinations with poor potential for development can be a sustainable income-generating scheme for local residents and can create a place for visitors to spend their leisure time [28]. Thus, it is important to prioritize the use of these services based on closeness, as well as the income level of the residents, which should be considered during the plan arrangement and implementation of the conservation scheme of tourism destinations [29].

In addition, the main important principle that could make an effective impact in the process of engaging the locals in tourism development is building trustful relationships with the different stakeholders [30]. Meanwhile, in the tourism area development plan, it is important to know the critical conditions of the locals so that the direction of the development plans can be determined [31,32]. Lastly, confidence in the ability to collaborate with various tourism professionals is considered a convenient business environment that facilitates discussions for a greater social relationship between tourism destinations and surrounding communities' areas [12].

The most important issue in the analysis of the development of tourism activities is minimizing conflicts of interest between stakeholders and achieving the most possible profit from the different tourism activities [33]. In addition, the use of heritage sites with a comprehensive data-based strategy will create sustainability in these sites, and can simultaneously make them serve as conservation tools [34].

In order to achieve the previously mentioned comprehensive collaboration between tourism destinations (especially the unpopular ones) and the local communities, various approaches can be conducted, such as placemaking. Activists and organizations have long recognized the value of place-based knowledge and intervention in highlighting and addressing social inequities [35]. Placemaking in the modern era is also a symbol of collaboration between several stakeholders to achieve a common goal using spatial assets [36]. Furthermore, sustainability is also a key factor in developing an area which can be realized by the placemaking concept [37].

According to the previously mentioned theory and approach, this study proposed the following second research question: "Q2: How can the placemaking approach create conditions for the closest unpopular destinations to get visitors from the popular ones?"

Placemaking, also written as place-making, is not a novel term; its roots date back to the 1970s, and it has been used under the term "sense of place" by various researchers such as Kevin Lynch, Aldo Van Eyck, Jane Jacobs, Christian Norberg-Schulz, and Edward Relph [38]. After that, the placemaking approach was used by scholars in various development disciplines such as urban planning, architecture, urban design, spatial development, urban upgrading, and landscape design. This variety of placemaking approach usage causes the absence of a single broad definition of this approach, and it is generally under-

stood as a community-driven approach that depends on local communities to boost the development process and achieve authenticity and quality [39].

In the tourism development context, placemaking is defined as a process that creates a destination's image, and it is critical for increasing tourists' return visits to a certain destination [40]. Additionally, the placemaking approach can play an important role in attracting more visitors, activities, businesses, and investments, in tourism destinations in general, and in particular, in unpopular ones. For example, J.A. Mansilla and C. Milano, in their article "Becoming Center: Tourism placemaking and space production in two neighborhoods in Barcelona", which was published in 2019, used the placemaking approach as a change-of-look policy for two destinations in Barcelona city [41], where the residents and social fabric were used to develop these two destinations [41]. In the same manner, researchers J. Delconte, C.S. Kline, and C. Scavo introduced the importance of the placemaking approach in heritage tourism by focusing on small local arts agencies as community culture actors and their role in developing heritage tourism destinations [42]. Regarding another tourism activity, "film tours", a 2020 article by R. Schiavone and S. Reijnders titled "Fusing Fact and Fiction: Placemaking through film tours in Edinburgh" highlighted the importance of different contemporary demographics of Edinburgh (such as local communities, cultural minorities, immigrants, etc.) and their impact in boosting the placemaking approach in the creation film of tours, [43]. In addition, S. Priatmoko, M. Kabil et al., in their article published in 2021, presented community-based tourism as a form of tourism that depends on the placemaking approach in achieving sustainable tourism development in Pampang Village in Indonesia [44].

It is worthwhile mentioning that there are other corresponding policies conducted with the placemaking approach to revive unpopular tourism destinations, such as tourism routes. There are many benefits to applying tourist routes as a supported strategy with the placemaking approach, such as: the development of cooperation, enhancement of the traditional local markets, raising interest, and fitting the trends [45]. Consequently, finding the best tourist routes could be one of the most successful policies in order to boost tourism activities in unpopular tourism destinations.

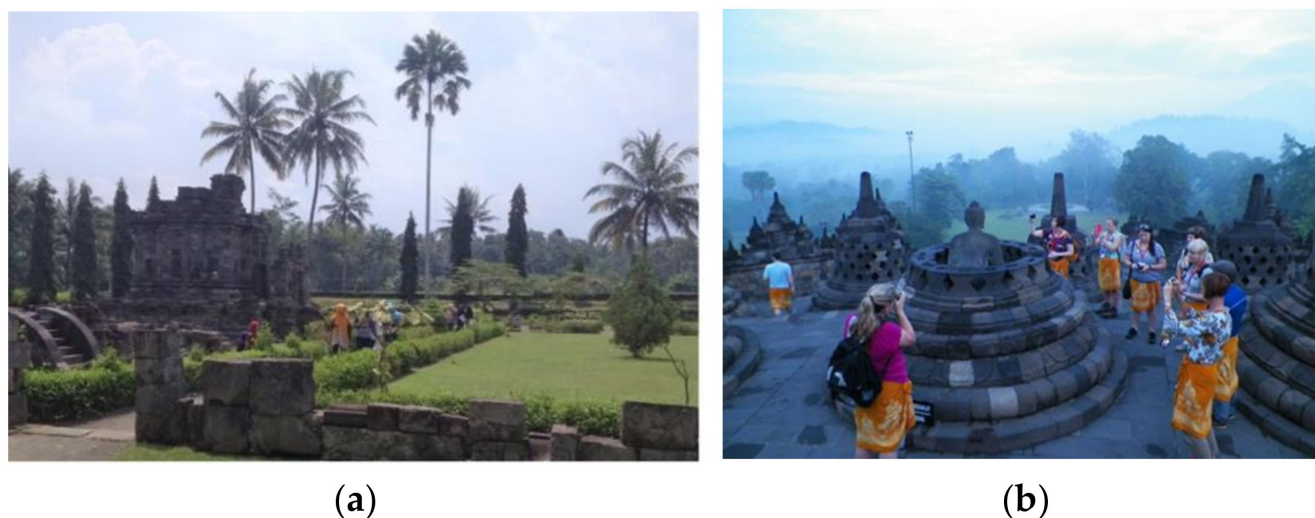
All of these studies and their core findings highlight the importance of the placemaking approach in the tourism development field, which is reflected in the importance of this study's idea, especially since it applied the placemaking approach to develop and revive unpopular tourism destinations.

Additionally, these studies applied the placemaking approach using different methods, which results in the third research question in this study, "Q3: How could the placemaking approach be designed to support slow tourism activities in unpopular tourism destinations?"

### 3. Research Methodology

#### 3.1. Case Study

Ngawen Temple is a Buddhist temple built by the Saylendra Dynasty in the VIII–IX centuries AD. Ngawen Temple is unique because there is a Buddha statue inside, while the temple itself is formally a Hindu temple (see Figure 1a). Geographically, it is at coordinates 1100°16'20" east longitude and 7036'16" south longitude, at an altitude of 307 m above sea level [46]. The site area of Ngawen Temple is approximately 3556 m<sup>2</sup> and bordered by a fence.



**Figure 1.** (a) Ngawen Temple site; (b) Borobudur Temple.

Ngawen Temple is located in Ngawen Village, Magelang District, Indonesia, and its site consists of five temples (Nagwen Temple and four others). The other four temples are not intact, and only the foot of each temple is left. The only temple that is still intact is Ngawen Temple No. II, still standing up to the roof. The Ngawen Temple area is quite attractive to tourists. The BPS Statistic Office of Magelang Regency indicates that Ngawen Temple received up to 33,028 visitors during its peak season in 2019. This number consisted of 371 foreign tourists and 32,657 domestic tourists. Ngawen Temple's visitors can easily access Ngawen Village because the temple is located close to the main road to the village. A comparison of tourist numbers between Ngawen Temple and the very popular, giant Borobudur Temple can be seen in Table 1 below.

**Table 1.** Borobudur vs. Ngawen Temples visitors comparison.

No.	Destination	Year			
		2016	2017	2018	2019
1	Borobudur Temple	3,795,300	3,775,799	3,855,285	3,989,839
2	Ngawen Temple	26,656	28,693	19,451	33,028

Source: [5].

The entrance ticket to Ngawen Temple is only IDR 3000 (USD 0.2), compared to the IDR 30,000 (USD 2) for Borobudur Temple for domestic visitors and USD 20 for foreign visitors (rate for USD 1 equals approximately IDR 15,000 in 2020) [47]. Located around 10 km from Borobudur Temple, which is the most popular heritage site on Java Island or even in Indonesia (Figure 1b), Ngawen Temple does not get significant economic benefits from the surrounding tourism activities.

### 3.2. Method

This study used the placemaking approach as the main method to determine the direction of tourism development in the tourism destination and suggest a convenient development model and policy.

To apply the placemaking approach in reviving the heritage destination, this study used three steps: (i) visitors survey and interviews, (ii) visitor flows based on field observation, and (iii) community survey and interviews. Each step consisted of various elements, as shown in Figure 2. The authors conducted an initial field observation at the site and designed several structured questionnaires based on cursory observations. The importance of understanding tourists' experiences has been substantiated in research on cultural and

creative tourism [48]. Initial observation is also very helpful for researchers to determine destination brand indicators [49].

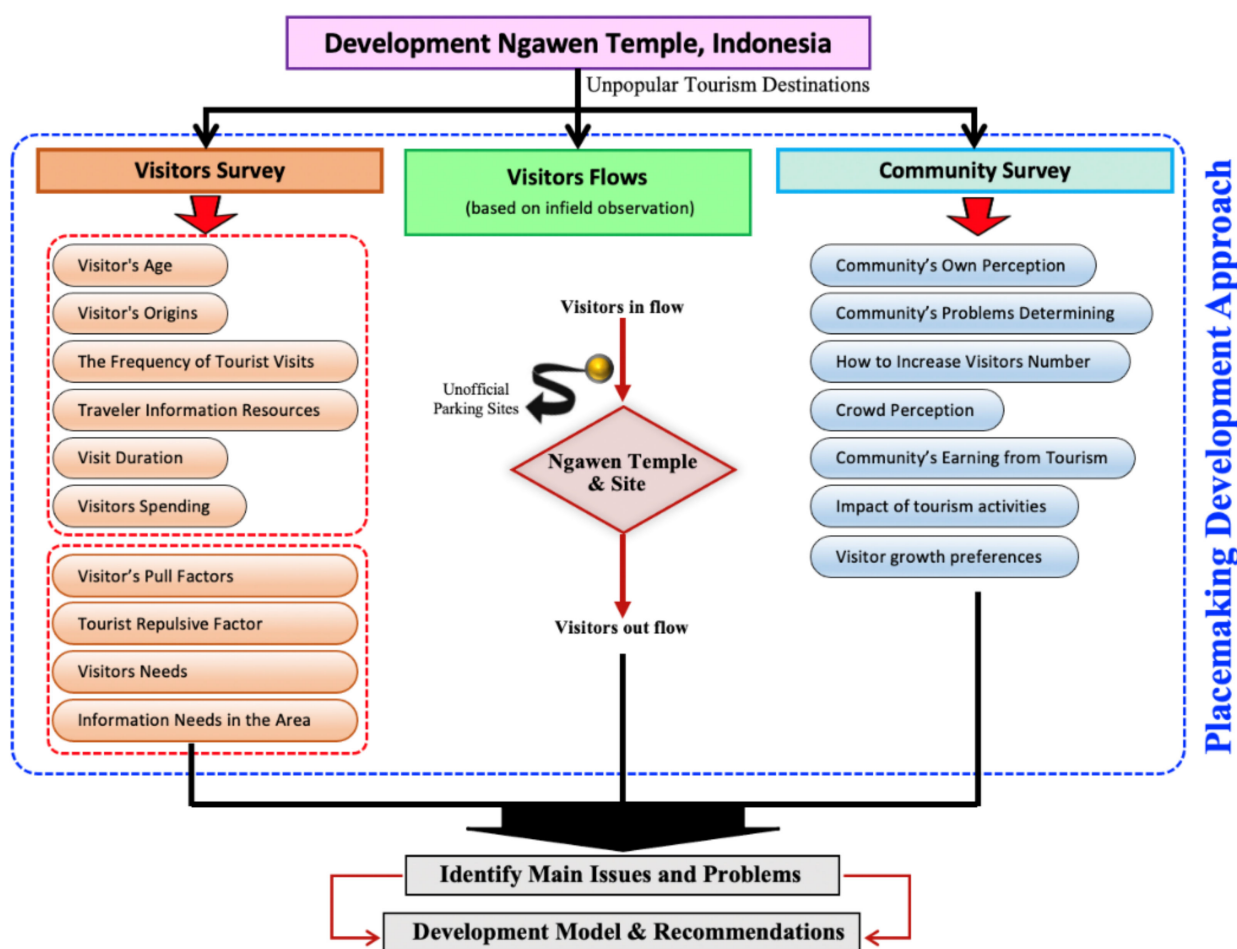


Figure 2. Research method.

This research order starts with conducting a visitor survey and interviews. The visitor's survey focused on identifying the age and origin of the tourists, the visit frequency to the destination, how they knew the destination, and how long they spent in the tourism destination area. Additionally, the visitors were asked about the amount of money they spent during their visit. The main idea of the visitor's questionnaire is to identify the pull factor in visiting the temple and the surrounding area. Furthermore, Ngawen Temple's visitors were asked about their opinions related to the physical aspects of the destination, the place's atmosphere, the weather and the air, the landscape, the visit's objectives, the community's response, activities, and other subjects. Apart from the visitor's questionnaire about attraction factors, the visitors were also asked about things that they did not like in the Ngawen Temple area. The responses were categorized as a repulsive factor, which contains information about opinions of the area around the heritage place, building conditions, choices of goods or services, tourism supporting infrastructure and facilities, the weather, and other things.

Secondly, the researchers observed the spatial behavior patterns of Ngawen Temple's visitors around the temple and its surrounding area. Observations were made for one week to find out various spatial patterns, whether for weekdays or weekends. The purpose of observing the visitor flow is to find out what tourists access while visiting the destination.

Thirdly, the local community survey and questionnaire was conducted. Respondents for this questionnaire were determined by the management of village tourism organizations. Respondents who were recommended by the village tourism organization were based on

which residents would be considered to understand and be able to read the sentences and context of the questionnaire proposed, as well as be aware of the importance of Ngawen Temple as a tourism destination. A community survey and questionnaire was included, focused on the following: the community's perception of the visitors, the attractiveness of the destination, proposals to increase visits, overcrowding, economic impacts, tourism activities' consequences, and preferences regarding visitor growth.

These three steps are considered the main pillars of applying the placemaking approach to enhance the potential of Ngawen Temple as a tourism destination. After that, the researchers identify the main problems and suggest proposed solutions for destination placemaking. Figure 2 illustrates the placemaking approach with its key steps used in this study.

## 4. Results

### 4.1. Visitor Survey Results

Before presenting the visitor survey results, the choice of the sample should be highlighted. From the records obtained from the receptionist's guest logbook, the average number of visits per day to Ngawen Temple is around 50 to 54 visitors. This figure includes 20% of the visitors who are underage (15 years and under), who are not considered as decision-makers, so they are not taken as a sample of respondents. Therefore, the number of people that visited Ngawen Temple per week was 315. Using the sample size calculator application found on the survey and statistics page (from a company that provides survey and statistical application services), it was calculated that for a population of 315, to achieve a 95% confidence level and a margin of error of 10%, a sample of 74 respondents is required [50] (see Equation (1) below and Table 2).

$$\text{Sample size} = \frac{\frac{z^2 \times p(1-p)}{e^2}}{1 + \left( \frac{z^2 \times p(1-p)}{e^2 N} \right)} \quad (1)$$

**Table 2.** Confidence level and z-score.

Desired Confidence Level	z-Score
80%	1.28
85%	1.44
90%	1.65
95%	1.96
99%	2.58

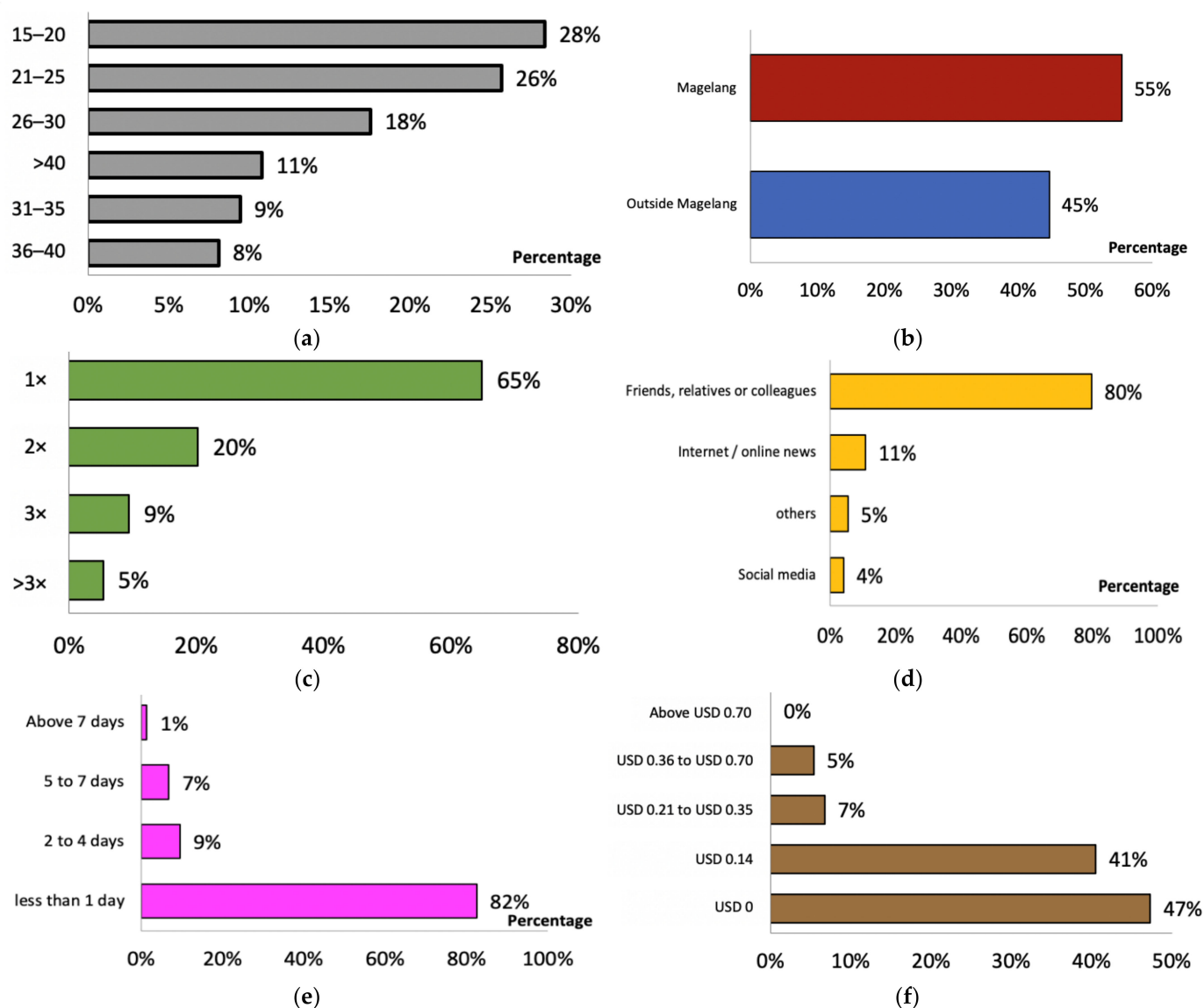
Source: [50].

Legend:  $N$  = population size;  $e$  = margin of error (percentage in decimal form);  $z$  = z-score.

These respondents were then used to find out their backgrounds and reasons for visiting the tourist attraction of Ngawen Temple. From the respondent's data that has been obtained, details and explanations of the findings are as follows:

#### 4.1.1. Visitor's Age

By analyzing the obtained responses from the visitors of the Ngawen Temple area, it was established that almost 72% of them belonged to the younger generations of "generation Z" or the "millennial generation". Fulfilling the information and tourism facilities needs typical of the millennial generation is needed so that they might choose Ngawen Temple as their preferred tourism destination. The age distribution of visitors to Ngawen Temple can be seen in detail in Figure 3a.



**Figure 3.** (a) Visitor's age, (b) origins of tourists in Ngawen Temple, (c) frequency of tourist's visits, (d) traveler information resources, (e) visit duration, (f) visitor's spending.

#### 4.1.2. Origin of Tourists in Ngawen Temple

Magelang City and Magelang Regency are still the largest contributors to the total number of visitors in the Ngawen Temple area, as seen in Figure 3b. The rest are from outside Magelang, including Yogyakarta, Solo, Klaten, Jakarta, and other places. Foreign tourists still have not considered Ngawen Temple as a tourism destination on their trips. Data from the Magelang District Youth and Sports Tourism Office from 2017–2018 show that less than 1% of foreign tourists visited Ngawen Temple (0.52% in 2017 and 0.75% in 2018).

#### 4.1.3. The Frequency of Tourist Visits

The majority of visitors to Ngawen Temple are considered first-time visitors in the past year. This makes sense considering the explanation of the previous data, and that they actually knew Ngawen Temple from word of mouth. However, there is a positive side: nearly 35% of the total visitors are those who are making their second visit and so on. This could mean, more or less, that repeat visitors are satisfied with the condition of the tourism

destination of Ngawen. It could also mean that on their first visit, they felt that they had not explored enough according to what the purpose of their visit was (see Figure 3c).

#### 4.1.4. Traveler Information Resources

The existence of the tourist area of Ngawen Temple is known to tourists who have come; in fact, it comes from word of mouth. There is also a possibility that the region has not yet reached an optimal number of tourists. Even information sourced from the internet and social media is only around 15%. This is quite a strong reason why the Ngawen area is not yet known, considering that the majority of international tourists use the internet to find information about a tourist destination. Even information from social media is still due to other reasons, including accidentally passing by, being invited by friends without a plan, and accidentally staying over at a relative's house in Ngawen. These conditions are described in Figure 3d.

#### 4.1.5. Visit Duration

Most (around 82%) of the tourists who visit Ngawen Temple only spend less than one day in Ngawen Village (see Figure 3e). In field observations and data from Google Maps analytics, even tourists visiting the Ngawen area only spend less than two hours. This figure is still very far from the length of stay of tourists in general in Magelang, which is 1.95 days.

#### 4.1.6. Visitors' Spending

Close attention should be paid to the economic benefits that local residents get from Ngawen Temple. The data obtained still show very concerning numbers. Nearly 50% of tourists who visited Ngawen Temple do not spend in the area. This tourist expenditure does not include the entrance ticket to the temple area. The remaining 41% only spent no more than IDR 2000 (approximately USD 0.14) to pay for parking fees for motorbikes. Meanwhile, the purchase of culinary snacks is also not more than IDR 10,000 (approximately USD 0.7) and is only bought by about 12% of visitors (see Figure 3f). The limited information and things that tourists can buy in Ngawen Village are likely to trigger this.

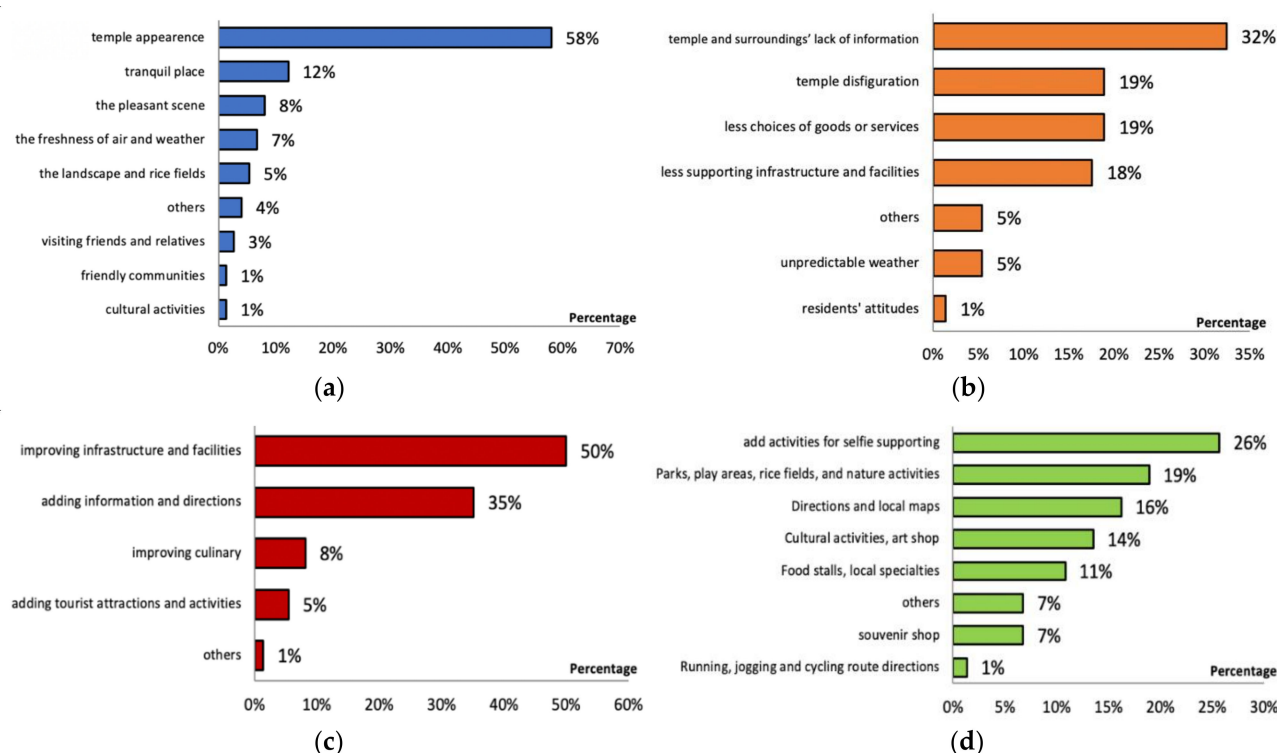
In addition to identifying the main aspects of the visitors of Ngawen Temple and its surrounding area, the visitor's survey tries to determine the visitors' feelings and ideas about how to develop Ngawen Temple to be one of the important tourism attractions in this area. The main questions were about the following:

#### 4.1.7. Visitor Pull Factors

There are several things that encourage visitors to come to Ngawen. More than half of the surveys taken stated that Ngawen was a beautiful tourist destination. The rest generally stated that the condition of the rural environment in Desa Ngawen was conducive to becoming the target of the visit. These reasons can be seen in detail in Figure 4a.

#### 4.1.8. Tourist Repulsive Factors

Apart from the positive factors that make Ngawen and Desa Ngawen interesting to visit, there are also things that are negative about these tourism destinations. The lack of information about the Ngawen area is the biggest factor for visitors. This is probably because the typical tourists today are people who always need information about the destinations they are willing to visit. On the other hand, it can be said that this is exciting for the stakeholders, because it means that visitors really care about the existence of this historical heritage. Tourists' concerns over the insufficiency of several parts of Ngawen took second place. Complaints about the limited choices of goods or services that can be purchased were also highlighted by visitors. It is worthy of note that there is lack of tourism support facilities, so tourists are really faced with limitations in their visit to Ngawen. Details of these conditions are shown in Figure 4b.



**Figure 4.** (a) Visitor pull factors, (b) tourist repulsive factors, (c) tourists' needs, (d) information needs in the area.

#### 4.1.9. Tourist Needs

From observations and data obtained in the field, the need for infrastructure and tourism support facilities, as well as additional information guidance for visitors, is a priority that is urgently needed by tourists. Visitors who came to Ngawen complained that they could not do anything other than see the beauty of Ngawen. In addition, the limited choice of culinary meals or snacks is also a highlight, and this is exacerbated by the lack of instructions around Ngawen. In general, the priorities expected by visitors that should be improved and added to are illustrated in Figure 4c.

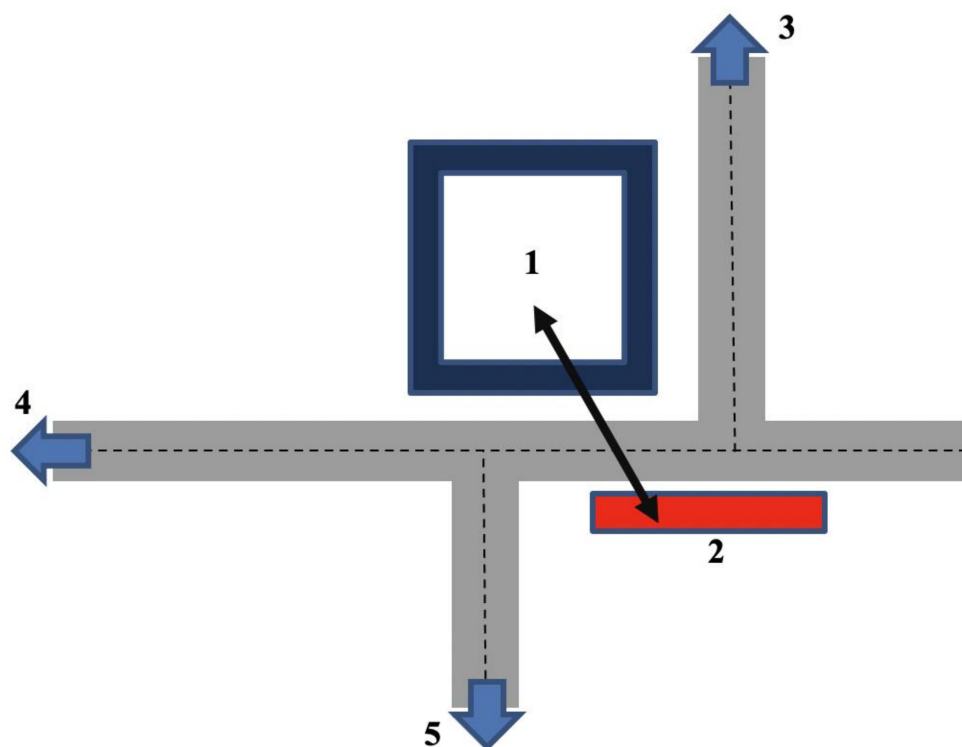
#### 4.1.10. Information Needs in the Area

Typical visitors to the Ngawen area, which are dominated by millennials, have resulted in demands on stakeholders in Ngawen Temple and related areas. Visitors demand information about interesting attractions and activities to do besides enjoying the beauty of Ngawen. These activities are very much needed by the younger generation, who are always thirsty for new and unique things in the places they visit. Equally important is the need for parks, activities in the rice fields, or other activities related to the unique atmosphere in Ngawen Village. This is probably based on the selfie trend among tourists of all ages, but with a distinctive and different atmosphere. Adding directions is also a necessity that is considered important, considering the fact that the majority of visitors are those who are visiting for the first time. Various cultural activities, such as art activities, are also considered as priorities in the tourist area of Ngawen. The various types of information needed can be seen in detail in Figure 4d.

#### 4.2. Visitor Flows Results

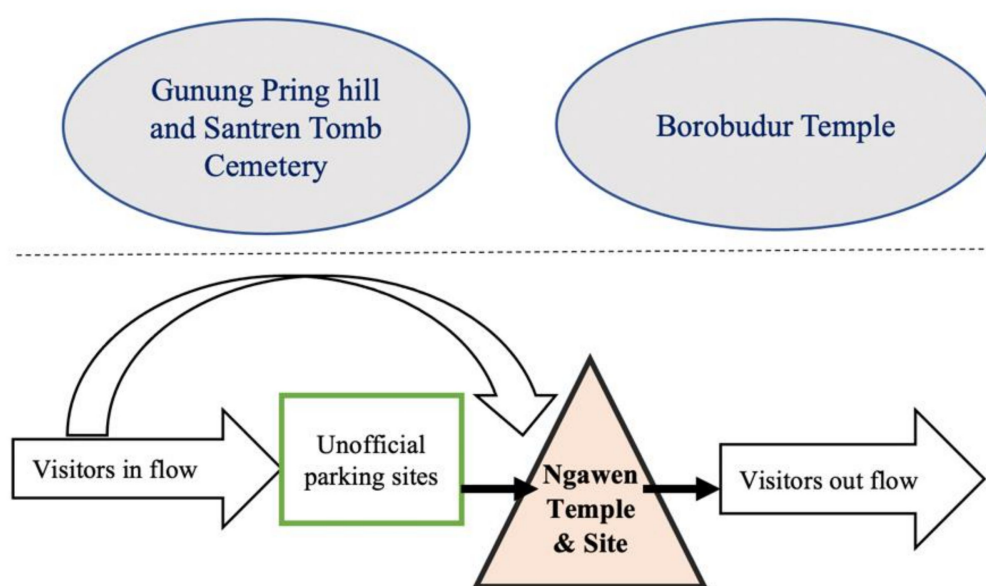
According to in-field observations and data from Google Maps analytics (data were taken 1 December 2019), even tourists visiting the Ngawen Temple area only spend less than two hours. The short duration of this visit does not support optimal economic benefits, because it contradicts the concept of slow tourism. With very cheap tickets and short-time visits, tourists are not conditioned to find activities that make them immerse and buy other

experiences from local residents. This shows the current conditions that occur for visitors to Ngawen. Almost all of the tourists at Ngawen use the unofficial parking area on the shoulder of the road, before entering the Ngawen site area, and going back home (see Figure 5). A small portion of visitors pay for drinks and snacks sold by street vendors at the entrance to Ngawen Temple.



**Figure 5.** Visitor Movement in Ngawen area. Legend: (1) Ngawen Temple site; (2) unofficial motorcycle park; (3) to Borobudur Temple; (4) to Gunung Pring and Santren Tomb; (5) to Jogja City.

This condition occurs because the flow of tourists is only fixated on Ngawen Temple's inner fenced area, as can be seen in Figure 6 below.



**Figure 6.** Recent Ngawen Temple area visitor flows.

From this flow, it is known that there are no other activities carried out by visitors to the Ngawen Temple. In addition, the existence, 3 km away, of Mount Pring Hill and Santren Tomb Cemetery, and 10 km away, Borobudur Temple, with almost five million total visitors, are not connected with tourist visits to Ngawen Temple, and vice versa.

#### 4.3. Community Survey Results

Apart from seeing the various conditions above, it is no less important to collect opinions from the residents of Ngawen Village. Those who are involved, have been involved in, or are not directly involved with tourism activities in the area of Ngawen were asked for their responses and heard. The main respondents were the Ngawen Village Tourism management and the Ngawen Village officials. Furthermore, they provided recommendations for other persons from Ngawen Village who were deemed trustworthy and could be asked for their opinion on the condition of tourism in the tourist attractions of Ngawen and Desa Ngawen. After going through several screening processes, responses were collected from 50 residents of Ngawen Village. Some of the main discussed topics were as follows:

##### 4.3.1. Perceptions of Ngawen Village Community (“Why Do Tourists Visit the Temple?”)

The people of Ngawen Village generally understand that the main purpose which attracts tourists to visit the Ngawen Temple is to enjoy the beauty of this historical site. Furthermore, the local community also considers village life activities to be one of the driving forces for the arrival of tourists in the Ngawen Temple area. These and other matters in the perceptions of the village community are illustrated in Figure 7a.

##### 4.3.2. Perceptions of the Ngawen Village Community about Things That Are Not/Less Interesting about the Attractiveness of Ngawen Temple

Nearly half (44%) of the Ngawen Village community thought that supporting facilities and infrastructure, such as signs and directions, were still lacking in the Ngawen Village area (see Figure 7b). Additionally, the fact that there are not many choices of goods or services that can be purchased by tourists was noted. This is also exacerbated by the lack of information that can be shared with visiting tourists. The community also considers the incompleteness of the temple site of Ngawen to reduce its attractiveness.

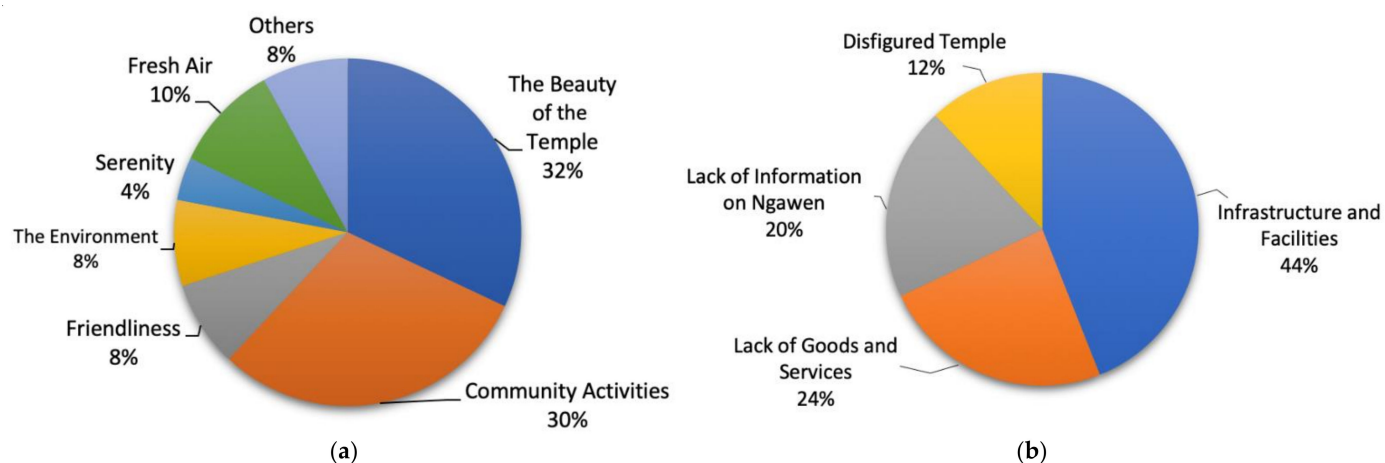
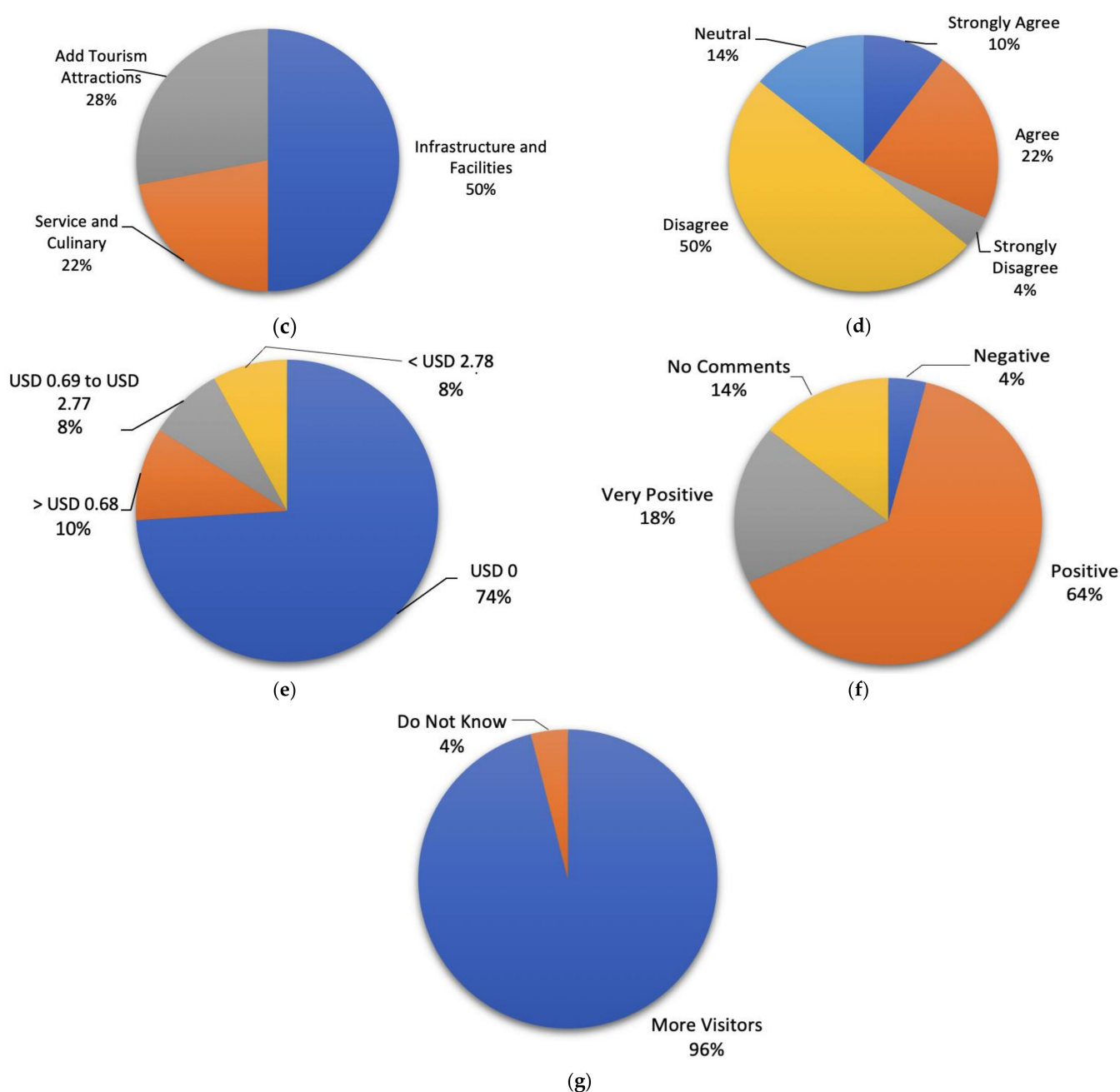


Figure 7. Cont.



**Figure 7.** (a) Perceptions of the Ngawen Village community ("Why do tourists come to Ngawen Temple?"); (b) perceptions of local community about non-interesting things related to the attractiveness of Ngawen Temple; (c) suggestions to increase visits to the temple; (d) overcrowding; (e) economic impact on local community; (f) impact of tourism activities in Ngawen; (g) visitor growth preferences in Ngawen.

#### 4.3.3. The Suggestion to Increase Visits to Ngawen Temple

Broadly speaking, the people in Ngawen Village think that there are three major issues that should be improved to increase tourist flows (see Figure 7c): tourist facilities and infrastructure, the quality of culinary goods and services, and links between Ngawen Temple area and other surrounding tourist attractions.

#### 4.3.4. Overcrowd

More than half of the people in Ngawen Village (52%) think that the presence of tourism activities in the area of Ngawen Temple does not create excessive crowds. Even so,

there are about 32% who think they have caused excessive crowds. From the observations in the field, it is likely that this is influenced by visitor vehicles parked on the side of the road, which is an intersection. It is important to know these perceptions of hustle and bustle in order to plan a strategy for breaking down overcrowding. In general, this is reflected in Figure 7d.

#### 4.3.5. Economic Impact on Local Community

A big challenge for the condition of tourism in tourist attraction areas such as Ngawen is the problem of tourism performance towards increasing the local economy. Most of the residents (74%) still do not get additional income from tourist visits to Ngawen. The remaining 10% only get less than IDR 10,000 (approximately USD 0.8) from each tourist who comes (see Figure 7e). This certainly needs to be the rationale for further development plans.

#### 4.3.6. Impact of Tourism Activities in Ngawen

The great thing about activities in the tourist attraction area of Ngawen is that the majority of residents (82%) consider these activities to have a positive or very positive impact. Those who did not comment were the ones who were still waiting on the situation to see. This is certainly good social capital for tourism development in the region. It can be seen in Figure 7f.

#### 4.3.7. Visitor Growth Preferences in Ngawen

Another interesting thing is that the local community apparently hopes that in the next five years the number of tourists coming to Ngawen Temple and its surroundings will increase. This certainly illustrates the readiness and positive expectations that are almost uniform in the minds of the people of Ngawen Village, who are very supportive towards tourism development (see Figure 7g).

### 5. Discussion

From the visitor and community responses obtained, we randomly asked 10 respondents each for an in-depth interview to add to the perspective's richness. From the results of the visitors' and residents' interviews, we have created a summary to make it easier to see the most significant issues and their interrelations with each other. This summary can be seen in Tables 3 and 4 below.

From the findings of the surveys of visitors and the community, several matching aspects could be highlighted. Visitor flow around the temple area will also be the basis for technical developments to slow down the flow of tourists. The visitor flow approach later accommodates the proposed solutions from the survey results. From three components—namely the visitor survey, visitor flows, and community survey—a strategy that is considered the closest to optimal in attracting tourists, as well as bringing economic benefits to residents, will be created.

**Table 3.** Visitor interviews summary.

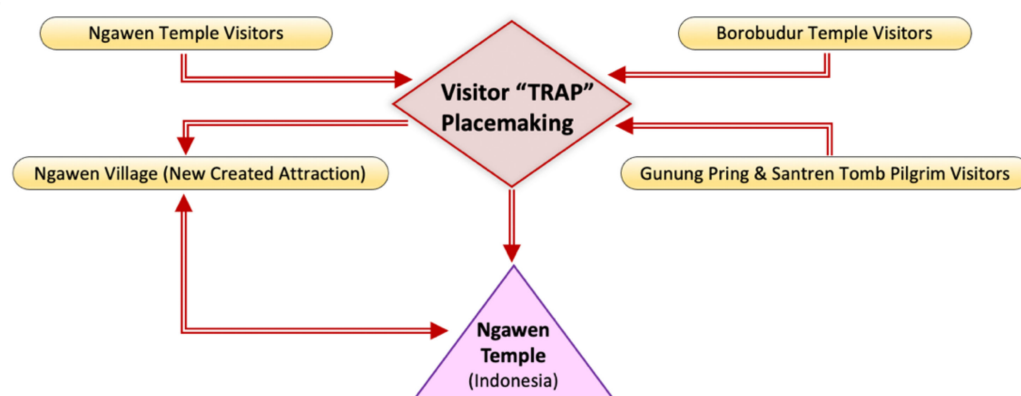
Visitors Interview Summary (Main Findings)	
-	Visitors do not know much about activities other than seeing the temple.
-	There is a need from tourists for additional attractions around the temple related to rural agrarian life.
-	The majority of visitors are first-time visitors and get information from word of mouth.
-	Visitors do not know the location of cafes, restaurants, and things that can be bought as merchandise in the Ngawen area.
-	Visitors generally admit that Ngawen's Temple and its scenery were beautiful.
-	Several things became the focus of complaints, namely: the parking area, toilets, and road directions.

**Table 4.** Community interviews summary.

Community Interview Summary (Main Findings)	
-	The beauty of the temple and the rural scenery are the main potential attractions, and preservation and utilization optimization should be conducted.
-	There is a need for infrastructure, attractions, services, and culinary offerings.
-	The residents have not received economic benefits from the Ngawen Temple tourism activity.
-	Tourism activities are considered positive, but residents understand what travelers complain about, because of the lack of facilities and attractions.
-	Residents hope to increase tourist visits and economic benefits from Ngawen Temple.
-	Residents understand that their capacity in tourism services needs to be improved, since their way of life has been farming.

In this context, the answer to the first research question (“Q1: How would the prominent tourist spots which succeed in attracting a large number of visitors be able to influence tourist visits to other nearby unpopular locations, resulting in economic benefits to the local community?”) could be illustrated as follows:

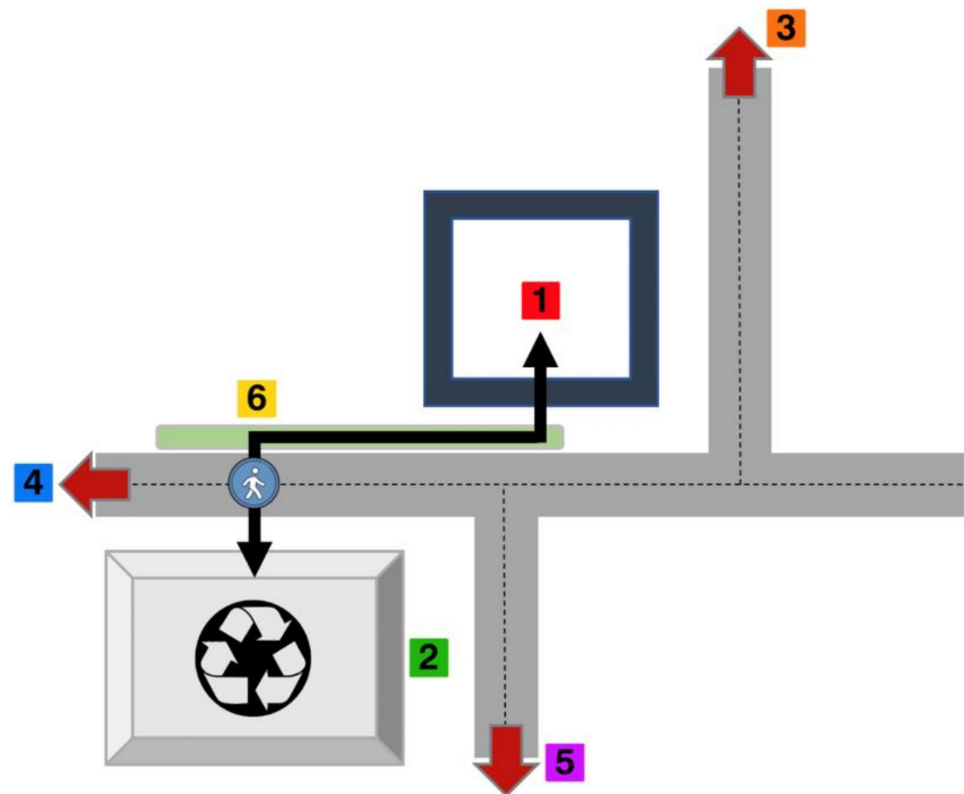
There are many results from the two survey types (visitors survey and community survey) that could produce a guide on how to deal with unpopular destinations such as Ngawen Temple in order to make the best use of the available resources and potentials. For example, the link between the unpopular destination and other famous ones could be improved. This development method could be effective because in tourist attractions like Ngawen Temple, tourists visit the temple, purchase a ticket, and leave, so it does not matter whether there are 10,000 or 2 million visitors per year. We should work on connecting this tourist attraction with other ones to achieve the optimum utilization of the available resources and potentials in the Ngawen Temple area. Therefore, the idea is to hold tourists as long as possible, so that the concept of slow tourism can be carried out. This also takes advantage of visitors from other popular destinations. The second plan is to make a second center of attraction to grab visitors from Borobudur Temple and Gunung Pring Tomb. The work plan concept of its placemaking is shown in Figure 8 below.

**Figure 8.** New Ngawen visitor flows strategy.

Additionally, the answer for the second research question (“Q2: How can the place-making approach create conditions for the closest unpopular destinations to get visitors from the popular ones?”) could be addressed as follows:

The visitor “trap” will be the first catchment area for tourists, who have so far only visited the Ngawen temple site and then immediately returned home without providing optimal social and economic contributions. The facilities will provide parking areas for motorbikes, cars, and micro-buses. The visitor “trap” of this placemaking area can only be realized if there is cooperation between various stakeholders: the government, residents,

and institutions managing the heritage area [51]. It is important to create this new place because new public spaces, with their variety and articulation, offer multiple possibilities to be experienced by different subjects with different needs and preferences [37]. The concept of a visitor trap is to create a new use of space to hold tourists longer in a destination using new additional facilities. The application of the visitor “trap” concept can be seen in the area depicted in Figure 9 below.



**Figure 9.** Visitor movement engineering plan. Legend: (1) Ngawen Temple site; (2) visitor “trap”; (3) to Borobudur Temple; (4) to Gunung Pring and Santren Tomb; (5) to Jogja City; (6) pedestrian sidewalk.

Based on visitor and community surveys, in the Ngawen Temple area, a tourism center could be established to enrich the tourist’s visit to this destination, which at the same time will present a comprehensive answer for the third research question, (“Q3: How could the placemaking approach be designed to support slow tourism activities in unpopular tourism destinations?”).

This proposed tourism center will have an information center introducing the potential activities of Ngawen Village, including tour packages, art shops, a cafeteria, and a mini-workshop and costumes rental for selfies in the Ngawen Temple area, since the visitors need something to do in the temple area. To attract tourists from Borobudur Temple and Gunung Pring and Santren tomb visitors, different attractions need to be made with the theme of the two destinations. The determination of the theme of the attraction is adjusted to the results of a survey of visitors and residents who think that the rural and agricultural atmosphere is one of the attractions of the Ngawen area, as found from interviews. The economic specialization indicator determines the diversification of an enterprise or a region in terms of the branching of its activities [52]. Its purpose is to transform public places into more inclusive and democratic settings of everyday learning and critical pedagogy, and encourage social interactions [35]. For this reason, it is suggested, for instance, to build a mini-museum as a learning and critical pedagogy facility, with the theme of encouraging social interactions with the Javanese farmer and rural life in the “trap” visitor area. Museum

can engage cultural consumers through the ways objects are displayed and the activities constructed for the multiple purposes (e.g., enjoyment or learning) [53].

Since visitors stated that they love the atmosphere of the village, activities in the museum can be in the form of exhibitions/displays of various ancient, rare, and unique items that are owned by the residents in Ngawen and surrounding areas in particular, and Central Java in general. In other words, an important concept in involving all parties in the design of placemaking is to obtain the optimal benefits of a special activity [36]. Apart from being an information center for various tourism activities in Ngawen Village, the museum will become a cultural center for micro-scale or model-scale rural communities' way of life, which is held in the calendar of events as an attraction as well as a selfie spot. Indigenous cultural features and ethnic cultural markers are something to be proud of, valued, and shared in the sense of cultural appreciation in tourism. In this case, the tourism provider emphasizes a distinct material culture in order to “embody the intangible” and portray genuine visitor experiences [54].

From analyzing the Ngawen Temple case study, the researchers devised a model framework to develop unpopular tourism destination planning through placemaking that can be applied to other premises. The process of placemaking for an unpopular destination is divided into three phases, which are macro evaluation, micro evaluation, and connectivity, as seen in Figure 10 below.

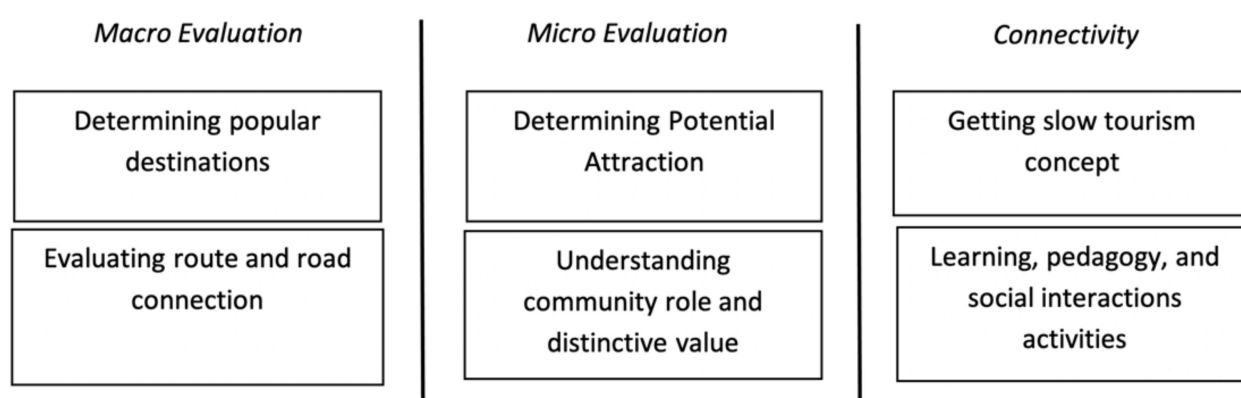


Figure 10. MMC tourism placemaking diagram.

As seen in the diagram, we can say the placemaking planning for unpopular destinations using popular destination benefits could be done comprehensively. This framework shall be used by stakeholders and planners so they can work simultaneously during planning work under the same perspective.

## 6. Conclusions

Using three pillars of methodology—which are visitor survey, visitor flows, and community survey—can give promising comprehensive results for placemaking planning. The proposed strategy and approach can be adjusted to the conditions of these main destinations, so that they can be considered contextual and realistic for potential visitors' gain. Despite promotional activities, unpopular destinations need to re-enumerate existing tourist attractions and their potentials, so that they can be developed and convey different values. The improving of facilities and conceptualizing of new themes to make tourism activities become slow-tourism need to be done carefully, so that tourists also get different satisfaction and experiences. The super-popular visiting destinations can be utilized by communities whose destination are passed by groups of millions of tourists. Destinations that are very popular in an area should be used to help lift other nearby destinations to bring more equitable economic improvement. Although the destination studied is considered as unpopular among nearby popular ones (Ngawen Temple versus Borobudur temple), it has the opportunity to gain more visitors by attaching its presence to the

other destinations. Furthermore, the results of the research and development plan will encourage the development of physical and non-physical infrastructure related to tourism to guide participation, efficiency, and community welfare. The success of developing an area is measured by the development of the welfare of each community member fairly and optimally by understanding community's and visitors' views.

## 7. Implications of the Study

The findings of this paper offer several practical implications to improve the performance of existing tourist destinations. Findings of possible strategies and issues based on field observations and helped by various studies can provide clues to stakeholders on how to use their tourism assets to improve the economy for residents. Several challenging aspects of community participation, empowerment, destination linkage, collaboration between stakeholders, and issues of preservation have positive influences on the management of a destination. The understanding that slow tourism is an example of responsible tourism development and an ideal picture of tourism in the future is reflected in this paper as well. In the end, with a simple concept that is easily understood by various parties, the less popular destination development strategies in this article can initiate more advanced ideas in different cases and locations.

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