

## Indonesian Tourist' Perceived Sacredness on Pilgrimage Journey

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### Abstract

This study explores and identifies the precise measurement of perceived sacredness of Indonesian tourist's perceived sacredness on their pilgrimage journey. Indonesia is a unique country which is having more than five major religions adopted by its population, thus we suggested they have a different perception of sacredness on spiritual destination. The methodology used in this study is using culture-based construct design to identify the items and indicators that could measure the Indonesian tourist's perceived sacredness. Thirteen items were identified, but only eight items were accepted as a valid and reliable measurement of the Indonesian tourist's perceived sacredness. Three indicators could be built from the items, they are (1) Spiritual Attractiveness, (2) Historic Spiritual Value, and (3) Spiritual Activities. The finding(s) on this research could be used for future research, especially to examining the relationship between perceived sacredness toward the Indonesian tourist's behavior.

### Keywords

Perceived Sacredness; Pilgrimage Journey; Indonesian Tourist

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### Introduction

The pilgrimage journey has been widely recognized as one of the oldest types of traveling activities by humankind. Religion and spirituality are still among the most common motivation for travel (Timothy and Olsen, 2006). These motives, drive people to travel to a destination that is considered sacred. Religiously or spiritually motivated travel could improve the development of the destination site; however, there are several considerations for the destination site management to maintain the key attractiveness and authenticity of a religious or spiritual site. Increases in spiritually motivated travel

have coincided with the growth of tourism in the modern era (Lloyd, 1998). The increasing number could improve the economic and social development for the community around the site, such as improving their income and/or introducing their culture to a wider tourist segmentation (Charoenwongsa, 2004).

Managing religious and/or spiritual site is slightly different than another tourist destination site. Timothy and Olsen (2006) describe three types of tourist visits a religious and/or spiritual site, they are (1) religiously and/or spiritually motivated, (2) educationally motivated, and (3) leisurely motivated

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Religiously and/or motivated pilgrimage journey is conducted by an individual or a group of people toward a destination site to seek religious and/or spiritual experiences based on getting involved in religious and/or spiritual activities on the destination site. The main difference between religious and spiritual motivated pilgrimage journey is that the religiously motivated people are seeking a religious experience by interacting on artifacts and/or activities conducted in the destination site. Meanwhile, the activities conducted by spiritually motivated tourist is similar to the religious one, but they did not want to be associated with any religious belief. Heelas (1998) describe that spiritually motivated people are those who seek spiritual experiences without having to hold religious beliefs. Atheists and agnostics may also have deeply spiritual experiences about nature and their self-consciousness without believing in God or any organized religious affiliation (Timothy and Olsen, 2006).

The study of Hermawan, et al. (2018) found that the sacredness of a Buddhist pilgrimage destination is an important factor that affects tourist's visit intention. The study suggested the importance of destination site management to maintain the sacredness of a religious and/or spiritual destination site. Mosques, churches, cathedrals, temples, and other religious and/or spiritual destination sites have been seen as tourism resources of a nation. Battour, et al. (2017) suggested that there is a slight competition amongst destination site marketers. These competitions lead to the commodification of destination sites. Destination site management could improve facilities and encouraging promotions to attract more tourists to visit the sites. Battour and Ismail (2016) mentioned "Halal Tourism" as one of several campaigns that could be done by the destination marketers to attract Muslim

Tourists. The study suggested that the campaign could improve the perception of the sites, as the tourist would believe that every tourism product offered on the site is "Halal" or sacred from the Muslim perspectives.

Destination sites commodification did not always bring a positive impact to the destination sites and/or the community around the site. Bremer (2006) suggested that religious and/or spiritual destination site management should pay attention to conserving the sacredness and authenticity of the site. As Timothy and Olsen (2006) suggested, there are the second and third motivated tourists who visit a religious and/or spiritual destination site. Educationally motivated tourists travel to a religious and/or spiritual destination site to study their history, including their artifacts and the culture of people around the site. The third motivated tourists travel to the site, simply to enjoy the attractions provided by the site such as artifacts or cultural activities conducted on the site. The visits of these tourists may affect the authenticity of the artifacts or disturb the religious and/or spiritual activities by the local people and the religious and/or spiritual tourists. Thus, providing clear rules and/or regulations for tourists who visit the site, could help the conservation of the sacredness and authenticity of the site.

Levi and Kocher (2012) suggested tourist's experience is an important part of the international tourism market. The study found that the perception of sacredness is highly related to the quality of tourist experience. There are positive and negative factors that could improve the perception of sacredness and the tourist experience. The positive factors include the physical characteristics of the places, the ability to observe religious activity, the sense of

history and historic preservation, and the presence of natural features. Meanwhile, the negative factors included the presence of too many tourists and tourist-related commercial activities and maintenance issues that showed signs of disrepair or created noise and other disruptions (Levi and Kocher, 2012). These findings support the suggestion from Leslie (2005) that to achieve sustainable tourists visitation on a religious and/or spiritual destination site, site management should (1) preserve the authenticity and sacredness of the site, and (2) regulate the commercial and maintenance caused by tourism activities on the destination site.

This study is the development of both findings from Levi and Kocher (2012) and Hermawan, et al. (2018). Both of those studies found the importance of perceived sacredness to attract pilgrimage travelers and build a good religious and/or spiritual experience on those travelers. Those studies' findings are also supported by the suggestion from Battour and Ismail (2016) that amongst Muslim tourists, the concept of Halal or sacredness of tourism products offered by the destination sites could improve the perception of the site's sacredness. However, the measurement of perceived sacredness in these studies was built to measure the perceived sacredness of religious tourists.

We suggested that perceived sacredness is one of the cultural-based construct variables, thus we strongly suggest researching to explore and identify the best measurement of perceived sacredness on a specific culture. Indonesia is a nation that is both unique and has a big market share in the tourism industry, especially on the spiritual destination site. Indonesia's population has adopted more than five major religions in addition to its original animism beliefs from

the old age. We predicted there has been more than one assimilation from the religious and animism beliefs in Indonesia's population that could affect their perception of sacredness toward a religious and/or spiritual destination site.

The main research objective of this study is to explore and identify the measurement of perceived sacredness on the Indonesian tourist. The results of this study provide contributions to both theoretical and managerial perspectives. From the theoretical perspectives, this study provides a better measurement for perceived sacredness if the object is Indonesian tourists. These measurement items could be used by future marketing researchers to collect data for perceived sacredness variables. Meanwhile, from the managerial perspectives, the items and indicators built to measure perceived sacredness could be used to determine which key attraction is needed to be preserved to maintain the sacredness of a religious and/or spiritual destination site.

## Literature Review

We review several articles to build a better understanding of perceived sacredness, based on major religious beliefs and several animisms belief. This review conducted based on consideration of Indonesian population belief and culture development from pre-historic to modern civilization. Indonesian has been associated with four major religious beliefs, they are Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, Christianity. Besides, some of the Indonesian original tribes such as Dayak and Asmat is still practicing animism beliefs, such as ancestor worship, totemism, and shamanism.

### ***Indonesian Hinduism's Perceived Sacredness***

Indonesian population's first contact with Hinduism was dated in the 4th century in the eastern part of Borneo Island. There is four strong theory of the Hinduism spread in Indonesia, they are (1) Vaishya Theory, (2) Kshatriya Theory, (3) Brahmana Theory, and (4) Bhumiputra Theory. The Vaishya Theory suggested that Hinduism spread because of the marriage between the Hindu Merchant and the local people. The Kshatriya Theory suggested that Hinduism is spread by the lost mercenaries of Hindustan (India) and retreated to Indonesia. The Brahmana Theory suggested that Hinduism is spread by the Brahmana (Hindu Missionaries) on a holy mission. And finally, The Bhumiputra Theory suggested that the local population of Indonesia genuinely travels to India to study Hinduism. Hinduism was the major religion on the Indonesian population in the 12th to 13th century along with Buddhism. Currently, Hinduism is adopted by 3% of the Indonesian population. Most of them could be found in Bali Island or Center Sulawesi (Celebes).

Hinduism pilgrimage journey is well known as the Tirtha Yatra (Singh, R., 2006). The journey is not suggested by any references but conducted by genuine motives to achieve serenity and/or peace of mind and soul. However, there are three common characteristics of the destination site visited by the Hindus on their pilgrimage journey, they are: (1) provides attractions and/or activities which is similar to ritual conducted by the Hindus, (2) has to access to water resources such as fountain, river, or beach, and (3) believed to be the locations which any God and/or Goddess shows their miracle in form of natural phenomenon (Singh, R., 2006). Mostly, the Tirtha Yatra destination site in Indonesia could be found in Bali

Island, however many Hinduism Kingdom's temples and *candies* are spread in different islands such as Java, Borneo, and Sumatra. These heritage sites are also considered sacred because of the artifacts, spiritual activities, and historical value of the sites.

### ***Indonesian Buddhism's Perceived Sacredness***

Indonesian population's first contact with Buddhism was dated almost at the same time with Hinduism, which is around the 4th century. However, the first Buddhism Kingdom in Indonesia is considered The Srivijaya Empire which stands from the 7th to 13th centuries. The empire is also considered as the most prosperous Buddhist empire in Indonesia, which rule all the Sumatra Island and half portion of Java Island. Recognition of the empire is very well known, especially on The Chinese Merchant as the trade agreement between The Srivijaya Empire and Chinese Trader lasted from Tang to Song Dynasty. Currently, around 3,3% of Indonesian Population is adopting Buddhism with a breakdown of 1% Buddhism and 2,3% is a combination of Taoism and Confucianism.

Buddhism is a teaching of The Buddha (Siddharta Gautama), which is well known as The Way (Hall, C.M., 2006). The Way or The Middle Way is a way between devotion to the pleasures of senses and self-mortification. The Way is considered as the steps to achieve Nirvana and The Buddha is the first human to achieve it, thus the teaching is the path to achieve it for every humankind. The pilgrimage journey of The Buddhist is a journey to seek enlightenment as The Buddha did before He reaches Nirvana. Buddhist have a strong believes that visiting places mentioned in the story of The Buddha is considered as devotion and considered those places as sacred sites, those sites are (1) Lumini in Nepal where The

Buddha was born, (2) Buddhagaya in India where The Buddha achieve the supreme enlightenment, (3) Sarnath in India where The Buddha conducted His first teaching, and (4) Kushnigar in India where The Buddha attained *parinirvana* or passed away (Hall, M.C., 2006).

Modern Buddhists believe that visiting Buddhist Temples is considered as one of the paths to learning The Middle Way (Hall, M.C., 2006). Pilgrimage Journey to Buddhist Temples is not only to learn but also participating in religious and spiritual activities hosted by The Monks of the temples. The Borobudur Temples in Indonesia is considered one of many Buddhist temples around the world that could attract visitors across nations, especially when Indonesian Buddhists celebrating Vesak Day on the site.

#### ***Indonesian Islam's Perceived Sacredness***

Islam is the third major religion that contacted the population in Indonesia, dated since the 7th century. However, the Islamic relics and artifacts found around Indonesia showed that the spread of the religion started from the 11th century, and introduced by the merchant from Gujarat, India. Following the fall of the Majapahit Empire, Islam started to become the most adopted religion by the Indonesian population until today. Islamic beliefs and cultures are considered as the major consideration of the Indonesian daily norm and/or regulations. Around 87,2% of the Indonesian population currently adopted this religion and contributed to 12,% of total Muslims all over the world.

The Muslim religious and spiritual activities are regulated based on the Holy Quran. The Quran consists of 114 *surahs*, 30 *juz*, and 6236 verses. Timothy and Iverson (2006) describe Muslims as avid travelers and Islamic doctrine encourages them to travel.

One of the fifth pillar of Islam, which is the pilgrimage (Hajj) to Mecca, Saudi Arabia is a prime example of traveling that is encouraged by the Quran. Besides, Muslims also believe that several sites are considered sacred, and visiting those sites is one form of devotion to God (Allah). Sites those are considered sacred by The Muslims are (1) Mosques or any site to pray to God (Allah), (2) Tomb of a Prophet, *Imam*, or Muslims Missionaries, and (3) site that is suggested to have an association to any Prophet religious and/or spiritual activities. In Indonesia, many heritage destinations sites are considered sacred by the Indonesian Muslims. Most of them are tombs of the *Wali* (Muslims Missionaries in Indonesia) and Mosques. The tombs of the 4th Indonesian President, Abdurrahman Wahid is also considered as sacred as the other *Wali* because of the strong Islamic characters that were shown by the President on his lifetime.

#### ***Indonesian Christianity's Perceived Sacredness***

Christianism is the last major religion that contacted the population in Indonesia and dated at the same time as the colonialism era from the European Civilizations. The religion first introduced by the Portuguese and Spanish explorers on their adventures to find new land and/or resources in the eastern part of the world. Along with the adventures, they carry three mission which is commonly known as 3G, Gold, Glory, and Gospel. Currently, Christianity (both catholic and protestant) are the second most adopted religion on the Indonesian population, with around 10% of the Indonesian populations are adopting these two beliefs.

The Christian beliefs are based on Lord Jesus's teaching, which is compiled in the Holy Bible. The pilgrimage journey of The Christians is conducted toward a destination

site that is mentioned in the Bible and/or story of Lord Jesus (Vukonic, B., 2006). These sites are such as (1) Bethlehem in Palestine where Lord Jesus was born, and (2) Jerusalem in Israel where Lord Jesus was crucified. Besides, Christian in the middle ages and renaissance era believe that the devotion to God could be shown by creating art devoted to Him, thus they left quite a lot of songs and/or music, relics, and artifacts. These artifacts are kept in a sacred Church or Christianity Temples, these places are including St. Peter's Basilica in the Vatican and Notre Dame in Paris, France.

The Christian also believes that every church is God's home, thus they are sacred, and conducting religious activities together in it is a form of devotion to get closer to God and achieve spiritual enlightenment. Indonesian Christians valued every church as a sacred place and the architecture of the church could show the glory and supremacy of God Himself.

### ***Indonesian Animism's Perceived Sacredness***

Animism is one of the oldest forms of beliefs that could be found on every people in the world (Hornborg, A. 2006). In the modern-day, it is difficult to find an individual or group of people purely adopting only animism beliefs. Most of them usually have adopted one of the major religions. However, the practice of animism beliefs still could be found in several tribes. In Indonesia, the practice of animism could be found in any region as this belief is the oldest belief they have adopted long before introduced to the major religions.

Ancestor worship is a belief that the ancestor has an important role in building the civilization of a tribe, thus give the next generation a debt to pay (Wilkinson, 2016). To pay the debt to their ancestors, the tribe

could make a tribute and/or made a ceremony dedicated to their ancestors. These activities could be found in any region in Indonesia, as its population still taking care of its elderly until they pass away before finally give them a proper burial ceremony. The people in several regions are also found to hold a very special burial ceremony, such as in Bali and Tana Toraja. The site that is used to hold the ceremony is considered sacred by these people, as it is not only a tomb but also a site to visit their late ancestors spiritually.

Both totemism and shamanism practice is hard to be found in the modern days in Indonesia. The beliefs of Muslims that the practice of totemism and shamanism is considered unholy, force the people who practice the beliefs to left and purely adopted one of the major beliefs. However, there are still several regions in which the people are found still practicing totemism and shamanism activities. Totemism is a belief that there is a spiritual relationship between humans and nature and/or natural spirit (Haekel, J., 1999). To mediate the relationship, the people who adopted this belief would build/craft an artifact in the form of a statue or totem in the shape of the natural spirit. Totemism practices could be found in Dayak and Asmat Tribes, meanwhile, the Hindus in Bali could also be considered practicing this belief as they showed great enthusiasm for crafting statues and/or totems for their religious and/or spiritual activities.

Finally, shamanism is a belief that there is an individual within a group or tribe who could mediate humankind and the intangible natural forces in nature (Singh, M., 2017). People who adopted shamanism believe that to balance human activities and natural resources, they must listen to natural forces. A shaman is a person who could listen to the

natural forces and deliver the message to humankind, and the message should be considered by the human to avoid imbalance in nature. Despite their decreasing in numbers, several regions and tribes in Indonesia still respected the shaman. Indonesian shaman mostly could be found in any natural area such as mountains, forests, and/or beaches.

## **Research Method**

### ***Research Design***

This research main objective is to explore and identify the items and indicators to measure the perceived sacredness of Indonesian tourists. To achieve the goal, we follow the cultural-based construct development suggested by Churchill (1979), thus we divided this research into four stages. The first stage is determining the research scopes and boundaries. Second, we conduct a focus group discussion (FGD) to collect information from the Indonesian tourists about factors that could affect their perception of sacredness on a destination site. Third, we examine and identify the keywords on the information collected from the FGD before finally we build a self-administered questionnaire to collect data to analyze the Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA).

The scope of this research was limited to exploring the items and indicators used to measure the perceived sacredness of a religious and/or spiritual destination site by the Indonesian tourists. To make sure the information collected in the second and third stages, we refer to perceived sacredness factors from Levi and Kocher (2012). The study suggested four factors positively affect tourists' perceived sacredness, they are (1) the physical characteristics of the places, (2) the ability to observe religious activity, (3) the sense of history and historic

preservation, and (4) the presence of natural features.

In the second stage we will conduct an FGD to collect information from experts on religious and/or spiritual tourism, which is including (1) the pilgrimage tourists, (2) religious and/or spiritual destination site management, and (3) local people who used the religious and/or spiritual site to conduct a religious and/or spiritual activities. This FGD also collects information about their point of view and concern about the sustainability of religious and/or spiritual destination sites in Indonesia. The third stage of research is information examination and identification. At this stage, we will compare each information to find any similarities of keywords mentioned in each information from all the participants. And finally, on the fourth stage, we will build the questionnaire to collect data for refining the items for measurement by conducting an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA).

### ***Participants and Samples***

The participants in this research are divided into two groups. The first one is Focus Group Discussion (FGD) participants which consist of experts on religious and/or spiritual tourism activities. These participants are one of these (1) pilgrimage tourists, (2) religious and/or spiritual destination site management, and (3) local people who used the religious and/or spiritual site to conduct religious and/or spiritual activities. Twenty invitations were sent to the chosen participant, with only 17 of them are attending the FGD activities. The second participants are pilgrimage tourists, which will be asked to fill a self-administered questionnaire. The questionnaire consists of items that are built according to the keywords found within the information given by the participants on the FGD activities. One hundred data is needed

to conduct an Exploratory Factors Analysis (EFA), thus we sent 100 questionnaires to Indonesian tourists until the requirement is met.

### ***Measurements***

Fine items and indicators to measure a variable are determined by the Exploratory Factors Analysis (EFA). EFA with the principal component method of extraction and varimax rotation is used to analyze the items found based on the information collected on Focus Group Discussion (FGD). An item with the score of Measure of Sampling Adequacy (MSA) lower than 0,5 indicates that the item is rejected and could not be used to measure the designed variable. Finally, the accepted items will be grouped to an indicator based on the similarities among the items. All this measurement is done by analyzing the collected data with the software SPSS 26.

## **Results**

### ***Focus Group Discussion***

The information collected on the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) showed that the perception of sacredness by the Indonesian tourist has several similarities with the factors that positively affect tourist's perceived sacredness found by Levi and Kocher (2012). First, Indonesian tourist appreciates the holy symbol, artifacts, and historical value of a religious and/or spiritual destination site and considered them as sacred. These perceptions are similar to the

first and third factors found by Levi and Kocher (2012). Second, Indonesian tourist strongly agrees that religious and/or spiritual activities conducted on the site by local people have a strong indication of the sacredness of the site. This perception is similar to the second factor found by Levi and Kocher (2012). Third, Indonesian tourist found the spaces in a religious and/or spiritual destination site provides serenity and peace, which give them a sense of belonging toward the site. This is a new finding which is not suited to any of the four factors found by Levi and Kocher (2012).

Fourth, Indonesian tourists strongly agree that a religious and/or spiritual destination site should provide a space where tourists could interact with each other, whether to conduct a religious and/or spiritual activities together or observing the religious and/or spiritual activities by the local people without disturbing them. These findings are supporting the second and third factors found by Levi and Kocher (2012). Finally, the Indonesian tourists also found that a religious and/or spiritual site that has natural features to be sacred as the site provides a sense of tranquility especially for meditated or just simply admiring nature itself. This finding supports the last factors found by Levi and Kocher (2012). In total, there are 13 items could be identified from the information given by the participant on FGD. All of the 13 items and their keywords are shown in Table 1.

**Table 1. Information Collected on FGD**

No.	Information Given	Number of Time Information is Given	Keywords
1.	I think the site should provide serenity and peace	5	Serenity, Peace.
2.	I think the site should provide spaces for tourists to interact with each other	5	Social spaces
3.	I think the site should create a good atmosphere to support religious and/or spiritual activities	5	The religious and/or spiritual atmosphere, religious and/or spiritual activities
4.	I think the site should have an object that could be admired by the visitors	5	Object's values
5.	I think the site should provide spaces to conduct religious and/or spiritual activities	6	Religious and/or spiritual activities
6.	I think the site should have an interesting or unique history	6	Historical values
7.	I think the site should have an artifact that is considered sacred by the visitors	7	Artifacts values
8.	I think the site should have a holy symbol that is considered sacred by the visitors	5	Symbolic values
9.	I think the site should create an emotional bond and sense of belonging on the visitors	5	Emotional relationship, sense of belonging
10.	I think the site should have architectural design and/or natural build that is considered holy by the visitors	4	Physical characteristics
11.	I think the site should be located in an environment which could improve the religious and/or spiritual experience of the visitors	4	Environmental value, religious and/or spiritual experience
12.	I think the site could make the visitors feel the tranquility of nature	4	Tranquility, natural presence
13.	I think the site should be used by the local people to conduct religious and/or spiritual activities	3	Religious activities, spiritual activities, local people

Source: Analyzed data, 2019

**Exploratory Factors Analysis**

The Exploratory Factors Analysis (EFA) was based on the items which are built according to the information given by participant on FGD activities. The 13 items were converted into a self-administered questionnaire and sent to 100 additional participants, which is Indonesian tourists in a religious and/or spiritual destination sites. The collected data is calculated with the software SPSS 26 and analyzed using EFA. First the Measure of Sampling Adequacy (MSA) shown that 9 out of 13 items were

accepted as they have MSA scores above 0,5, meanwhile the 4 others are rejected. The most interesting finding on this test is that the item number 12 which describe the tranquility provided by the presence of nature in the site is not fit as the measurement of perceived sacredness of Indonesian tourists, which against the finding on Levi and Kocher (2012) on the factors that positively affect tourist perception of sacredness on a religious and/or spiritual destination site. Each MSA score of the items tested is shown in Table 2.

**Table 2. MSA Scores**

Measurement Items	MSA Score
Item 1	0.874
Item 2	0.443*
Item 3	0.663
Item 4	0.821
Item 5	0.379*
Item 6	0.721
Item 7	0.688
Item 8	0.822
Item 9	0.482*
Item 10	0.691
Item 11	0.728
Item 12	0.283*
Item 13	0.721

*\*rejected, below 0,5*

*Source: Analyzed data, 2019*

Finally, the accepted items are examined and compared based on their characteristics by measuring their outer loading scores. The scoring was calculated by Rotated Component Matrix. The results showed that the nine accepted items could be grouped

into 4 major indicators. However, the fourth indicator could not be accepted as it only consists of one item thus the indicator and item should be eliminated. The results of the Rotated Component Matrix are shown in Table 3.

**Table 3. Rotated Component Matrix Score**

	Component			
	1	2	3	4
<b>Item 1</b>	.290	-.346	.701*	.079
<b>Item 3</b>	.795*	.021	.150	.010
<b>Item 4</b>	.014	-.003	.060	.959*
<b>Item 6</b>	.152	.701*	-.209	.465
<b>Item 7</b>	.250	.822*	-.095	.102
<b>Item 8</b>	.164	.836*	.099	-.242
<b>Item 10</b>	.795*	.278	-.174	.061
<b>Item 11</b>	-.180	.120	.878*	-.025
<b>Item 13</b>	.798*	.230	-.021	.000

*\*highest loading factors on a given component*

*Source: Analyzed data, 2019*

The results on Rotated Component Matrix showed that the first component consists of three measurement items, they are Item 3, Item 10, and Item 13. The second component also consists of three measurement items, they are Item 6, Item 7, and Item 8, meanwhile, the third component only consists of two measurement items, they are Item 1 and Item 13. Finally, the fourth component should be deleted as it

only owns one measurement item, which is Item 4. Based on the characteristics and similarity of each measurement item on a given component, we discussed with experts on religious and/or spiritual destination tourism management to name each of these components. The name of each component and their respective measurement items are shown in Table 4.

**Table 4. Component and Measurement Items**

Component	Measurement Items
<b>Spiritual Attractiveness</b>	The site provides serenity and a peaceful atmosphere.
	The site has a sacred architectural design and/or sacred natural build.
	The site has a religious and/or spiritual attraction from the locals conducting religious and spiritual activities on the site.
<b>Historic Spiritual Value</b>	The site has a unique story and/or history
	The site has a sacred artifact
<b>Spiritual Activities</b>	The site has a sacred symbol
	The site provides spaces to conduct religious and/or spiritual activities for the visitors
	The sites located in an environment that supports the religious and/or spiritual activities for the visitors

## Discussion and Implications

The results on Exploratory Factors Analysis (EFA) on the study fit the research main objective, which is exploring and identify the items and indicators to measure the perceived sacredness of a religious and/or spiritual destination site by Indonesian tourists. We found three indicators consist of eight measurement items to measure the variable. First, this result is both support and against the findings on previous research (Levi and Kocher, 2012). We found that Indonesian tourists highly appreciate the historical value of a religious and/or spiritual destination site and consider the site as

sacred if they have a unique history and/or sacred artifacts or symbols.

Second, Indonesian tourists strongly agree that the main attraction of a religious and/or spiritual destination site is its spiritual attractiveness which consists of (1) the serenity and peaceful atmosphere, (2) sacred architectural design and/or natural build, and (3) religious and spiritual activities conducted by the local people. Indonesian tourists believe destinations with those attractions should be considered sacred. Finally, Indonesian tourists also believe that a sacred site is where they could conduct a religious and/or spiritual activity with other

visitors. They agree that several areas could improve their religious and/or spiritual experience, thus destination site location is also considered as important to improve the sacredness of the site.

These results have several implications for marketing theories and practices. First, the measurement items found in this study could be used in future studies specifically on the studies of tourist behavior toward destination sites. Several studies suggested a strong relationship between sacredness and destination site image (Levi and Kocher, 2012; and Hermawan, et al., 2018). Previous studies conducted by Prayag and Ryan (2012), Zhang, et al. (2014) and Chiu, et al. (2016) found that destination image is one of the key factors affecting tourist loyalty. Those previous studies implying that we could make a new research model examine the relationship between perceived sacredness toward tourist loyalty. The measurement items for perceived sacredness built on this study have been refined to specifically measure Indonesian tourists perceived sacredness, thus could help the future researcher to collect reliable data for the variable.

Additionally, the measurement is also could be used as examining the relationship between experience quality and customer perceived value. Previous research such as Chen and Chen (2010), Jin, et al. (2015), Wu, et al. (2016), Wu and Li (2017); and Moon and Han (2019) found a good experience quality could lead a better-perceived value toward a destination site. This study found several pieces of information leading to a suggestion that perceived sacredness has a relationship with tourist experience quality. Most of the participants agree that their perception of sacredness toward a destination site is affected by their experience quality when visiting the site. We strongly suggest future research to examine the role of experience quality as the determinant factor to improve the perceived sacredness of a spiritual destination site.

These findings also suggested the important factors that need to be assessed by religious and/or spiritual destination site management to preserve the authenticity of the site they are managing. The Indonesian pilgrimage tourist's uniqueness if compared to another pilgrimage tourist, is that they highly value the opportunity to join and conducting religious and/or spiritual activities in the destination site rather than observing the activities conducted by the locals. Therefore, the management of a site should consider any rules or regulations for tourists if they want to participate in religious and/or spiritual activities on the site, as it is also important to preserve the authenticity and sacredness of the site by conducting the religious and/or spiritual activities properly without disturbing the locals or damaging the artifacts on the site.

### **Limitation and Future Research**

The research limitation is the time available to conduct the study, we highly hope we have a longer period to not only explore and identify the measurement items and indicators of perceived sacredness but also examine the role of perceived sacredness on Indonesian religious and/or spiritual tourist' behavior. Therefore, we suggested future research to examine the role of perceived sacredness on Indonesian tourist behavior by using the construct of perceived sacredness of religious and/or spiritual destination sites found in this research.

### **Notes on Contributor**

**Fatchur Rohman** is a senior lecturer in the Management Program of the University of Brawijaya. His research interest is Marketing Management, Strategic Management, and Good Governance. Currently, he is appointed as the Head of Brawijaya University's Doctoral Program on Jakarta Regional.

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