

**THE ANALYSIS OF STATEGIES IMPLEMENTED BY SURAKARTA CITY TO BE A MICE  
TOURISM DESTINATION POST COVID-19**

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**ABSTRAK**

Tourism is a mainstay sector in Indonesia, with Indonesia's considerable tourism potential, many types of tourism in Indonesia, one of which is MICE tourism. MICE itself is an abbreviation of Meeting, Incentive, Conference and exhibition, the target of this MICE is that MICE is convention tourism, for example, a group of people such as statesmen, scholars and others who intend to discuss issues related to their interests. One of the cities in Indonesia that has been designated as a MICE tourist location is Surakarta. This study will discuss the readiness of the city of Surakarta as an Indonesian MICE destination and will also discuss the impact of Covid-19 on MICE tourism in Surakarta City. In this study, it was found that Surakarta City continues to improve its infrastructure to support tourism and there is an increase in the number of tourists, especially MICE tourists. However, Covid-19 also has an impact on the tourism sector in Surakarta City, which is also felt by business people who support MICE tourism

Keywords: Tourism, Tourism Management, MICE, Covid-19

**1. INTRODUCTION**

Tourism is activities and services that related to provide a travel experience to its consumers. The activities existed in tourism industry consisting of transportation, accommodation, dining, retail stores, entertainment businesses and other hospitality services for individuals or groups traveling (Mcintosh and Goeldner, 2010). From visitors' perspective, tourism is divided into international and national tourism. International tourism consists of inbound and outbound tourism, namely the activities of visitors living outside the reference country, either as part of a domestic or outbound tourist trip and the activities of non-resident visitors within the reference country. Meanwhile, national tourism consists of domestic tourism and outbound tourism, namely the activities of visitors living within and outside the reference country, either as part of domestic or outbound tourism trips

Indonesia as an archipelagic and maritime country has very diverse tourist destinations, both ecotourism (marine, nature, and mountains), culture, history and culinary, more potential than other countries, but in reality Indonesia only ranks fourth in the number of foreign tourist visits in ASEAN. Indonesia comes after Malaysia, Thailand, and Singapore, with a total of 15,810,305 foreign tourists (ASEAN Secretary, 2019). Meanwhile, the number of tours during 2018 was 303,000,000 people (BPS, 2019). Therefore, the Ministry of Tourism as a leading sector creates several excellent programs and helps tourism promotion, including: development of supporting infrastructure, ease of access, launching of Indonesian brand visits, MICE programs, tourism incentives, and cultural displays funded by the government. MICE is a leading tourism product because it has a multiplier effect that is felt by many because of its high spending power. Various

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parties that have the potential to benefit greatly from this business are; printing, hotels, small and medium industries, travel agencies, transportation, and related professionals.

Surakarta is one of the tourist destinations in Indonesia and has been designated as a MICE city. The city of Surakarta was made MICE Indonesia because it has great business potential, stable economic growth, the number of tourists continues to increase and is successful in branding the city. With the designation as a MICE city, Surakarta is always enthusiastic about holding various national and international scale events (tourism solo, 2021).

Although MICE has become one of the promising industries, and several cities in Indonesia have become MICE destinations, Indonesia still ranks 36th in the world for international association meeting destinations, is in 11th place in the Asia-Pacific region, still below Thailand, Singapore and Malaysia. Moreover, according to the observations of researchers, the city of Surakarta has not been managed properly as a MICE city, especially from the readiness of human resources in welcoming the city of Surakarta as an Indonesian MICE city destination. In addition, the reason why researchers are interested in doing this research is because apart from the many local government efforts to make Surakarta an Indonesian MICE destination, Covid-19 has hit the world. According to Ananta 2020, the tourism sector experienced a sharp decline in Batang district. With that, researchers want to conduct research related to the implementation of the city of Surakarta as an Indonesian MICE destination and see the impact of Covid-19 on the tourism sector, especially MICE tourism in the city of Surakarta.

### **Research purposes**

The researcher intends to conduct an analysis with the aim of:

1. Analyzing the government efforts for the city in term of tourism, transportation and technology to support the city as MICE tourist destination
2. Analyzing the impact of Covid-19 on tourism sectors, especially MICE tourism

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **1. Management**

Management is a process consisting of planning, organizing, Leading, and controlling. These actions are determined to achieve goals through the use of human resources and other resources (Terry and Leslie, 2010). In addition, management is the science and art of managing the process of utilizing human resources and other resources effectively and efficiently to achieve a certain goal (Hasibuan, 2013). This understanding explains that management is a science and an art where in its implementation a manager needs to find ways to empower their resources effectively and efficiently in order to achieve company goals.

### **2. Tourist**

According to Hunziker and Kraft (2018) tourism starts with the rise of presence of foreigners coming to a country. According to the Law of the Republic of Indonesia number 10 of 2009 concerning Tourism, Article 1 Paragraph 3 states that tourism is a variety of tourism activities and is supported by various facilities and services provided by the community, businessmen, government and local governments. Meanwhile, according to Pitana in (Hanum, 2014: 49) states that the definition of tourism proposed contains several main elements, namely:

1. There is a trip by a person or group of people from one place to another.
2. There is an element of temporary residence in a place other than his/her place of residence.
3. The main purpose or movement of people is not to seek or make a living in the place to be addressed.

From the explanation above about tourism, it can be concluded that tourism is an activity that is supported by all facilities as well as tourism activities that benefit various parties, tourists or visitors, the community and the local government. However, from some of these definitions, it can be seen that tourism will provide benefits if it is managed optimally by the local community, government, private sector and tourists.

### **3. MICE Tourism Industry**

According to Lestari (2021) MICE is a service convention tour for a group of people such as statesmen, scholars and others who intend to discuss issues related to their interests. MICE is an acronym for Meeting, Incentives, Convention, and Exhibition. Senkhen (2018) further explains:

- Meeting: is a general term that indicates the unification of a number of people in one place, to carry out certain activities. Planners and other meeting professionals may use the term "meeting" booked at a hotel, convention center, or other venue for the meeting.
- Incentives: Meetings as part of a program where participants are rewarded for past performance.
- Convention: A participatory meeting designed for discussion, fact finding, problem solving and consultation.  
Conferences are smaller in scale than congresses, but prefer characters that tend to facilitate the exchange of information. While they are inherently timeless, conferences are usually of limited duration with a specific purpose.
- Exhibition: events where products and services are displayed.

### **3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The method used for this research is a qualitative research method by analyzing the results of the data obtained from the primary survey and secondary data. The data needed are related service data and also the results of observations made. The data processing method uses descriptive analysis

#### **Discussion**

The enthusiasm of the city of Surakarta as a MICE city is quite visible in several national and international scale events such as the Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Housing and Urban Development, APMCHUD (Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on housing and urban development) which involved delegates from 28 countries, then the Conference and Expo World Heritage Cities, WHC (Conference and expo of world cultural heritage cities), National Congress APEKSI, Ethnic Music Festival, SIEM (Ethnic music festival), The International Performing Art Mart (IPAM), Solo Batik Carnival and various other ways related to tourism, arts and culture.

The economic development sector in Surakarta in the last five years has stimulated business activity in this city. Supported by the development of transportation , communication networks, telecommunications, infrastructure for public facilities and improvement of public services, the development of Surakarta has become better so that Surakarta is the preferred place for business and investment in the future. Various kinds of attractions and arts and cultural festivals are held almost every month which makes this city interesting to visit. The development of MICE tourism in the city of Surakarta As explained in MICE Theory where there are four things that become the benchmark of MICE, namely (Meeting, Incentive, Convention and Exhibition).

Tourist Destination

No	Tourist destinations
1	Dalem Kalitan
2	Museum Keris
3	Museum Radya
4	Taman Sriwedari
5	Taman Banjarsari
6	Monumen Press
7	Keraton Mangkunegaran
8	Ngarsopuran
9	Keraton Solo
10	Alun-alun Solo
11	Benteng Vastenburg
12	Taman Cerdas Jebres
13	Taman Satwa Jurug
14	Taman Balekambang

The existence of tourist attractions in the city of Surakarta can be a balance for MICE tourists to hold events and get refreshment and tourist experiences in the city of Surakarta. Moreover, according to the observations of researchers, the city of Surakarta also offers many cultural events that can attract tourists such as Batik Solo Carnival; Lantern Park during Chinese New Year or at certain times there is a Sekaten event. Also, tourists can be pampered with shopping tours such as Klewer Market or Laweyan Batik Village. The city of Surakarta has also done many renovations to tourist areas such as the Klewer market, the Vastenburg bull and the Jurug Zoo.

Number of Restaurant and hotels in Surakarta

Indikator	Satuan	Kinerja					Ket.
		2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	
Jumlah Restoran	unit	119	152	158	277	277	
Jumlah Rumah Makan	unit	740	690	699	715	450	
Jumlah penginapan /hotel	unit	161	161	153	142	145	
Jumlah penginapan /hotel Bintang-5	unit	3	3	3	3	3	
Jumlah penginapan /hotel Bintang-4	unit	7	7	9	9	9	
Jumlah penginapan /hotel Bintang-3	unit	15	15	15	16	15	
Jumlah penginapan /hotel Bintang-2	unit	9	9	12	12	12	
Jumlah penginapan /hotel Bintang-1	unit	10	10	10	9	9	
Jumlah penginapan /hotel Non Bintang	unit	103	103	104	93	97	
Jumlah Home Stay	unit	14	14	7	39	66	

The table above shows that there is an increase in the number of restaurants in the city of Surakarta. With the increase in the number of restaurants in the city of Surakarta, it can be indicated that there will continue to be an increase in the culinary sector which will add facilities that can encourage the city of Surakarta as an Indonesian MICE city. Besides, the number of inns with various types of choices also seems to be increasing. Increasing the type of accommodation offered in the city of Surakarta can be an option for the types of MICE activities that will be carried out in this city. Not only that, the city of Surakarta has rebranded a jasmine-type hotel into a non-star hotel. With the available data it can be seen that the city of Surakarta continues to perform Transportation. The implementation of the city of Surakarta as an Indonesian MICE destination must be accompanied by good transportation access, according to the observations of researchers; access to the city of Surakarta is getting better. It can be seen from the improvement of the Terminal, the addition of the number of city buses and bus stops, the renewal of the train station and easier access to the airport with the design of the airport train. Not only that, with access to the Trans Java toll road, it also makes access to the city of Surakarta easier.

Not only access to enter the city of Surakarta, but transportation within the city has also progressed a lot. Such as the addition of the Batik Solo Trans (BST) fleet which is used as a means of mass transportation in the city, in the table below it can be seen that within five years, there has been an increase in the number of corridors and it can be seen in 2020 the realization of additional corridors even up to 80% of the total number of corridors.

Indikator	Satuan	Kinerja					Ket.
		2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	
Jumlah jaringan komunikasi	lokasi	11	11	11	89	89	
Website milik pemerintah daerah	web	12	39	54	54	117	
Frekuensi Penyebarluasan informasi melalui Media elektronik/Cetak	kali	46	72	72	365	182	
Persentase Perangkat Daerah Telah Memiliki Website	%	25	25	65	100	97	
Persentase Perangkat Daerah yang menyediakan layanan online	%	12,24	12,24	60	60	97	
Persentase Perangkat Daerah yang memperbarui informasi website minimal 1x per minggu	%	67,35	67,35	67,35	90	90	
Persentase Perangkat Daerah yang melaksanakan integrasi aplikasi e-governance (%) (Tujuan 16)	%	17,07	34,15	51,22	85,37	85,37	

Sumber: Dinas Komunikasi, Informatika, Statistik, dan Persandian, 2021

In the table above, we can see that the local government is trying to develop the dissemination of information and technology in the city of Surakarta. Researcher sees that a good number of communication networks will help disseminate information that will be used for the implementation of the city of Surakarta as an Indonesian MICE city. Moreover, good network communication is beneficial during the new normal post-Covid-19 recovery, where the implementation of MICE tourism is still limited. Information and technology that continues to develop will help generate Indonesian MICE tourism.

### The Impact of Covid-19 on MICE Tourism in Surakarta

The city of Surakarta is a famous tourist destination and not only to local tourists but also foreign tourists. This makes the tourism sector as a sector with good potential in the city of Surakarta. One of the industries most affected by the pandemic is the tourism industry, which includes the tourist accommodation or hospitality sector. This sector is generally dominated by large domestic and foreign-owned companies; the hotel sector has been paralyzed in recent months.

Wisata	2019		2020	
	Wisman	Wisnus	Wisman	Wisnus
<b>Obyek</b>				
1. Kraton Kasunanan	-	-	-	-
2. Mangkunegaran	7.957	32.040	902	9.310
3. Musium Radya Pustaka	616	17.467	76	5.945
4. Taman Balekambang	482	2.737.269	10	210.014
5. W.O Sriwedari	-	33.939	-	12.103
6. THR. Sriwedari	-	-	-	-
7. Museum Batik Danarhadi	1.535	11.856	243	2.893
8. Taman Satwataru	14	566.317	14	107.332
9. Museum Keris	2443	13.618	161	4.172
10. Museum Lokananta	-	1.456	-	-
<b>Event</b>				
1. Bakdan Neng Solo	-	12.647	-	-
2. Haul Habib Ali	-	122.895	-	-
<b>Jumlah</b>	<b>13.047</b>	<b>3.549.504</b>	<b>1.406</b>	<b>351.769</b>

Sumber: Dinas Pariwisata Kota Surakarta

In 2020, there were 1,406 foreign tourists, from this number; it was much lower than the number of foreign tourists in the previous year in 2019 of 13,047 visitors. Also, there was a decrease in the number of foreign tourists; in 2020 the number only reached 351,769 visitors. This number is considered very small compared to previous years. According to interviews conducted by researchers, tourism sector business people feel a lot of decline which has an impact on the community's economic decline. This condition becomes even worse because many entrepreneurs who depend on this sector must end up going out of business and choosing other businesses to make a living.

Bulan	Obyek Kunjungan			
	Hotel		Daya Tarik Wisata	
	Wisman	Wisnus	Wisman	Wisnus
Januari	134.562	1.293	139.939	831
Pebruari	134.923	1.106	147.066	352
Marret	83.340	284	28.979	168
April	57.976	26	0	0
Mei	62.972	28	0	0
Juni	72.960	39	0	0
Juli	78.640	51	6.650	4
Agustus	87.481	62	9.896	12
September	79.947	47	6.691	1
Oktober	101.374	33	5.587	3
Nopember	77.788	35	4.236	18
Desember	91.167	75	3.656	17
<b>Jumlah</b>	<b>1.063.130</b>	<b>3.079</b>	<b>352.700</b>	<b>1.406</b>

Sumber: Dinas Pariwisata Kota Surakarta

In addition, from the number of guest in hotels, the decline began to occur in March 2020 when the Covid-19 Pandemic began to be informed in Indonesia. Previously, from the data, tourism could be seen as a sector with important data for the region, especially tourists from foreign countries related to the development of tourism potential to support regional economic growth. The second potential is domestic or domestic tourists whose development can be used as an indicator of the level of community welfare. With the decline that occurred many negative impacts felt by the community such as hotels, restaurant entrepreneurs, souvenir shops and providers of transportation and travel services.

Indikator	Satuan	Kinerja					Ket.
		2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	
Persentase objek wisata memiliki sarana prasarana sesuai standar kawasan wisata	%	40	50	60	60	70	
Persentase SDM Pariwisata (guide dan pengelola wisata) yang bersertifikat	%	NA	40.2	40.2	40.2	40.2	
Jumlah Event MICE berskala regional, nasional dan internasional	event	414	938	972	1008	200	
Jumlah wisatawan Mancanegara (Tujuan 8)	orang	33.682	34.423	38.537	32.317	4.485	
Jumlah wisatawan Nusantara/Domestik (Tujuan 8)	orang	4.361.868	4.468.822	4.657.283	5.321.517	1.415.830	

Meanwhile, MICE tourism also experienced a significant decline from the previous year. In the previous year, if we look at the number of regional, national and international MICE events, which previously stood at 1008 and only 200 events could be held in 2020. This will definitely bring losses to the parties involved, such as hotels, restaurants, tourist attractions and the transportation services. The decline MICE events being held in the city of Surakarta according to interviews conducted with business people in this field, there are multitier effects from this disaster such as food orders being dismissed, event decorations being stopped and many other things choosing not to be continued. This causes related businesses, especially small businesses, to get a big enough effect, even many supporting businesses that lay off their employees or close their businesses because they are unable to bear operational costs.

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

1. The Surakarta city government has made many efforts to fulfill it as an Indonesian MICE destination city with many things being done such as improving tourist areas, increasing the number of hotels, improving public infrastructure and improving communication and information systems.
2. The Covid-19 outbreaks that occurred in almost all countries in the world, also had an effect in Indonesia. Many effects are felt from the spread of Covid-19, including in terms of tourism. Surakarta also experiences the difficulties due to the Covid-19 outbreak, especially in the tourism sector. The tourism sector experiencing an unfavorable situation from the impact of Covid-19, for MICE tourism also gets considerable pressure from the Covid-19. Events that have been arranged have had to be postponed or even stopped due to the Covid-19 outbreak. In the end, the Covid-19 outbreak also had an impact on the economic decline in the tourism sector of the city of Surakarta.

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