



## BOTTOM-UP TOURISTIFICATION IN YOGYAKARTA AFTER PANDEMIC COVID-19

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### ABSTRACT

#### Article History

**Submitted:**

10 March 2024

**Reviewed:**

16 March 2024

**Accepted:**

25 March 2024

**Published:**

15 May 2024

This research was conducted to identify the bottom-up touristification phenomenon that occurred in the city of Yogyakarta after the Covid-19 pandemic. This research is a qualitative research. Data was collected through a process of observation and secondary data survey. The analysis techniques used are spatial analysis and also qualitative descriptive. The results of this research show that the touristification phenomenon occurring in Yogyakarta can be identified through changes in function and environment both visually and non-visually as well as changes in mobility aspects. Changes in function and environment both visually can be seen from the development of spatial concentration and spread of tourists, changing the function of the area into a tourist area, and

also the increase in facilities for tourists. Changes in function and environment non-visually can be seen from the development and distribution of accommodation which increases community profits and encourages tourists to travel to places that were not originally tourist attractions. Changes in the mobility aspect can be seen from changes of roads function as part of attractions which can then encourage environmentally friendly habits in the community. In the end, this touristification phenomenon can indirectly help tourism activities to adapt after the Covid-19 pandemic. The government is expected to increase its support to ensure that this touristification phenomenon can run according to the carrying capacity and capacity of tourism in Yogyakarta city.

**Keywords:** Touristification; Tourism village; Tourism; Changes in function and environment

### INTRODUCTION

The tourism sector is able to contribute to the global economy because both can influence each other (Nizar, 2015). This contribution is not only felt by urban communities but also rural communities. In such cases, tourism provides a source of employment (Coll-Ramis et al., 2023). However, this contribution is threatened by the Covid-19 pandemic. There is no doubt that the Covid-19 pandemic has succeeded in paralyzing the business and society throughout the world. This has



caused an unprecedented economic crisis in countries around the world including in the tourism sector (Huyugüzel Kışla et al., 2023). In this case local communities around the world are struggling to survive. However, the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic is not always bad and has brought several new things to the development of the tourism sector, one of which is through technology.

In the years before the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the tourism sector grew very rapidly. This rapid growth coupled with the emergence of online accommodation platforms has given rise to a considerable increase in tourist pressure on urban destinations. This condition is known as touristification, which refers to the complex process of territorial transformation caused by tourism in certain geographic spaces (Ojeda & Kieffer, 2020). This phenomenon is also interpreted as a more specific tourism boom that can encourage urban development initiatives (Hayllar et al., 2011). There have been several previous studies that have identified this touristification in various cities in foreign countries such as Paris, Copenhagen, Donostia–San Sebastián, and Lisbon (de la Calle Vaquero et al., 2023; Estevens et al., 2023; Freytag & Bauder, 2018; Stors & Kagermeier, 2013). In several cases, touristification has been proven to increase population satisfaction and quality of life (Woo et al., 2022).

Based on several previous related studies, touristification can first be viewed from visual changes in function and environment which include the development of spatial concentration of tourist activities, the emergence of new uses of space, transformations in the use of space that create uniqueness, and increased facilities for tourists. For example, the Vesterbro area in the city of Copenhagen has developed from a pornography, prostitution and drug area into a tourist area (Stors & Kagermeier, 2013). This area develops more through word of mouth. Secondly, touristification can be viewed from non-visual changes in function and environment which include the increase and spread of private accommodation, increasing population profits (Coll-Ramis et al., 2023), and increasing environmental quality.

Third, touristification can also be viewed from the mobility aspect. This aspect can include increased pedestrian and cyclist activity, changes in the function of roads as part of attractions, and increased tourism distribution due to interconnected mobility (Freytag & Bauder, 2018; Maitland, 2008). This will certainly encourage environmentally friendly habits for residents (Davies, 2018) which is exemplified by the use of the Velib' bike-sharing system in the City of Paris (Freytag & Bauder, 2018). In the development of touristification, the role of government is very important, both in encouraging investment and opening up opportunities for cooperation, as was done in Lisbon (Estevens et al., 2023).

The touristification phenomenon also occurs in Indonesia. Apart from Bali (Picard, 2003), the phenomenon of touristification can also be seen in the Special Region of Yogyakarta (DIY) (shinta touristification) especially in urban areas. DIY has rich tourism and cultural potential starting from Yogyakarta City, Sleman Regency, Bantul Regency, Kulon Progo Regency to Gunungkidul Regency. There has been a lot of activity arising from the development of tourism in this area, starting from the emergence of tourist villages, accommodation services such as hotels and homestays, the trade sector and other tourism support services, both formal and informal, which are increasing. The development of tourist villages is also an effort to develop rural and urban tourism which has long been considered to be an

effective catalyst in socio-economic development. In this case, the development of Yogyakarta city is said to have been more influenced by the existence of an imaginary straight line from the palace to the peak of Merapi which is 2.5 km from the palace (Suryanto et al., 2015).

In their position as centers of culture and local wisdom, these tourist villages are experiencing commodification and are in the process of becoming tourist destinations for consumption by the tourism market. However, this condition has changed with the arrival of the Covid-19 pandemic since the end of 2019. The arrival of the Covid-19 pandemic also has its own implications for the touristification phenomenon in Indonesia, especially in Yogyakarta city which is known for its tourism. The most obvious implication is the drastic decline in the number of tourists which has resulted in the closure of these long-established tourist villages. The next implication is the loss of livelihood of local residents who are used to living from the tourism activities they create. This condition is also accompanied by other implications, if there is no immediate intervention, the characteristics and potential of the Special Region of Yogyakarta (DIY) will also be submerged by Covid-19. Therefore, it is important to carry out this research to see the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on changes in touristification in the context of the development of tourist villages in Yogyakarta city.

## METHOD

This research is a qualitative research. This qualitative research was used to obtain more comprehensive research results regarding the impact of touristification on the development of tourist villages in Yogyakarta city after the Covid-19 pandemic based on a combination of the results of qualitative analysis and spatial analysis. Data was collected through a process of observation and secondary data surveys. The data was then analyzed by combining descriptive qualitative with spatial analysis.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In identifying the bottom-up touristification phenomenon that occurs in Yogyakarta city, it can be viewed from changes in function and environment visually, non-visually, as well as in mobility aspects which can be explained as follows:

### Visual Changes in Function and Environment

The phenomenon of touristification in Yogyakarta city can first be seen from the development of spatial concentration of tourism activities. Currently, the spatial concentration of tourism activities in the city of Yogyakarta is not homogeneous but is spread out and increasingly visited by tourists. In this case, tourist areas in Yogyakarta are not only the Kraton, Malioboro Area, Tamansari, Vrederburg Museum, and Alun-Alun which are located on the philosophical axis that is known to tourists. Tourist areas have now developed in all directions across Yogyakarta city, such as the development of tourist village areas initiated by the community. This finding is a different picture because urban space does not only develop along

an imaginary straight line from the palace to the peak of Merapi but spreads in all directions (Suryanto et al., 2015). This finding is also different from the previous one which stated that tourist attractions have historical value indicating a greater centrality of tourism in the tourist flow network (Wen et al., 2023).

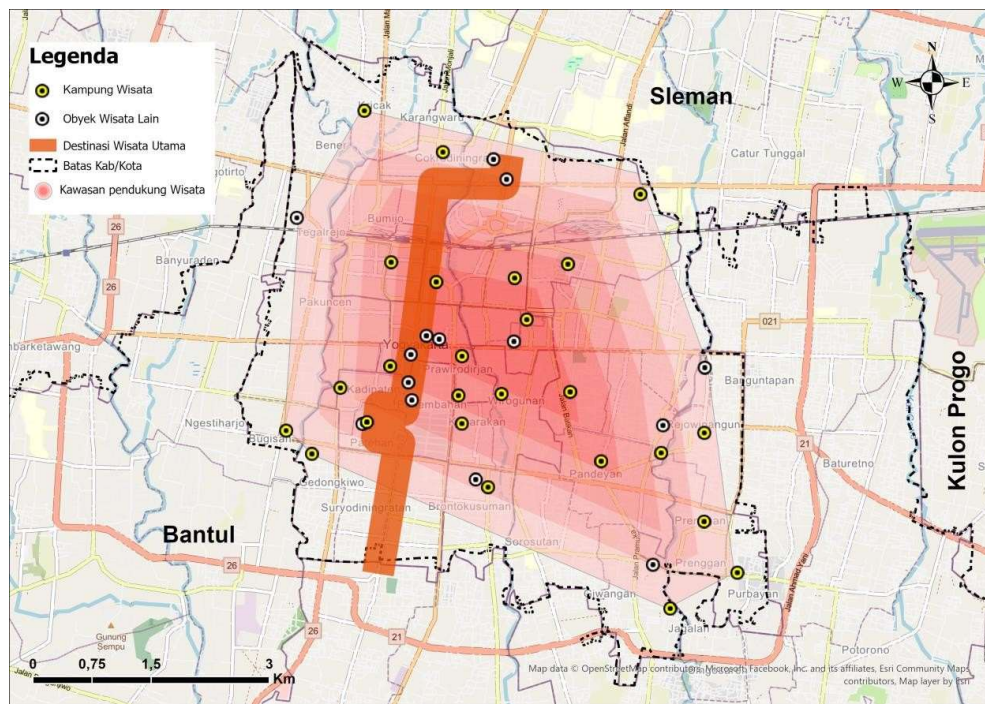


Figure 1. Central Tourist District

Since the beginning of 2023, there have been the addition of eight new tourist villages, namely Kamwis Kricak, Bener, Baciro, Sura Amerta, Suryatmajan, Bausasran, Ratmakan, and Patangpuluhan. The development of this tourist village was initially just a residential area as usual. Several tourist villages started from a group of people who work as craftsmen, artists and MSMEs. There is also a tourist village which started from a group of residents who were previously known as former pickpockets and former thugs, so it was known as the preman village. Apart from that, there are also those that originate from slum settlements bordering the river and some are former prostitution areas. This is in line with the Vesterbro area which has developed from a pornography, prostitution and drug area into a tourist area (Stors & Kagermeier, 2013). However, in order to respond to opportunities for tourism development in Yogyakarta city, people with diverse backgrounds are innovating to transform their homes into tourist areas. This condition shows the transformation of urban space which is influenced by the development of tourist activities. In the context of Yogyakarta City, this is supported by the Government through the formation of Pokdarwis and the selection of tourist villages ambassador. Furthermore, the government's role needs to be increased not only from a policy aspect but also to open the way for possible cooperation such as that carried out in Lisbon (Estevens et al., 2023).

The increasing development of tourist areas in the city of Yogyakarta has triggered an increasingly growing tourist movement. In this case, both the main area and supporting areas have a widespread number of tourists. Tourist visitors today

no longer focus on the Malioboro area and its surroundings but spread to all corners of the city. This phenomenon then made people flock to organize and decorate their residential areas to increase the attractiveness of the Tourism Village. Many visitors come to residential areas through word of mouth, as is the case in the Vesterbro area (Stors & Kagermeier, 2013). In this case, not all tourist villages have adequate social media for promotional activities, but they still have visitors. Even though currently the number of tourists has increased again with the end of the Covid-19 pandemic, strategies to increase visitors still need to be implemented. This is in line with previous research which suggests using technology in tourism activities to keep people traveling (Huyugüzel Kışla et al., 2023). The Covid-19 pandemic has taught that tourist activities that survive are those that do it on a small scale and allow activities that do not involve crowds (Jeon & Yang, 2021). In this way, touristification can indirectly help tourists become more widespread and become a solution to increase resilience to the Covid-19 pandemic.

This phenomenon also encourages the increase of facilities for tourists not only in the main tourist areas but also in supporting tourism areas. These facilities consist of a parking area, meeting hall, cafeteria, souvenir stand, culinary delights, prayer room, photo spot, wifi area, ATM, etc. Thus, we can not only find these tourist facilities in the main tourist areas in Yogyakarta, but we can also find them in tourist village areas. This tourist village can be an alternative to cafes, parks and gardens which are important places that tourists can visit because they offer the opportunity to experience the life of local residents (Freytag & Bauder, 2018; Maitland, 2008). This also shows the transformation of urban space which is not only used for residents but also tourists.

#### Non-Visual Changes in Function and Environment

The phenomenon of touristification in Yogyakarta can also be seen from non-visual changes in function and environment. This can be seen from the growth and distribution of tourist accommodation facilities, although the growth is not as much as before the Covid-19 pandemic. Based on data on the growth of hotel accommodation, in 2022 we will start to see an increase in numbers, although not as much as in 2019-2020.

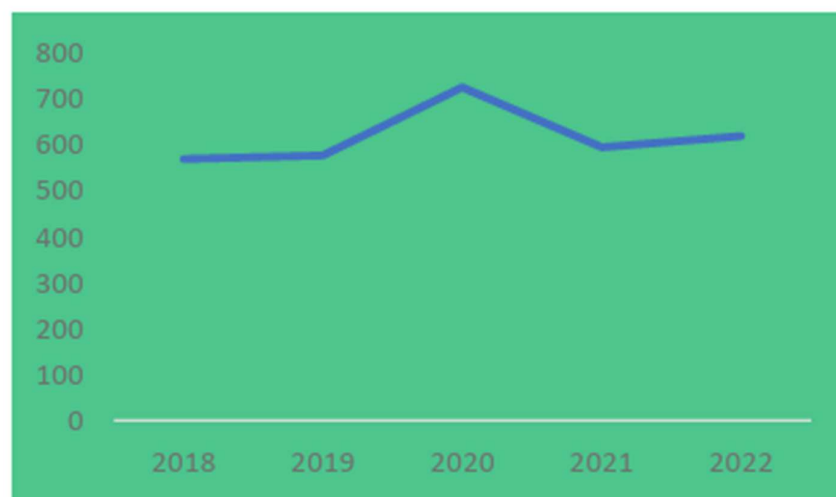


Figure 2. Increase in The Number of Accommodations

From distribution, tourist accommodation in Yogyakarta has spread in all directions. Not only accommodation in the form of hotels, but there is also a growth in private accommodation in community settlements. This accommodation can be in the form of homestays and also contemporary villas. There are also residential homes that can be used as temporary accommodation if there is tourist demand. With the development of accommodation in Yogyakarta city, this also encourages tourists to spread out more. In the past, tourists only stayed in the Malioboro Kawawasan area, now there are many accommodation options. This will also encourage tourists to tour in places that were not originally touristic (Maitland, 2008) and contribute to a wider distribution of visitors throughout the city (Freitag & Bauder, 2018). Even though the Covid-19 pandemic has had an impact on the closure of several homestays, this situation has changed as tourism activities recover. The Covid-19 pandemic has brought positive changes to the importance of homestay standardization which will improve the quality of tourism in Indonesia.

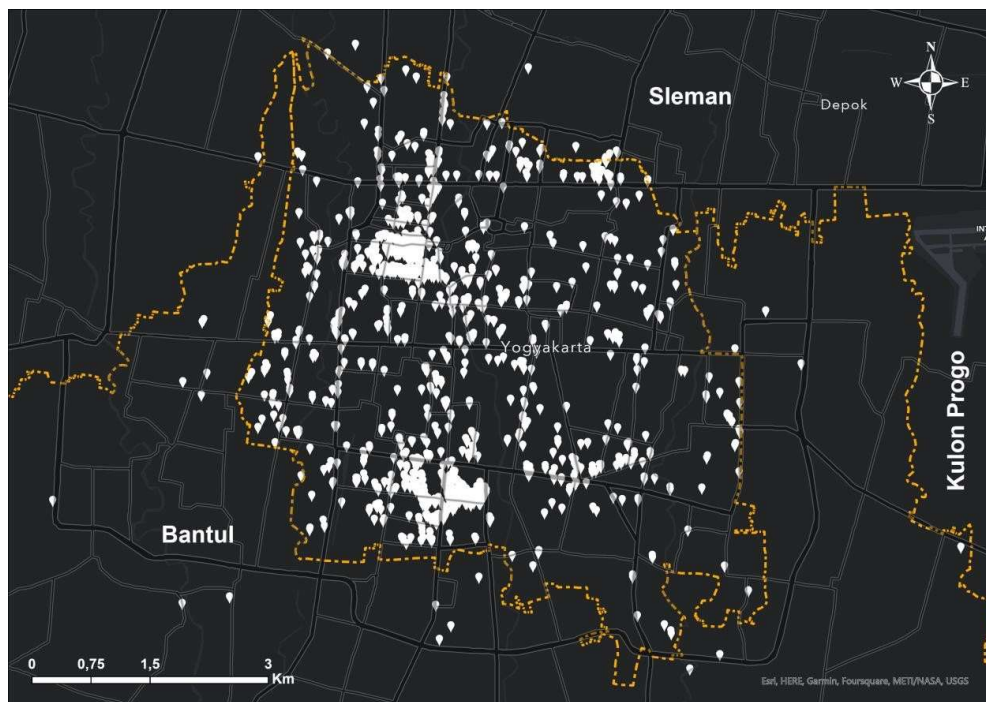


Figure 3. Distribution of Accommodation

The development of tourism and private accommodation can also have a positive impact on local communities. These positive impacts include sharing profits with local residents (Coll-Ramis et al., 2023), closer relations between tourists and local residents, activities and the atmosphere of the environment where residents live which becomes more lively. It was also stated in previous research that the further impact of touristification will increase the life satisfaction of residents which affects their overall quality of life (Woo et al., 2022). This phenomenon is certainly different from ordinary settlements that we encounter every day.

#### Changes in Function and Environment of the Mobility Aspect

The bottom-up touristification phenomenon can also be viewed from the mobility aspect. In this case, the development of tourist villages has encouraged the growth of the habit of walking and using environmentally friendly modes of

transportation such as rickshaws and bicycles. The activity of walking and using this environmentally friendly mode of transportation has even become a mandatory attraction in almost all tourist villages in Yogyakarta. This attraction is called 'blusukan' or village exploration. This attraction offers tourists a different experience because by cycling and getting around using environmentally friendly transportation, tourists can better experience the atmosphere of life in the village.

Changes in urban space due to the development of tourist activities can also be seen from residential streets which are also starting to become part of tourist attractions. In this case, residential streets that tourists pass through during tourist activities can be considered part of the tourism. This can also be seen from the signs installed on every street corner and maps of tourist areas. Of course, this is different from what we find in ordinary settlements. In this way, changes in function and environment do not only occur in residential buildings but also in residential streets. This will also encourage the creation of environmentally friendly habits for residents by minimizing the use of motorized vehicles and increasing walking activities. This is in line with previous research (Davies, 2018).



Figure 4. Roads as Attractions and Installation of Road Signs and Tourist Maps  
Resource: Field Observation, 2023

The change in the function of residential roads to become part of tourist attractions is also supported by existing infrastructure. In this case, there are bicycles provided by tourist villages independently, some are the result of collaboration with private parties. In the case of Yogyakarta City, there is a provision of a bike sharing system called Jogjabike. With the existence of a bike sharing system which makes it easier for tourist mobility in Yogyakarta, it will further encourage urban transformation. Bike sharing system offers bicycle rental

services that can be ordered and paid for via an online platform. Not only that, the bike sharing system also offers cycling tour packages which can connect more than one tourist point in more than one city/district in DIY (Jensen, 2009). This can certainly further expand the opportunities for urban transformation taking place in Yogyakarta. This is in line with the City of Paris which uses the Velib' bike-sharing system (Freytag & Bauder, 2018).



Figure 5. Jogjabike Yogyakarta

Resource: <https://www.pondoksepeda.com/2023/06/jogjabike-aplikasi-penyewaan-sepeda-di.html>

## CONCLUSIONS

Yogyakarta city is proven to have experienced a transformation process led by tourism. This transformation process occurs by bottom-up where residential areas and other small parts of urban areas develop into tourist zones initiated by the community. This transformation can be seen from changes in function and environment both visually and non-visually and can also be seen from the mobility aspect. In the visual aspect, changes in function and environment are marked by the development of spatial concentration of tourist activities, no longer centralized but spread out and increasingly visited by tourists in both main and supporting areas. In this aspect, there is also a change in the function of the space which has changed into a tourist zone that has its own uniqueness and history. Apart from that, residential streets are also starting to turn into part of tourist attractions that encourage environmentally friendly habits in the community. This area is increasingly developing, supported by active communication from the community. In the non-visual aspect, changes in function and environment are marked by the growth and distribution of tourist accommodation facilities, both by the private sector and the public, in line with the end of the Covid-19 pandemic. In this case it is also seen that residents share life and facilities with tourists. Residents also gain financial benefits and the environment in which they live becomes more lively. This can also encourage tourists to travel to places that were not originally tourist attractions. In the context of the post-covid-19 pandemic, touristification can indirectly be a solution to increase resilience to the covid-19 pandemic because it can help tourists become more spread out with the increasing number of transformations of tourist zones and the growth of tourist accommodation facilities. This is in accordance with the changing demands of tourism during the Covid-19



pandemic. Based on this research, the government still needs to increase its role in responding to the touristification phenomenon in Yogyakarta city, namely not only from a policy aspect but also cooperation in development. In this case, the government also feels it is necessary to identify the capacity and supporting capacity of Yogyakarta City for tourism as a basis for responding to this phenomenon. It is recommended that further research can examine in more depth the influence of touristification on Yogyakarta resilience city.

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**Scopus ID:** 57202449741