

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Problem

The Ampel area in Surabaya is one of Indonesia's important religious tourism destinations, combining historical, spiritual, and cultural values. It is known for the Sunan Ampel Grand Mosque, one of the oldest mosques in Java (Rohhana & Tucunan, 2019), as well as a traditional market offering culinary specialties and souvenirs reflecting Arab-Javanese cultural heritage. According to research, the Ampel area's existence is inseparable from the history of the arrival of Sunan Ampel, one of the Walisongo (Walisongo) figures who played a crucial role in the spread of Islam in Java. Since its inauguration as a religious tourism area, Ampel has had a positive impact on the development of the local community and is known for its multicultural culture, consisting of various ethnicities (Rostiana, 2021).

Religious tourism in Ampel, particularly related to the tomb of Sunan III Ampel, is a major draw for visitors seeking a spiritual experience. Sunan Ampel, as a key figure in the spread of Islam in Java, attracts pilgrims and tourists from various regions (Amsyari, 2018).

However, despite its significant tourism potential, the Ampel area is not yet fully recognized by domestic tourists outside Surabaya and its surrounding areas. Statistics show an increase in the number of visitors to the area, reflecting growing interest in Sampail religious tourism. The number of domestic tourists in Surabaya increased from 9,235,074 in 2021 to 12,613,840 in 2022. The number of foreign tourists also increased from 100,767 to 458,635 during the same period, with total visitors reaching over 13 million in 2022 (M Sholahuddin, 2023). Many domestic visitors still do not understand the full potential and uniqueness of Ampel, despite the increasing visitor trend. This is partly due to the tourism management strategy that is still carried out traditionally, making it less attractive to tourists seeking a more modern and interactive tourism experience. Furthermore, although this area has great potential to be developed as a halal tourism destination, promotional and marketing efforts are still limited in reaching tourists from outside Surabaya (Ahyak, 2019). Based on interviews and observations, it was discovered that the lack of comprehensive and engaging information about iconic sites, activities, and guides to facilitate tourists' exploration of Ampel is a major problem. Therefore, a medium capable of addressing this need, such as an illustrated travel guidebook,

is needed to support this positive trend and introduce the cultural and spiritual richness of the Ampel region to a wider audience.

The concept of "iconic" refers to elements or symbols that have special meaning and serve as representations of a particular place, culture, or identity. In the tourism industry, iconic elements can include historical buildings, local items, or distinctive cultural traditions (Firdaus & Wardhani, 2024). The Ampel religious tourism area in Surabaya has many remarkable features that can be mentioned to attract tourists. The Ampel Mosque is a center of worship and an important symbol for the area's Muslim community. The tomb of Sunan Ampel, one of the highly revered Wali Songo (nine saints), is located near the mosque, and many visitors make pilgrimages there. Tourists have the opportunity to experience the rich social life and diverse economic, religious, and cultural activities available today. Furthermore, events such as markets selling typical Arabic food and religious ceremonies enhance the area's appeal (Suprihardjo, 2016). By highlighting these iconic elements, tourist sites can attract more visitors. Furthermore, they have the opportunity to improve their health and well-being.

Currently, teenagers' interest in social media is very high. However, survey data shows that 53.8% of 107 respondents are interested in reading travel guidebooks with illustrations, and 46.2% are very interested in reading illustrated books. Based on these results, it can be concluded that illustrated books have great potential to attract audience attention, especially in terms of promoting religious tourism in Sunan Ampel, especially to teenagers aged 18-25 years. By providing an engaging and informative visual experience, illustrated books can contribute significantly to increasing the number of visitors to Sunan Ampel. Based on research on designing illustrated travel guidebooks, this medium is able to present information in an interesting and easy-to-understand manner, and is important for introducing the cultural and historical appeal of a destination to a wider audience (Santoso, 2020). Illustrations in books or other media have been proven to explain or embellish a story, writing, poetry, or other written information. It is hoped that the presence of visual elements will make the writing more easily understood by readers.

The 18-25 age group was chosen as the primary target because they are legally registered, meaning they have an Identity Card (KTP) and can travel alone without parental supervision. At this age, people usually already know how to make their own decisions, such as how to plan and travel. Furthermore, according to survey results, as a generation born in the digital era, the 18-25 age group tends to actively seek information through attractive and easily accessible visual media. This group also has a high interest in cultural and historical

exploration, in line with the phase of searching for spiritual identity that they often experience. The results of a survey conducted on young people aged 18-25 years old, which was completed by 107 respondents, 43 of whom (82.7%) showed an interest in local history and culture. Furthermore, this age group is also highly mobile and tends to frequently travel, either with friends or with family, so they need easy-to-understand guides.

Furthermore, the use of guidebooks as a medium is due to their effectiveness in conveying information. Based on survey data from 107 respondents, 99 stated that they use travel guidebooks when traveling. This indicates that guidebooks remain the primary choice for domestic tourists for obtaining clear and easy-to-understand information about the destinations they visit. Guidebooks also provide in-depth information about local culture and history, which is essential for enriching their experiences.

Illustrations in books allow tourists to better understand the location they are visiting before arriving and create positive expectations about what they will encounter. They can also enhance the visual appeal of the place, increasing the desire to visit. Illustrations can strengthen branding and convey complex messages in an easily understood way (Nabilla & Daniar, 2024). In the context of tourism in Ampel, engaging illustrations can provide a compelling picture of the architecture of the Sunan Ampel Mosque, traditional markets, and pilgrimage activities, which might be difficult to describe in words. Therefore, illustrations allow tourists to "experience" the destination visually before visiting it in person, providing a more personalized approach.

Illustrated books serve not only as promotional tools but also as visual guides for tourists. Illustrations can aid in conveying engaging and interactive information (Kharismatuzzahra & Daniar, 2024). This is particularly relevant when writing illustrated travel guidebooks, which not only provide accurate information but also offer immersive experiences through storytelling and visuals. A well-designed book can present information in an engaging and useful way (Nirmala & Daniar, 2024). In such situations, illustrated travel guidebooks can serve as an effective tool for promoting tourist destinations like Ampel, providing tourists with maps, guides, and information about attractions and activities.

Despite its immense potential as a religious tourism destination with strong historical, cultural, and spiritual values, the management and promotion of Ampel still face numerous challenges. One major issue is the lack of integrated promotions that appeal to domestic visitors. Many domestic tourists, especially those from outside Surabaya, do not yet fully

understand Ampel's uniqueness and appeal because current tourism promotion is still traditional and limited. Furthermore, available information about Ampel tourism is very limited and not presented in a format that makes it easy for tourists to understand the iconic sites and activities available there. Survey results showed that 48.1% of respondents answered that they "didn't know" or "had never seen information" about Ampel religious tourism. This indicates that there is not enough information available to attract potential tourists to the area's potential.

Therefore, it is crucial to develop more effective and creative promotional strategies to ensure greater public access to information about Ampel tourism. Presenting information in an engaging and easy-to-understand format will significantly increase tourist awareness and interest in visiting the Ampel area. The visitor experience in Ampel is suboptimal due to the lack of visualizations and practical instructions. Furthermore, the development of educational tourism, which could help promote the richness of local culture and history, remains under-recognized in the area. In efforts to attract more domestic tourists and maximize Ampel's potential as an iconic religious tourism destination, one of the biggest obstacles is the lack of effective and informative promotional media.

Therefore, an illustrated guidebook for Ampel's iconic tourist destination is needed for domestic tourists. This illustrated book will not only increase the visibility of Ampel tourism but also serve as an educational tool for tourists. This book is expected to introduce the area's culture, history, and traditions, as well as provide a visual guide to must-see places and activities. With a combination of illustrations and engaging information, this book will help tourists understand and appreciate the cultural richness of Ampel, while also supporting the development of religious tourism in Surabaya.

1.2 Identification of problems

The problems identified are as follows:

- a. Domestic tourists lack awareness and recognition of its potential. Despite Ampel's rich historical, cultural, and spiritual values, many tourists are still unaware of the area's unique charm and uniqueness.
- b. Problems related to ineffective promotion and marketing in the context of tourism development. This research highlights that despite the significant potential for tourism development in the Ampel area, promotional and marketing efforts have not been optimal in reaching tourists from outside Surabaya. This has resulted in

the Ampel area not being fully recognized by domestic tourists outside Surabaya and the surrounding area.

- c. The problem is the lack of integrated information about the tourist area. This combination of factors has resulted in the Ampel area not being fully known to domestic tourists outside of Surabaya and its surroundings, indicating a lack of integrated and engaging information about iconic sites and activities in the area.

1.3 Problem Formulation

Based on the background above, the problem formulation in this design is How to design an illustrated guide book for iconic Ampel tourism for domestic tourists aged 18-25 years?

1.4 Limitation of the Problem

The problem limitations applied are as follows:

- a. This research will be limited to the Ampel religious tourism area in Surabaya, including the Sunan Ampel Grand Mosque and the surrounding traditional markets.
- b. The illustrations created will focus on iconic elements in the Ampel area, such as the Sunan Ampel Grand Mosque, traditional markets, as well as souvenirs and typical culinary delights.
- c. This book is designed for domestic tourists, so the language, visual style, and content will be tailored to the domestic target audience.

1.5 Purpose of Planning

The research objectives are as follows:

- a. Increasing the awareness of domestic tourists, especially young people aged 18-25 years, regarding the tourism potential of Ampel, designing an illustrated book that can introduce the attractions of the Ampel religious tourism area to domestic tourists, especially those who are not yet fully familiar with the cultural, historical and spiritual potential offered by this area.
- b. Providing More Effective and Engaging Promotional Media, Creating an effective illustrated book as a promotional and marketing tool, capable of reaching tourists beyond Surabaya. The attractive and informative design is expected to expand the promotional reach of the Ampel area as an important religious tourism destination.
- c. Presenting Integrated and Easy-to-Understand Information, providing complete and integrated information about iconic places in the Ampel area, activities that can

be done, and other important elements in a visual format that is attractive and easy for tourists to understand.

1.6 Benefits of Planning Outcomes

The design of this iconic Ampel tourist guide illustration book for domestic tourists is expected to provide the following benefits:

a. For students

This illustrated book design process will help students hone their graphic design, illustration, and typography skills. Students will learn how to apply design principles to the needs of their target audience while creating engaging and informative work.

b. For universities or institutions

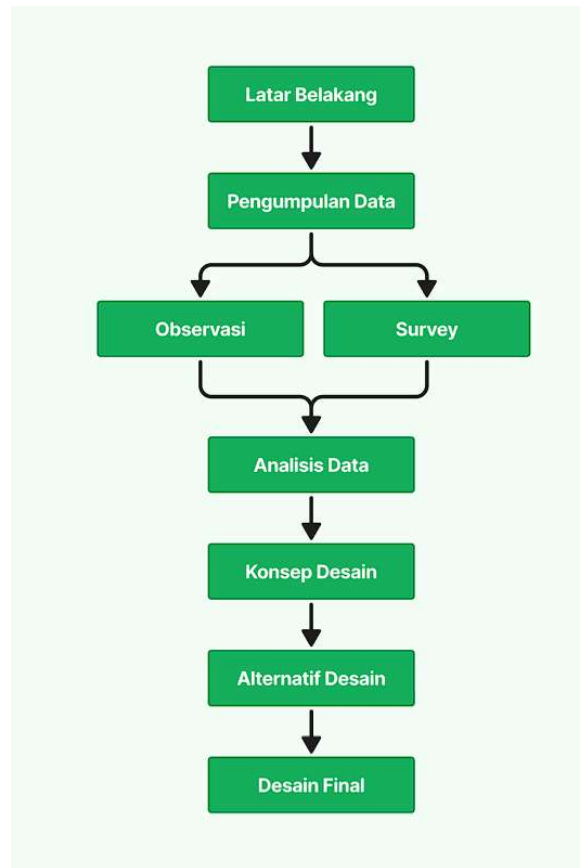
Through involvement in projects that support local tourism development, universities or agencies can enhance their reputation as institutions that contribute to community empowerment and the development of culture- and history-based tourism.

c. For the community

With the attractively designed illustrated Ampel tourist guide, local residents will benefit from the increased number of domestic tourists. The increased tourist arrivals can support the local economy, particularly for businesses such as souvenir artisans, culinary vendors, and small business owners around Ampel.

1.7 Planning Framework

The following is the research design framework:



*Picture 1. 1 Planning Framework
(Source: Personal Data)*