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Analysis of the Potential for Religious Tourism Based on Religious Rituals at Sakyawanaram Monastery, Cianjur Regency

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Abstract

The growing public interest in religious tourism indicates a shift from purely recreational activities toward spiritual experiences, cultural values, and the pursuit of inner peace. In this context, Sakyawanaram Vihara in Cianjur Regency, West Java, Indonesia, offers a distinctive religious tourism attraction through its sacred water bathing ritual, which symbolizes physical and spiritual purification and attracts visitors from diverse religious backgrounds. This study aims to analyze the potential of ritual-based religious tourism at Sakyawanaram Vihara. This study employed a qualitative research approach, with data collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Informants were selected using purposive sampling and consisted of temple administrators, religious leaders, local community members, and tourists. The analysis was guided by the 5A tourism components framework, comprising attraction, accessibility, amenities, accommodation, and ancillary services, and was further strengthened through SWOT analysis. The findings reveal that Sakyawanaram Vihara possesses substantial religious tourism potential due to its spiritual significance, distinctive architectural features, serene natural environment, and strong

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tradition of interreligious tolerance. The study concludes that the sacred water bathing ritual can serve as a strategic basis for developing religious tourism while maintaining the sacredness and authenticity of the site. The contribution of this study lies in extending the discourse on ritual-based religious tourism and offering practical implications for optimizing digital media promotion and infrastructure management without compromising the structural sacredness and cultural-religious integrity of the ritual.

Keywords: Religious Tourism; Ritual-Based Tourism; Sacred Water Purification Ritual; Sakyawanaram Vihara; SWOT Analysis

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is an archipelagic country with an extensive territorial expanse comprising 38 provinces, each characterized by distinctive administrative features and unique sectoral potential (Putri et al., 2023). This territorial division significantly influences the development of the national tourism sector (Yakub., 2019). Each province possesses a rich diversity of tourism destinations, ranging from religious tourism, nature-based tourism, and man-made attractions to tourism rooted in local cultural heritage (Wijana., 2025; Wahyuni., 2021). This diversity positions Indonesia as one of the world's most promising archipelagic nations in leveraging its spatial and cultural richness to promote sustainable regional economic development (Hasrullah., 2024)

Table 1. Tourist Arrival Data for the Top Five Provinces in Indonesia (2024)

No	Provinsi	Tourist Visit Statistics
1	Jawa Timur	204.882.768
2	Jawa Barat	180.558.894
3	Jawa Tengah	131.803.213
4	DKI Jakarta	90.447.104
5	Banten	61.875.925

Base on table 1 tourist arrival data for the top five provinces in indonesia (2024) the national tourism statistics, West Java Province ranked second nationally, recording a total of 180,558,894 tourist arrivals. This substantial number of visitors is driven by the diversification of West Java's tourism products, encompassing mountainous destinations, coastal attractions, and historically significant religious sites. The continuous growth in tourist arrivals has contributed positively to regional macroeconomic acceleration while simultaneously creating new investment opportunities in special interest tourism, particularly

religious tourism. Religious tourism has evolved beyond merely serving as a formal ritual journey; it has increasingly become a medium for cultural education and the pursuit of psychological well-being among contemporary society.

Table 2. Tourist Arrivals in Selected Regencies of West Java (2024)

No	Kabupaten atau Kota	Tourist Visit Statistics
1	Kabupaten Bogor	5.982.148
2	Kabupaten Bandung	4.013.313
3	Kabupaten Garut	1.980.426
4	Kabupaten Cianjur	1.745.634
5	Kabupaten Sukabumi	1.352.496

Base on table 2. tourist arrivals in selected regencies of west java (2024) at the regional level, Cianjur Regency plays a strategic role, recording an annual tourist arrival of 1,745,634 visitors. Cianjur is widely recognized for its clusters of mountain and coastal tourism destinations, particularly in the Puncak area and South Cianjur, including Cibodas Botanical Garden, Nusantara Flower Garden, the Gunung Padang Megalithic Site, and Citambur Waterfall. Nevertheless, the primary tourism market orientation in Cianjur continues to be dominated by nature-based and man-made recreational tourism, while the potential of religious tourism has yet to be optimally developed and systematically mapped. In fact, Cianjur is home to numerous sacred sites representing diverse religious traditions with remarkable architectural value, including Gunadharma Vihara, the Great Mosque of Cianjur, Our Lady of Mount Carmel Grotto (Gua Maria Lembah Karmel), the Sacred Tomb of Cikundul, and Sakyawanaram Vihara.

Sakyawanaram Vihara, located in the Cipendawa Valley, Pacet District, Cianjur Regency, is a Buddhist place of worship that possesses distinctive spiritual and cultural tourism potential. In addition to serving its primary function as a monastic center and a venue for Buddhist devotional practices (*Puja Bhakti*), the vihara features a unique attraction that clearly distinguishes it from other Buddhist temples in West Java: the sacred water bathing ritual. This ritual is performed periodically during particular sacred occasions, especially on Thursday night preceding Friday Kliwon, precisely at 12:00 a.m. Western Indonesian Time (WIB).

From both cultural and functional perspectives, the sacred water bathing ritual at Sakyawanaram Vihara reflects theological and anthropological similarities to the *Melukat* purification ceremony practiced within the Balinese Hindu tradition (Paramita., 2024)

Etymologically, *Melukat* derives from the term *Sulukat* (Resty., 2024)(*su* meaning "good" and *lukat* meaning "purification") and aims to remove spiritual impurities (*mala*) and non-medical illnesses affecting both the physical and spiritual dimensions through the use of consecrated holy water (*tirta*). The phenomenon observed at Sakyawanaram Vihara demonstrates that spirituality centered on sacred water possesses a universal appeal capable of transcending the boundaries of formal religious affiliation, as evidenced by the high level of participation among visitors from diverse religious backgrounds who take part in the ritual procession in pursuit of inner peace (Pitana & Narottama, 2021).

The sacred bathing facilities at Sakyawanaram Vihara are organized into separate areas based on gender, comprising a designated section for men equipped with seven water spouts and a designated section for women featuring three water spouts. Each water spout embodies profound philosophical significance, symbolizing the purification of the mind, the safeguarding of the five senses from worldly desires, and the release of negative psychological energy. As the concluding stage of the ritual, participants are required to discard the undergarments worn during the bathing ceremony as a sacred symbol of relinquishing a troubled past and embracing a renewed life characterized by spiritual purity.

Based on these tourism potentials and dynamics, this study aims to analyze the destination readiness of Sakyawanaram Vihara through the application of the 5A destination components framework and to formulate strategies for the sustainable development of religious tourism while preserving the intrinsic sacredness and authenticity of the religious rituals practiced within the vihara.

METHODS

This study employed a qualitative research approach to explore the development potential of Vihara Sakyawanaram as a religious and spiritual tourism destination in Cianjur Regency, Indonesia. A qualitative approach (Dana, 2020) was considered the most appropriate because the research sought to obtain an in-depth understanding of the destination's tourism characteristics, religious values, cultural significance, and strategic development potential from the perspectives of multiple stakeholders. Rather than emphasizing numerical measurement or statistical testing, the study focused on interpreting social phenomena, cultural practices, and destination management through comprehensive field observations and contextual analysis. The qualitative approach also enabled the

researchers to capture the symbolic meanings embedded in the holy water purification ritual, the implementation of religious tourism activities, and the interaction between spiritual values and tourism development within the monastery environment. Consequently, this approach facilitated a holistic understanding of the opportunities and challenges associated with developing Vihara Sakyawanaram as a sustainable religious tourism destination while preserving its sacred values and cultural authenticity.

This research adopted a descriptive qualitative case study design, with Vihara Sakyawanaram serving as the primary case for investigation. The case study design was selected because it allows an intensive and comprehensive examination of a particular phenomenon within its real-life context. The study focused on analyzing the tourism potential of the monastery by applying the 5A tourism destination framework—comprising Attraction, Accessibility, Amenities, Accommodation, and Ancillary Services—as the principal analytical framework. In addition, the study employed SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis to formulate strategic recommendations for destination development. Through the integration of these analytical frameworks, the research was able to evaluate both the internal characteristics and the external environmental conditions influencing the competitiveness and sustainability of the destination. The descriptive nature of the research enabled the systematic presentation of empirical findings concerning the monastery's religious attractions, supporting infrastructure, institutional management, accessibility, accommodation facilities, and strategic development prospects within the broader context of spiritual tourism.

The participants in this study consisted of individuals who possessed direct knowledge and practical experience related to the management, operation, and utilization of Vihara Sakyawanaram as a religious tourism destination. They included the monastery's management board, religious leaders, local community representatives, visitors participating in religious and spiritual activities, and tourism stakeholders with relevant expertise regarding destination development. Because the research aimed to obtain rich and context-specific information rather than statistically representative data, a non-probability purposive sampling technique was employed. Participants were deliberately selected based on predetermined criteria, including their involvement in religious activities, destination management, tourism services, or familiarity with the historical and cultural significance of the monastery. This sampling strategy enabled the researchers to obtain comprehensive insights from individuals who were considered capable of providing credible and relevant

information regarding the destination's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and development challenges. The inclusion of multiple stakeholder groups also facilitated data triangulation, thereby enhancing the credibility and trustworthiness of the research findings.

Data were collected using multiple qualitative data collection techniques to ensure the comprehensiveness and validity of the research findings. The primary instrument of the study was the researcher, who functioned as the principal observer, interviewer, and interpreter throughout the research process. Primary data were obtained through direct field observations, semi-structured interviews, and documentation studies. Field observations were conducted to examine the physical condition of the monastery, the implementation of the holy water purification ritual, tourism facilities, visitor activities, accessibility, environmental conditions, and supporting infrastructure. Semi-structured interviews were carried out with monastery administrators, religious leaders, local community members, visitors, and other relevant stakeholders to explore their perceptions regarding the development potential, management practices, tourism experiences, and challenges associated with Vihara Sakyawanaram. Documentation techniques were utilized to collect complementary information from institutional records, photographs, tourism promotional materials, government documents, previous research, and other relevant archival sources. The combination of observation, interviews, and documentation enabled the researchers to compare information obtained from different sources and strengthened the reliability of the findings through methodological triangulation.

The collected data were analyzed using the interactive qualitative data analysis model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, consisting of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification. During the data condensation stage, information obtained from observations, interviews, and documentation was organized, categorized, and simplified according to the research objectives and analytical framework. Subsequently, the organized data were systematically presented through descriptive narratives, thematic categorization, and the 5A tourism destination framework to facilitate interpretation of the destination's characteristics and tourism potential. The analysis was further complemented by the application of SWOT analysis, which systematically evaluated the destination's internal strengths and weaknesses alongside external opportunities and threats. Based on the SWOT matrix, strategic development alternatives were formulated using SO (Strength–Opportunity), WO (Weakness–Opportunity), ST (Strength–Threat), and WT (Weakness–Threat) strategies to support the sustainable development of Vihara Sakyawanaram as a

religious and spiritual tourism destination. Throughout the analytical process, the researchers continuously compared findings from multiple data sources to ensure consistency, credibility, and the validity of interpretations. This comprehensive analytical approach enabled the study to generate strategic recommendations that not only reflected the current conditions of the destination but also provided practical guidance for preserving its religious authenticity while enhancing its competitiveness within the regional spiritual tourism sector.

RESULTS

1. Attraction

The primary attraction that distinguishes Vihara Sakyawanaram is its holy water purification ritual, which is widely believed to possess psychological healing properties and the ability to cleanse negative energy. The ritual is highly flexible due to its inclusive nature, allowing participation by both Buddhist and non-Buddhist visitors.

Beyond the uniqueness of the holy water ritual, the monastery's theological distinctiveness lies in its integration of local cultural syncretism, as reflected in the presence of dedicated altars honoring prominent Indonesian spiritual figures, including the Prabu Siliwangi Altar, Eyang Suryakencana Altar, and Patih Gajah Mada Altar. Furthermore, the harmonious integration of sacred architectural elements with the surrounding hilly natural landscape creates an authentic and distinctive spiritual tourism attraction that enhances the destination's overall appeal.

2. Accessibility

The road infrastructure leading to Vihara Sakyawanaram is generally in good condition, with well-maintained asphalt pavement that allows convenient access for motorcycles and small private vehicles. However, a significant structural limitation exists due to the narrow width of the access road, which prevents large tourist buses and other mass transportation vehicles from reaching the monastery directly. Consequently, visitors traveling in large groups are required to park their vehicles along the main roadside parking area and continue their journey using smaller local transportation services, such as public minivans (*angkot*) or motorcycle taxis (*ojek*). Another notable limitation is the limited availability of regular public transportation routes serving the destination, which reduces accessibility for visitors who rely on public transit.

3. Amenities

The availability of basic tourism amenities within the monastery complex is considered adequate and well maintained, with a consistently high standard of cleanliness. Supporting facilities include an internal parking area, clean public restroom facilities, a dedicated prayer hall (*Puja Bhakti*), a columbarium, local food stalls offering a variety of culinary options for visitors, and souvenir kiosks featuring locally produced handicrafts. Nevertheless, the absence of interpretive facilities, such as educational information boards and historical tour guides, remains an important aspect that should be addressed by the monastery's management to enhance visitors' educational and cultural experiences.

4. Accommodation

Accommodation facilities surrounding the Pacet and Cipanas areas are highly developed due to their strategic location within the renowned Puncak tourism corridor. Visitors can easily access a wide range of lodging options, including homestays, family villas, and star-rated hotels offering competitive pricing across different market segments.

The availability of nearby accommodation provides additional convenience for religious tourists intending to participate in the midnight holy water purification ritual (00:00 WIB), allowing them to complete the spiritual activities without concerns regarding immediate transportation back to their place of residence.

5. Ancillary Services

The operational and institutional management of Vihara Sakyawanaram is administered through a well-established organizational structure under the supervision of the Buddhist Association Management Board. All routine religious activities, major Buddhist celebrations, including Vesak and Kathina, as well as the management and coordination of the holy water purification ritual, are systematically organized according to established operational procedures.

The monastery's role as a center for interfaith harmony has received positive recognition and formal support from the Cianjur Regency Government. However, despite its strong institutional governance, the organization has not yet established a dedicated division responsible for integrated tourism marketing management. As a result, destination promotion continues to rely primarily on organic word-of-mouth communication and

personal visitor-generated content shared through social media platforms, rather than through a structured and professionally managed destination marketing strategy.

The Existence of the Holy Water Purification Ritual as a Spiritual Tourism Attraction

The holy water purification ritual at Vihara Sakyawanaram represents the evolving trend of contemporary tourism motivation, shifting from conventional recreational activities toward spiritual and healing tourism. Within this ritual, water is conceptualized as a universal medium of catharsis, serving to cleanse psychological burdens, alleviate anxiety, and transform negative mental energy into a renewed state of well-being. According to the prescribed ritual procedure, participants are required to complete seven consecutive purification cycles by passing through a designated sequence of holy water fountains. From an anthropological perspective, the practice of discarding one's undergarments after completing the ritual symbolizes a profound spiritual transformation, representing the release of past sins and the adoption of a renewed and purified existential identity. The distinctive and sacred execution of this spiritual practice constitutes the monastery's principal tourism asset, providing a unique value proposition that differentiates Vihara Sakyawanaram within the increasingly competitive landscape of regional religious and spiritual tourism.

SWOT Analysis and Strategic Development Matrix

The formulation of development strategies for religious tourism at Vihara Sakyawanaram was based on the results of a comprehensive assessment of internal and external factors using the SWOT analytical framework, as outlined below.

Table 3. SWOT Matrix for the Development Strategy of Vihara Sakyawanaram

Internal / External Factors	Strengths (S) • Unique Holy Water Purification Ritual • Refreshing Mountain Climate • Strong Values of Religious Tolerance	Weaknesses (W) Narrow Access Road (Inaccessible to Tourist Buses) • Organic Marketing Has Not Yet Been Optimized • Limited Visitor Information Facilities
Opportunities (O) • Growing Global Trend in Healing Tourism • Expansion of Digital Promotion • Integration into	SO Strategies 1. Package meditation programs and the holy water purification ritual as premium spiritual education tourism experiences. 2. Establish partnerships with the Regional Tourism Office to conduct	WO Strategies 1. Develop official digital platforms (website and social media) as the primary source of information regarding the ritual and destination. 2. Install multilingual educational

Regional Tourism Packages	joint promotional campaigns at the national level.	interpretation boards throughout the monastery complex.
Threats (T) • Risk of Excessive Commercialization • Environmental Degradation and Cleanliness Issues • Disruption of the Solemnity of Religious Worship	ST Strategies 1. Establish dress code regulations and limit the number of participants for each ritual session. 2. Reinforce the monastery's spiritual identity to prevent misleading commercial narratives and misconceptions surrounding the ritual.	WT Strategies 1. Develop a clear spatial zoning system separating sacred worship areas from public visitor zones. 2. Optimize the local shuttle transportation system to reduce traffic congestion around the destination.

Base on table 3. swot matrix for the development strategy of vihara sakyawanaram, Strengths (S): The destination possesses several competitive advantages, including its unique interfaith holy water purification ritual, the refreshing mountainous climate, the historical legacy of Ashin Jinarakkhita as a pioneer of modern Indonesian Buddhism, and a high level of social harmony that has earned the area the designation of the "Valley of Tolerance."

Weaknesses (W): The primary limitations include restricted road width that prevents access by large-capacity tourist buses, the absence of an information and historical interpretation center, and the lack of a comprehensive tourism zoning blueprint to guide sustainable destination management.

Opportunities (O): Significant opportunities arise from the rapid growth of the global niche market for healing tourism and meditation, the increasing utilization of multimedia-based digital promotional platforms, and the potential integration of Vihara Sakyawanaram into regional nature-based tourism packages within the Puncak–Cianjur tourism corridor.

Threats (T): Potential threats include the risk of excessive commercialization that may diminish the sacredness of the ritual, environmental degradation resulting from tourist-generated waste, and scheduling conflicts in which a substantial increase in visitor numbers could disrupt the solemnity and spiritual atmosphere of the monastery's principal Puja Bhakti worship activities.

DISCUSSION

The findings demonstrate that Sakyawanaram Monastery possesses substantial potential to be developed as a sustainable religious tourism destination (Mardani, 2024; Maharani et al., 2023) primarily due to the uniqueness of its sacred water purification ritual, which functions not only as a religious practice but also as a spiritual attraction appealing to

visitors from diverse religious backgrounds. The analysis based on the 5A tourism destination framework reveals that the destination exhibits strong performance in terms of attraction, amenities, accommodation, and institutional management, while accessibility remains the principal aspect requiring further improvement (Supardi et al., 2022; Cahyanti et al., 2025). The sacred water ritual represents the core attraction because it provides visitors with an opportunity to experience psychological purification, spiritual reflection, and inner healing, thereby distinguishing the monastery from other Buddhist temples in West Java.

The attraction is further strengthened by the historical significance of the monastery, its distinctive Buddhist architecture, and its location within the peaceful mountainous landscape of Cipendawa Valley (Wiguna et al., 2024). These physical and cultural characteristics create an authentic spiritual atmosphere that enhances visitors' religious experiences. Moreover, the existence of altars dedicated to important historical and cultural figures, including Prabu Siliwangi, Eyang Suryakencana, and Patih Gajah Mada, illustrates a form of cultural syncretism that enriches the site's spiritual identity and broadens its cultural appeal beyond conventional Buddhist pilgrimage.

From the perspective of destination readiness, the availability of supporting facilities, including parking areas, clean public toilets, worship spaces, local food stalls, souvenir shops, and nearby accommodations, indicates that the destination has reached an adequate level of operational preparedness for tourism activities. However, the study also identifies several structural limitations, particularly the narrow access roads that prevent large tourist buses from directly reaching the monastery, the limited availability of public transportation, and the absence of comprehensive interpretive facilities that could improve visitors' understanding of the historical and philosophical significance of the sacred ritual. These limitations suggest that while the destination possesses considerable tourism potential, its long-term competitiveness depends upon strategic infrastructure improvements and more systematic destination management.

The SWOT analysis further confirms that the monastery's strengths considerably outweigh its weaknesses. The growing international demand for spiritual tourism, wellness tourism, and healing experiences provides a significant opportunity for destination development. Nevertheless, the increasing commercialization of religious tourism also introduces potential threats, particularly the risk of diminishing the sacredness of religious rituals if tourism activities are not carefully regulated. Consequently, destination development

should prioritize maintaining the balance between tourism promotion and the preservation of religious authenticity.

The findings strongly support the theoretical framework of the 5A tourism destination model proposed by Sunaryo & Sugiama, which emphasizes that destination competitiveness depends upon the integration of attraction, accessibility, amenities, accommodation, and ancillary services. In the case of Sakyawanaram Monastery, attraction emerges as the strongest component because the sacred water purification ritual constitutes a unique religious experience that cannot easily be replicated by competing destinations. Nevertheless, the relatively weaker accessibility component confirms the theoretical argument that deficiencies in transportation infrastructure may limit tourism development regardless of the uniqueness of the attraction itself.

The findings also correspond with previous studies on spiritual tourism conducted by Maharani and colleagues (2023), Wiguna and colleagues (2024), and Ekasani and colleagues (2024), which argue that sacred water rituals increasingly function not only as religious ceremonies but also as experiential tourism products that facilitate psychological restoration, emotional well-being, and spiritual transformation. Similar to the Melukat purification ritual practiced in Bali, the sacred water ritual at Sakyawanaram Monastery symbolizes the cleansing of both physical and spiritual impurities while providing participants with opportunities for personal reflection and emotional renewal. This similarity suggests that water-based purification rituals possess universal symbolic values that transcend specific religious traditions.

Furthermore, the present findings reinforce the argument proposed by Mardani (2024) that religious tourism should be viewed as an integral component of sustainable tourism development because it simultaneously preserves cultural heritage, strengthens community identity, and contributes to local economic development. The high level of interfaith participation observed at Sakyawanaram Monastery also supports previous research highlighting that contemporary religious tourism increasingly emphasizes inclusiveness, intercultural dialogue, and social harmony rather than exclusive religious participation (Febrianti & S., 2024)

However, the findings simultaneously resonate with the concerns expressed by Wardani (2025), who argues that excessive commercialization may gradually transform sacred rituals into tourism commodities, thereby reducing their religious authenticity and

spiritual meaning. This issue is particularly relevant for Sakyawanaram Monastery because the increasing popularity of its sacred water ritual may generate economic opportunities while simultaneously creating challenges in maintaining ritual sanctity. Therefore, tourism development should be accompanied by clear institutional regulations that prioritize religious values over commercial interests.

This study provides several theoretical and practical contributions to the literature on religious tourism and destination management. Theoretically, it enriches the application of the 5A destination framework within the context of Buddhist religious tourism, demonstrating that destination attractiveness is influenced not only by physical infrastructure but also by the symbolic, spiritual, and cultural meanings embedded within religious rituals. The integration of SWOT analysis further illustrates how destination planning can systematically identify strategic priorities while maintaining the balance between tourism development and heritage conservation.

Practically, the findings offer valuable recommendations for monastery administrators, tourism authorities, and local governments. Destination managers should establish a dedicated tourism management unit responsible for visitor regulation, digital promotion, educational interpretation, and preservation of ritual authenticity. The development of multilingual interpretive signage explaining the historical significance of Ashin Jinarakkhita and the philosophical meaning of the sacred water ritual would enhance visitors' understanding while reducing misconceptions regarding the ritual's purpose.

At the governmental level, stronger institutional collaboration is necessary to improve transportation infrastructure, establish integrated shuttle services, provide designated parking facilities for tourist buses, and incorporate Sakyawanaram Monastery into regional religious tourism development programs. Digital marketing strategies should also be strengthened through official websites and social media platforms to increase destination visibility while ensuring that promotional activities accurately represent the monastery's spiritual identity. Ultimately, sustainable destination development should prioritize cultural preservation and religious integrity alongside economic benefits to ensure the long-term sustainability of religious tourism.

Despite providing valuable insights into the religious tourism potential of Sakyawanaram Monastery, this study has several limitations. First, the research employed a qualitative approach with purposively selected informants, limiting the generalizability of the

findings to broader populations or other religious tourism destinations. Future studies may adopt quantitative or mixed-method approaches involving larger samples of visitors to statistically examine factors influencing visitor satisfaction, destination loyalty, and revisit intention.

Second, the present study primarily focuses on destination readiness through the 5A framework and SWOT analysis without quantitatively assessing the economic contributions of religious tourism to surrounding communities. Future research should investigate the multiplier effects of religious tourism on local employment, small business development, household income, and regional economic growth.

Third, this study does not comprehensively evaluate the psychological outcomes experienced by visitors after participating in the sacred water purification ritual. Considering that spiritual healing constitutes one of the principal motivations for visitation, future research could employ psychometric instruments to measure spiritual well-being, emotional restoration, perceived life satisfaction, and psychological resilience before and after participation in the ritual.

Finally, comparative studies involving multiple religious tourism destinations across Indonesia would contribute to a broader understanding of how different religious traditions transform sacred rituals into sustainable tourism products while maintaining their cultural authenticity. Such comparative investigations would further enrich the theoretical development of religious tourism studies and provide evidence-based recommendations for sustainable destination management within multicultural societies.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that Vihara Sakyawanaram possesses significant potential to be developed as a sustainable religious and spiritual tourism destination through the optimization of its unique cultural, religious, and environmental resources. Based on the analysis using the 5A destination framework, the monastery demonstrates considerable strengths in terms of attraction, amenities, accommodation, and institutional support. Its most distinctive attraction, the holy water purification ritual, serves not only as a religious practice but also as a spiritual healing experience that attracts visitors from diverse religious backgrounds. The inclusive nature of the ritual, combined with the monastery's harmonious integration of sacred architecture and mountainous landscapes, enhances its authenticity and

strengthens its competitiveness within the regional spiritual tourism market. Nevertheless, several challenges remain, including limited transportation accessibility, inadequate visitor interpretation facilities, and the absence of an integrated tourism marketing strategy. The SWOT analysis further indicates that while growing global interest in healing tourism and digital promotion presents valuable development opportunities, sustainable management is required to minimize the risks of excessive commercialization, environmental degradation, and disruption to the solemnity of religious worship. Consequently, the implementation of integrated development strategies involving infrastructure improvement, destination management, environmental conservation, and digital promotion is essential to ensure the long-term sustainability of Vihara Sakyawanaram as a religious tourism destination.

This research contributes to the growing body of knowledge on religious and spiritual tourism by providing a comprehensive analysis of destination development through the integration of the 5A tourism destination framework and SWOT strategic analysis. The findings demonstrate that sacred religious practices can simultaneously function as authentic tourism attractions while preserving their spiritual values and cultural significance. Furthermore, the study expands the literature on spiritual tourism by illustrating how religious rituals, local cultural heritage, and interfaith inclusivity collectively create distinctive destination competitiveness. The research also offers practical insights for destination managers, tourism practitioners, and local governments by emphasizing the importance of balancing tourism development with the preservation of religious authenticity, cultural heritage, and environmental sustainability. Accordingly, this study reinforces the relevance of sustainable tourism management approaches in enhancing the competitiveness of religious tourism destinations without compromising their sacred character.

For future research, since this study focused exclusively on Vihara Sakyawanaram as a single case study, future investigations are encouraged to conduct comparative analyses involving multiple religious tourism destinations with different cultural, historical, and managerial characteristics to enhance the generalizability of the findings. Future studies should also incorporate quantitative approaches to examine the relationships between destination attributes, visitor satisfaction, perceived authenticity, revisit intention, and destination loyalty using more advanced statistical techniques. In addition, further research should explore the influence of digital tourism marketing, community participation, environmental management, destination governance, and sustainable tourism policies on the long-term development of religious tourism destinations. Such studies would provide a more

comprehensive understanding of sustainable destination management strategies while supporting the preservation of cultural authenticity and spiritual integrity in an increasingly competitive tourism industry.

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