



## The Effect of Individual Religiosity on Visits to Religious Tourism

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### ABSTRACT

This research aims to determine the influence of religiosity, the attractiveness of religious tourism and the quality of sharia tourism bureau services on tourists' decisions to visit the Gedhe Kauman Mosque, Yogyakarta. This research uses a quantitative type of research, using primary data. The sampling technique was purposive sampling with 200 respondents as the research sample. Data were analyzed using SmartPLS 3.0. The research results show that the religiosity variable does not have a significant effect on tourists' decisions to visit the Gedhe Kauman Mosque in Yogyakarta, while the variables of religious tourism attraction and the quality of sharia tourism bureau services have a positive and significant effect on tourists' decisions to visit the Gedhe Kauman Mosque in Yogyakarta.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Religious tourism is a type of tourism product that is closely related to the religious side of humanity. Religious tourism is defined as tourist activities to places that have special meaning for religious people, usually several places of worship that have advantages (Chotib, 2015). For example, these advantages can be seen from a historical perspective, the existence of myths and legends about the place, or the uniqueness and superiority of the architecture of the building. This religious tourism is often connected with the intentions and goals of tourists to obtain blessings, *ibrah*, *tausiah* and wisdom in their lives. But it is not uncommon for certain purposes such as to gain blessing, inner strength, steadfastness of faith and even abundant wealth. This makes the attractiveness factor for religious tourism develop and increase (Ryan & McKenzie, 2003).

Yogyakarta's Gede Kauman Mosque is one of the historical sites that has high tourist attraction in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. As an important place of worship for Muslims, this mosque also attracts local and foreign tourists who are interested in the religiosity and architectural beauty of the mosque. However, in attracting tourists, factors such as individual religiosity, tourist attraction, and the quality of tourist service agencies also play an important role.

Individual religiosity is a person's level of involvement and commitment to religious practices and spiritual beliefs (Kuo et al., 2018). For some people, visits to holy places such as the Gede Kauman Mosque can provide peace, togetherness with fellow Muslims, and a deep spiritual experience. Tourists who show religious motivation have a greater tendency to undertake pilgrimages or visits to religious places (Buzinde et al., 2014; Wang et al., 2016; Kim & Kim, 2020). Therefore, individual religiosity can influence tourists' decisions to visit this mosque.

Apart from that, tourist attraction is also an important factor in tourists' decisions to visit a place. The Gede Kauman Mosque has unique, charming traditional Javanese architecture, with beautiful carved details and a long history related to the development of Islam in Yogyakarta. This beauty and historical value can be a strong attraction for tourists who are interested in culture and historical heritage.

Religious tourism has been a recurring phenomenon within the history of religions and refers to the forms of tourism that have religious associations (Rinschede, 1992). Relevant religious tourism studies have investigated topics in diverse destinations, such as devotional sites (Abbate & Di Nuovo, 2013; Ryan & McKenzie, 2003; Shuo et al., 2009), religious tourist attractions (Bond et al., 2015; Hughes et al., 2013; Gutic et al., 2010).

Not only that, the quality of the tourist service bureau also plays a key role in influencing tourists' decisions. Travelers often rely on travel agents to provide accurate information, efficient arrangements, and a pleasant experience during their visit (Kuo et al., 2018). If the tourist service bureau operating around the Gede Kauman Mosque is able to provide good service, such as competent guides, comfortable transportation, and recommendations for quality places to eat or stay, this can increase tourists' desire to visit the mosque.

In this context, it is important to understand the influence of individual religiosity, tourist attraction, and the quality of tourist service bureaus on tourists' decisions to visit the Gede Kauman Mosque, Yogyakarta. With a better understanding of these factors, relevant parties, such as governments, mosque managers, and travel agencies, can take appropriate steps to improve the tourist experience and promote sustainable tourism in the area.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

Research by Arta & Fikriyah (2021) states that religiosity has a negative and insignificant effect on interest in visiting the city of Malang Raya. Meanwhile, research by Adif et al (2024) states that the religiosity variable has a positive and significant effect on tourists' decisions to visit halal tourism in Surau Tuo Taram, Payakumbuh, West Sumatra.

Due to these differences, further research is needed to help clarify the relationship between religiosity and the decision to visit religious tourism by addressing several of the factors mentioned previously, such as clear definitions, accurate measurements, and controlling other relevant variables.

Tourist attraction is also an important factor that can influence the decision to visit religious tourism (Andira et al., 2023). Tourist attractions cover various aspects, such as natural beauty, cultural heritage, unique places, cultural events, and spiritual experiences. How tourist attractions play a role in the relationship between religiosity and the decision to visit religious tourism can vary depending on the context and characteristics of the tourism.

In some cases, a strong tourist attraction can be the main factor that encourages tourists to visit religious sites, regardless of the individual's level of religiosity. For example, tourists who are interested in art, architecture, history, or culture may be interested in visiting religious sites that have cultural riches and interesting architecture, such as historic buildings, temples, or beautiful mosques.

Good quality tourism agency services can have a positive impact on tourists' experiences when visiting religious places. Tourists will feel more helped, comfortable and satisfied with their trip if they receive adequate and quality service from a tourism agency. This can include providing accurate and complete information about the religious places to be visited, good coordination in terms of transportation and accommodation, as well as having a competent and friendly guide who can provide clear and interesting explanations about the religious places (Kuo et al., 2018).

On the other hand, if the tourist agency's services are inadequate or do not meet tourists' expectations, this can have a negative impact on the decision to visit religious tourism. Travelers may feel frustrated, disappointed, or uncomfortable with their experience. For example, if a travel agency does not provide accurate information, has problems arranging transportation or accommodation, or does not provide competent guides, this can cause dissatisfaction and encourage tourists to choose another destination or travel agency.

So, the hypothesis formulated in this research is:

H1: Religiosity has a positive and significant effect on tourists' decisions to visit religious tourism

H2: The attractiveness of religious tourism has a positive and significant effect on tourists' decisions to visit religious tourism

H3: The quality of Sharia Tourism Bureau services has a positive and significant effect on tourists' decisions to visit religious tourism.

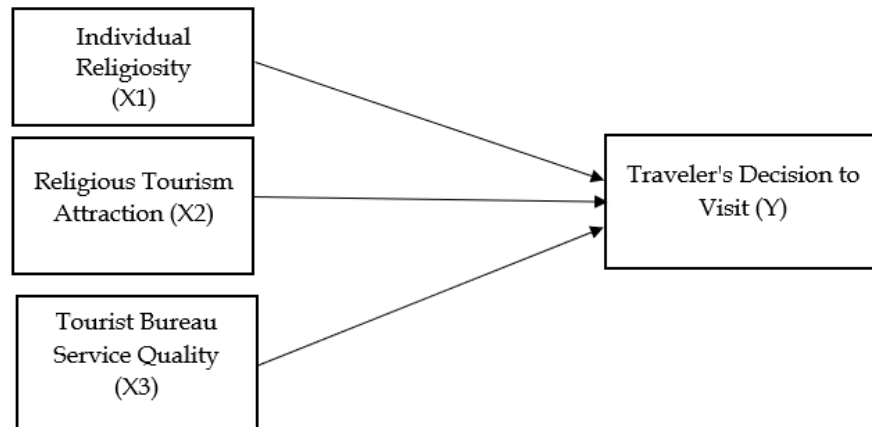


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

## METHODS

This research uses quantitative research. The data used is primary data. The sampling technique used was purposive sampling with 204 respondents as the research sample. The population in this study were all tourists who had visited the Gedhe Kauman Mosque, Yogyakarta. Respondents were tourists who visited the Gedhe Kauman Mosque, Yogyakarta. Data was collected directly by distributing questionnaires. The scale used is a 1-5 Likert scale, then the research data was analyzed using SmartPLS 3.0.

## RESULTS

The characteristics of respondents in this study include gender, age, highest level of education, and area of origin/province of origin). the number of male respondents was 105 or 51.75% while the number of female respondents was 48.53%, the age of tourists was dominated by those aged 21-27 years at 34.45%, while the highest education level was dominated by high school graduates with 46.75%. The largest number of respondents came from Central Java province with 56 respondents or 27.5%, while the fewest respondents came from the provinces of Southeast Kalimantan, Nanggro Aceh Darussalam and Southeast Sulawesi, namely 1 respondent or 0.4%.

In this research, the analysis used is path analysis using SmartPLS software version 3.0. The analysis process in PLS consists of three stages, namely outer model analysis, inner model analysis, and hypothesis testing. In this research, researchers used external model testing to ensure the suitability of the measurements used as measurement tools (valid and reliable). Several standards

used in the measurement model (outer model) and structural model (inner model) in this research include (Hair Jr et al., 2021).

**1) Measurement Model**

Convergent Validity is validity related to the principle that measurements should be highly correlated. The assessment indicator in the convergent validity test is that the loading factor value must be equal to or more than  $> 0.70$  for confirmatory research and  $> 0.60$  for exploratory research (Hair Jr et al., 2021).

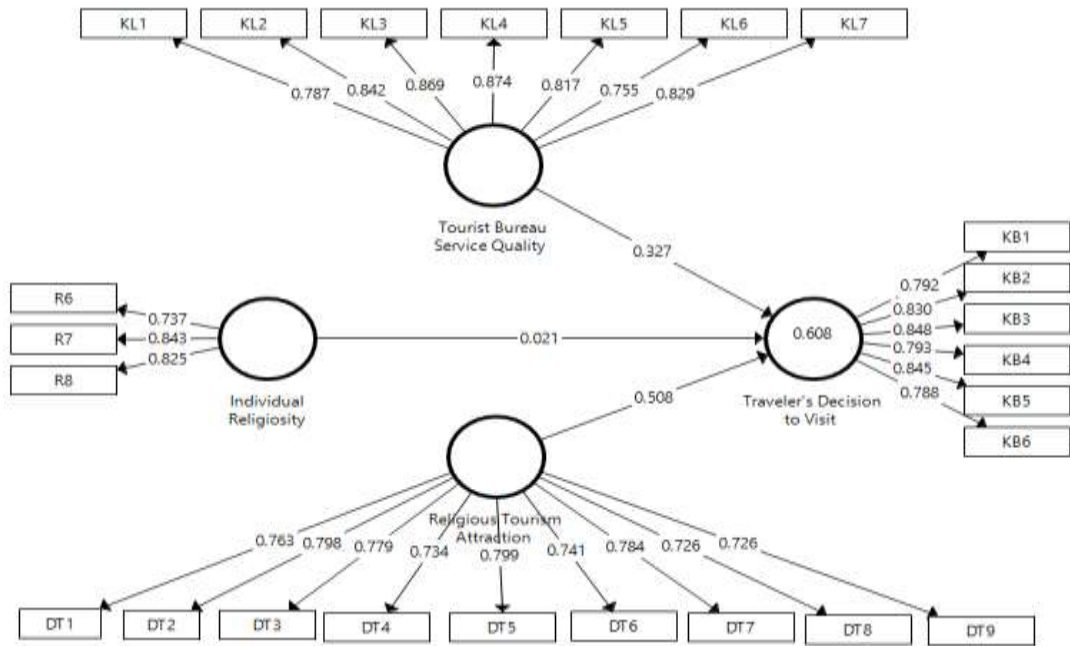


Figure 2 Outer Model Test Results

Apart from that, the average variance extracted (AVE) value is  $> 0.50$  and the communality value is  $> 0.50$ .

Table 1 AVE Test Results

	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Individual Religiosity	0.645
Religious Tourism Attraction	0.580
Tourist Bureau Service Quality	0.682
Traveler's Decision to Visit	0.667

Next, discriminant validity testing was carried out. Discriminant validity, namely validity related to the measuring principle of the construct, should not be highly correlated. To test discriminant validity, the method used is to see whether the cross-loading value of each variable in the study exceeds 0.70. Another approach that can be used is to compare the square root of the average

variance extracted (AVE) of each construct with the correlation between constructs in this research model (Hair Jr et al., 2021).

Table 2 Fornell-Larker Criterion Test.

	Individual Religiosity	Religious Tourism Attraction	Tourist Bureau Service Quality	Traveler's Decision to Visit
Individual Religiosity	<b>0.803</b>			
Religious Tourism Attraction	0.442	<b>0.762</b>		
Tourist Bureau Service Quality	0.390	0.684	<b>0.826</b>	
Traveler's Decision to Visit	0.373	0.741	0.683	<b>0.816</b>

Lastly is reliability testing. This reliability test is seen from the composite reliability value which must be more than  $> 0.70$  for confirmatory research and  $> 0.60 - 0.70$  for exploratory research.

Table 3 Reliability Test Results

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability
Individual Religiosity	0.722	0.725	0.844
Religious Tourism Attraction	0.909	0.911	0.925
Tourist Bureau Service Quality	0.922	0.924	0.937
Traveler's Decision to Visit	0.900	0.902	0.923

**(2) Structural Model (Inner model)**

Testing of the structural model (inner model) can be done using several methods, including looking at the resulting R-Square value. If the resulting values are 0.75, 0.50 and 0.20 then it can be interpreted that the model is strong, moderate and weak (Ghozali & Latan, 2015a). Changes in R-Square are used to explain whether or not there is an influence between one variable and the other variables being tested.

Table 4 R Square Test Results

	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Traveler's Decision to Visit	0.608	0.602

The R square results show 0.608. This means that individual religiosity, the attractiveness of tourist attractions and the quality of sharia bureau services have an influence of 60.8% on tourists' decisions to visit the Gedhe Kauman Mosque, Yogyakarta, Indonesia, while 29.2% is influenced by other factors not examined in this research.

Apart from looking at the R-Square, this test can be done by looking at the Q value, where the value must be more than  $> 0.0$  this shows that the model has predictive relevance. The Q values in the study were 0.02, 0.15 and 0.35 indicating that the model was weak, moderate and strong (Ghozali & Latan, 2015b). The final method used in the structural model (inner model) is by looking at the significance value (t-value) to determine the influence between research variables which is based on the number of respondents in the t-table.

**(3) Hypothesis Testing (Bootstrapping)**

Hypothesis testing carried out in SMART PLS analysis is by using the bootstrapping method. In this method, the confidence level used is 95% with an inaccuracy level of 5%. With 204 respondents, the t-table value is 1.65 and the p-value  $< 0.05$ .

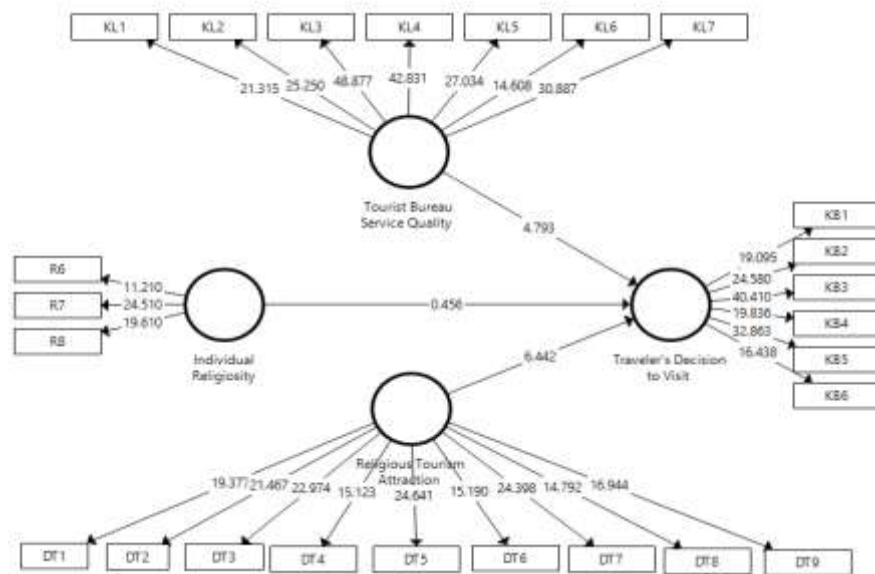


Figure 3 Bootstrapping Test Results

In hypothesis testing, there are three points that need to be considered in structural tests with bootstrapping, these points include the original sample value ( $\beta$ ) which is used to see the influence between the relationships between constructs. T-Statistics are used to measure the level of significance for each hypothesis, while p-values are used to see the level of significance of hypotheses with different levels of significance (Hair Jr et al., 2021).

Table 5 Hypothesis Testing Results

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics ( O/STDEV )	P Values
Individual Religiosity → Traveler's Decision to Visit	0.021	0.025	0.046	0.456	0.324
Religious Tourism Attraction → Traveler's Decision to Visit	0.508	0.505	0.079	6.442	0

Tourist Bureau Service Quality → Traveler's Decision to Visit	0.327	0.331	0.068	4.793	0
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Hypothesis test results 1: Religiosity has a positive but not significant effect on tourists' decisions to visit the Gedhe Kauman Mosque, Yogyakarta. This happened, because based on the bootstapping results, it showed that the beta coefficient value was 0.021 with a t-statistic value of 0.456, which was smaller than the t-statistic value, namely (>1.65 with a significance level of 5%) and a p-value of 0.324. Based on the calculations above, the first hypothesis in this research is rejected.

Hypothesis test results 2: The attractiveness of religious tourism has a positive and significant effect on tourists' decisions to visit the Gedhe Kauman Mosque, Yogyakarta. This happens, because based on the bootstapping results, it shows that attractiveness has a positive and significant influence on tourists' decisions to visit with a beta coefficient value of 0.508 with a t-statistic value of 6.442 which is greater than the t-statistic value, namely (> 1.65 with a significance level 5%) and p-values of 0.000. Based on the calculations above, the second hypothesis in this research is accepted.

Hypothesis test results 3: The quality of sharia tourism bureau services has a positive and significant effect on tourists' decisions to visit the Gedhe Kauman Mosque, Yogyakarta. The bootstapping results show that service quality has a positive and significant influence on tourists' decisions to visit with a beta coefficient value of 0.327 and a t-statistic value of 4.793 which is greater than the t-statistic value, namely (>1.65 with a significance level of 5%) and the p value - values of 0.000. Based on the calculations above, the third hypothesis in this research is accepted.

## DISCUSSION

The research results found that religiosity has a positive, but not significant, influence on tourists' decisions to visit the Gedhe Kauman Mosque. This means that although there is a relationship between tourists' level of religiosity and their decision to visit the mosque, the relationship is not statistically strong enough to be considered significant. Differences in the geographic, cultural, or religious context of the research sample may influence the relationship between religiosity and the decision to visit religious tourism. For example, in some cultures or religions, high religiosity may be generally considered a positive factor for visiting holy places, whereas in other contexts, other factors such as spiritual level may be more influential (Luz, 2020).

Different studies may use different definitions and measurements related to religiosity. For example, in this study we measure religiosity as an individual's involvement in religious practices (Stark & Glock, 1970; and Shabbir, 2007), whereas other studies may measure religiosity as the level of belief or commitment to religious beliefs. Differences in measurements can produce inconsistent results (Kim et al., 2020). So, this needs to be underlined in further research.

Furthermore, the attractiveness of tourist attractions and the quality of sharia tourism bureau services have a significant positive influence on tourists' decisions to visit the Gedhe Kauman Mosque, Yogyakarta. The attractiveness of tourist attractions is the dominant factor in this research. This shows that factors such as architectural beauty, cultural heritage, uniqueness of the place, and the spiritual experience offered by the mosque are very important in persuading tourists to visit it. The strong attraction of tourist attractions can be the main reason for tourists to choose a particular destination.

The findings also show that the quality of sharia tourism bureau services has a positive and significant influence on the decision to visit the Gedhe Kauman Mosque showing that factors such as good communication, accuracy of information, friendliness, and professionalism in providing services in accordance with sharia principles have a role important in meeting the expectations and needs of tourists. Good service quality can improve tourists' experiences and build their trust in the sharia tourism bureau that serves them (Kuo et al., 2018).

The attractiveness of tourist attractions and the quality of sharia tourism bureau services are the dominant factors in influencing tourists' decisions based on the findings of this research. Religiosity, although it has a positive influence, is not significant so it is not the main factor influencing the decision to visit the Gedhe Kauman Mosque.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that religiosity has a positive, but not significant, influence on tourists' decisions to visit the Gedhe Kauman Mosque. However, the attractiveness of tourist attractions and the quality of sharia tourism bureau services have a significant positive influence. This shows that factors such as the attractiveness of tourist attractions and service quality play a more dominant role in influencing tourists' decisions.

The results of this research show the importance of paying attention to factors such as the attractiveness of tourist attractions and service quality in the development and management of religious tourist attractions. Efforts to increase the attractiveness of tourist attractions, such as maintaining historical and cultural authenticity, paying attention to architectural beauty, and organizing interesting cultural events, as well as improving the quality of sharia tourism bureau services can increase tourist satisfaction and interest in visiting the mosque.

Furthermore, to implement the results of this research, there are several steps that can be taken, including strengthening the attractiveness of tourist attractions. This can be done by maintaining and restoring buildings, promoting and documenting history, as well as developing events and activities that can attract tourist interest (Ayorekire et al., 2020). Involving local communities and historians is also important in maintaining the authenticity and uniqueness of tourist attractions.

Apart from that, it is important to pay attention to the development and improvement of the quality of sharia tourism bureau services serving the Gedhe Kauman Mosque. Staff training in good communication, in-depth knowledge of

history and culture, and friendliness to visitors can enhance the tourist experience. Ensuring that sharia principles are upheld in services is also important to provide an experience consistent with religious values.

Increasing more effective promotions, considering that the attractiveness of tourist attractions and the quality of sharia tourism bureau services influence tourist decisions, it is important to develop effective promotional campaigns. The campaign should highlight the architectural beauty, history and uniqueness of the Gedhe Kauman Mosque, as well as emphasize the quality of sharia services provided. The use of social media, websites, brochures and collaboration with local tourism parties can help increase visibility and reach the target audience.

Furthermore, collaborating with related parties, such as collaboration with educational institutions, local communities and religious institutions, can provide significant benefits (Istiqomah et al., 2023). For example, holding seminars, workshops or educational programs about the history, culture and religious values related to the Gedhe Kauman Mosque can increase tourists' understanding and appreciation of the place.

It is important to continue to evaluate and monitor the successful implementation of the results of this research. Involving feedback from tourists, measuring their level of satisfaction and impressions, and tracking the number of tourist visits can help in improving strategies and ensuring the sustainability of tourism development and management efforts.

By implementing these steps, it is hoped that it can increase tourist interest and decisions to visit the Gedhe Kauman Mosque. This will contribute to the development and sustainability of religious tourist attractions, as well as providing economic and social benefits for local communities (Anwar et al., 2017).

## **FURTHER STUDY**

This study could possibly be expanded by involving a larger and more diverse sample of tourists visiting the Gedhe Kauman Mosque. This will help in obtaining better generalizations and understanding the variability in the influence of the factors that have been studied.

Future research could investigate more in-depth and comprehensive measurements of religiosity. Combining aspects such as beliefs, religious practices, spiritual experiences, and religious commitment can provide a better understanding of the relationship between religiosity and the decision to visit religious tourist attractions.

Apart from that, further research can consider other factors that might influence tourists' decisions to visit the Gedhe Kauman Mosque. For example, factors such as accessibility, tourism promotion, perceived safety, and price can be important considerations for tourists. Including these variables in the analysis can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors that influence tourist decisions.

Conducting comparative studies with other religious tourism sites can provide valuable insight into the factors that influence tourists' decisions to visit

certain religious sites. This can help in understanding the differences and similarities in the influence of these factors in various locations. Future research could consider sustainability factors and tourism management in the context of the Gedhe Kauman Mosque. Investigating the impact of tourism on the environment, culture and local communities, as well as the management efforts undertaken, can help in developing sustainable strategies to maintain the attractiveness and sustainability of religious tourist attractions.

By involving broader variables, deeper measurements, and looking at a more comprehensive context, future research can provide deeper insight into the factors that influence tourists' decisions to visit the Gedhe Kauman Mosque or other religious tourist attractions.

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