

## An Analysis of Embung Giwangan Cultural Park Attractions as a New Tourism Destination in the Southern Region of Yogyakarta

Ilia Abivara

Sekolah Tinggi Pariwisata AMPTA Yogyakarta  
[liavara@yahoo.com](mailto:liavara@yahoo.com)

---

### KEYWORDS

cultural arts  
preservation;  
cultural park;  
*embung*; tourist  
attraction; tourism  
destination

### ABSTRAK

Yogyakarta Special Region (Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta/DIY) is known as one of the main tourism destinations in Indonesia famous for its natural beauty, cultural diversity, and history. Recently Yogyakarta has been developing a new tourism destination in the southern region to reduce traffic jams in the city center, namely the Embung Giwangan Cultural Park, which has a unique charm by combining the concepts of preserving art, culture, traditional customs, architectural design, and environmental conservation. This research aims to explore the uniqueness of cultural parks and their impact on tourism, the economy, and cultural preservation in Yogyakarta. The research used a qualitative approach through focused interviews, observation, and documentation. The analysis used the theoretical approach by Miles and Huberman (1994) by separating relevant data, presenting the reduced data in a structured form, and making conclusions or verification from the data to identify various interesting aspects of the Embung Giwangan Cultural Park, including its innovative design, the cultural activities, and its impact on the local economy and community. The research results show that this tourism destination not only functions as a recreation space, but also as a center for cultural activities that supports the preservation of local arts and culture and increases tourist attraction in the area. These findings provide insight into how the development of integrated tourism destinations can provide multiple benefits, both for cultural and environmental preservation and economic development.

---

### INTRODUCTION

As a tourism destination, the Special Region of Yogyakarta is not only famous for its natural beauty, but also cultural diversity, history, culinary delights, education quality, and low cost of living. According to a survey conducted by goodstats.id released on its Instagram @goodstats.id on August 25 2024, Yogyakarta still becomes a favorite destination for tourists. Tourist attractions are growing and developing in all districts in Yogyakarta, such as Sleman Regency with its Mount Merapi tourism, Gunung Kidul Regency with its karst/limestone tourism, Bantul Regency with beach tourism, Kulon Progo Regency with its hills, and Yogyakarta City with its cultural tourism. All of these areas continue to improve in developing their tourism. This can be seen from the development of tourist attractions, the construction of accommodation, the establishment of many new culinary places, the construction of road access, and the development of transportation facilities. This development is carried out not only by the local government but also by the community who are aware of the impact of tourism development in supporting economic improvement.

Yogyakarta continues to develop innovations to improve its tourism. As it is already known, Yogyakarta is famous for its cultural and heritage tourism. Besides the Sultanate of Yogyakarta Hadiningrat Palace and Puro Pakualaman Yogyakarta, there are many historical sites in Yogyakarta, including Tamansari Water Castle site and Warung Boto site, Kota Gede complex, Vredeborg fort, Sono Budoyo Museum, tourism villages, and other tourist attractions. In recent decades, Taman Pintar, Yogyakarta Cultural Park, Zoo Gembira Loka, Jogja National Museum have also been developed. Yogyakarta, with an area of 32.50 square km, is not a big city

compared to the other four regencies in the Special Region of Yogyakarta. This makes the Yogyakarta city government overwhelmed in dealing with traffic jams when the holiday season arrives. It is very difficult to break down traffic jams when tourists flock to the city center. Traffic jams during the holidays often make the people of Yogyakarta complain because all their activities are hampered. In fact, the holiday season is highly anticipated because it is an opportunity to improve the regional and city economy. This becomes the reason why the Yogyakarta city government considers developing tourism in the southern region. This is also aimed to achieve economic equality in the southern region of Yogyakarta and to reduce traffic jams and density of activities in the city center.

The newest tourist attraction developed by the Yogyakarta City government in the southern region is Embung Giwangan Cultural Park, which is integrated with the Kotagede Cultural Heritage Area. Embung Giwangan Cultural Park is expected to be completed by the end of 2024, but it has been opened to the public. Besides being used as a place to hold city events, the park is also used as a sports facility as it has a jogging track.

Embung Giwangan Cultural Park is located at Jalan Tegal Turi No 54, Giwangan Kemantren Umbulharjo, Yogyakarta, with an area of 3.5 hectares, including a reservoir as a rainwater catchment with a capacity of 9,210 cubic meters and a pool area of around 4,123 square meters. Initially, there was only one reservoir owned by the city government to irrigate the surrounding rice fields. Currently, this area is being developed by combining the concepts of preserving art, culture, traditional customs, and environmental conservation. It is developed in stages using Yogyakarta Special Funds and the project is carried out by the Department of Public Works for Housing and Residential Areas (*Dinas Pekerjaan Umum Perumahan dan Kawasan Permukiman/PUPKP*) of Yogyakarta. Embung Giwangan Cultural Park is managed by the Culture Service of Yogyakarta (*Dinas Kebudayaan/Kundha Kabudayan*), especially Cultural Park Management Technical Implementation Unit (*UPT Pengelolaan Taman Budaya*). The City Culture Service oversees two units, namely Cultural Park Technical Implementation Unit and Malioboro Technical Implementation Unit. Within the Cultural Park Technical Implementation Unit there are two organizations, namely Taman Pintar and Embung Giwangan Cultural Park. Currently Taman Pintar is under the management of Embung Giwangan Cultural Park in terms of human resources such as cleaning service and security.

According to the Head of the Yogyakarta City Culture Service (*Kundha Kabudayan*) Yetti Martanti, the aim of establishing Embung Giwangan Cultural Park is to provide opportunities for artists in Yogyakarta to express themselves without limits and as a tourism destination that is integrated with Kotagede Cultural Heritage Area so that it becomes one of the attractions in Yogyakarta in terms of creative economy.

Based on the description above, this research is conducted to:

1. Explore the uniqueness of Embung Giwangan Cultural Park
2. Support cultural and environmental preservation
3. Assess the impact on local economy

### **The Concept of Tourism Attraction According to Damanik and Weber**

According to Damanik and Weber (2006), tourism attractions consist of three main elements, namely accessibility, amenities, and attractions. In the context of Embung Giwangan Cultural Park, these three elements interact with each other to create an interesting and useful tourism experience.

1. Accessibility: This cultural park has relatively easy access from the center of Yogyakarta, supported by transportation infrastructure. This allows tourists to easily reach the location and experience the atmosphere.

2. Amenities: Various facilities provided, such as a jogging track, amphitheater, prayer room, give comfort to visitors. This creates a welcoming environment and supports a better experience for the tourists.
3. Attractions: Embung Giwangan Cultural Park offers a variety of attractions, including art performances, cultural exhibitions, and interactive activities that engage visitors. The unique architectural design and beautiful landscape are the main attractions that can increase the aesthetic value of this cultural park.

### **Relevance of the Concepts in Ecotourism Development**

In the book "Ecotourism Planning: From Theory to Application", Damanik, J. and Weber, H. F. define ecotourism as a form of tourism that focuses on sustainable natural and cultural experiences. They emphasize that ecotourism must meet the following principles:

1. Environmental conservation  
Ecotourism aims to protect and preserve ecosystems and biodiversity.
2. Empowerment of local communities  
Ecotourism must involve local communities in the management and utilization of resources, thereby providing economic and social benefits for them.
3. Education and awareness  
Ecotourism serves as a means to increase tourists' awareness of environmental and cultural issues.
4. Sustainable development  
It focuses on economic, social, and environmental sustainability in every aspect of tourism development.

Damanik and Weber highlight the importance of thorough planning in ecotourism to achieve these goals effectively, so that ecotourism provides benefits not only for tourists but also for the environment and local communities. Thus, ecotourism seeks to create a harmonious relationship between humans and the environment, while providing economic benefits to local communities.

### **METHOD**

This research used a qualitative descriptive method to find out the actual conditions in the field. According to Sugiyono (2022:9-10), descriptive qualitative method is based on post-positivist philosophy used to analyze the condition of natural objects in which the researcher is the key instrument. Observation, documentation, and in-depth interviews (FGD), data validation using triangulation techniques, by comparing the results of interviews, documentation, and observations, result in qualitative data. The data were analyzed by using the theoretical approach of Miles and Huberman (1994), which consists of separating the relevant data from the irrelevant ones, presenting the reduced data in a structured form, and making conclusions or verification from the data that have been analyzed. The results of the research could be more structured, focused, and easy to understand, and supported by a verification process that increased the credibility of the findings.

### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

This research analyzes Embung Giwangan Cultural Park using the 3A elements (Attractions, Accessibility, and Amenities), by focusing on ecotourism principles such as environmental conservation, local community empowerment, education and awareness, and sustainable development.

## Attraction

Embung Giwangan Cultural Park has main attractions that support ecotourism principles:

1. Uniqueness of architecture and design

The design involves a Yogyakarta heritage concept that reflects local cultural elements such as Tamansari, Plengkung Gading, and other traditional architectural symbols. It provides an aesthetic and educational visual appeal. The *Indische* style building is located in a reservoir/lake with a length of approximately 1 kilometer. The park's architectural design is inspired by Yogyakarta heritage and reflects local cultural values. Performing arts and cultural programs are conducted in a horseshoe-shaped amphitheater with a capacity of more than 500 spectators, allowing spectators to watch from three sides of the stage. The open stage has the potential for various artistic and cultural performances.

2. Environmental conservation

The function of *embung* as a rainwater reservoir contributes to water management and conservation of local ecosystems. The surrounding green spaces also improve air quality and provide ecological benefits.

3. Cultural preservation

The gate inside can be used as a mini gallery. Graha Budaya building, with indoor amphitheater and exhibition hall facilities, supports the preservation of traditional art and improves the appeal of cultural tourism. Tourism cannot be separated from cultural elements, such as historical relics, heritage buildings, arts and cultural attractions, and local cultural customs that have their own charm and attraction for tourists. Culture is the main factor of the tourism development mission in Yogyakarta, so all tourism and education are culture-based. Due to this fact, Embung Giwangan Cultural Park strengthens Yogyakarta as a cultural city.

4. Education and awareness

This park also becomes an educational facility for tourists to understand the importance of environmental conservation and arts and culture through programs such as "*Harmoni Embung Giwangan*."

## Accessibility

The strategic location of Embung Giwangan Cultural Park supports the principles of sustainable development:

1. Connectivity with other destinations

With a strategic location in the southern area of Yogyakarta, this park is easy to reach from the city center in around 20 minutes. This park is connected to Kotagede heritage area and Prawirotanaman tourism village, creating an integrated tourist route.

2. Ease of access

The infrastructure allows tourists from various backgrounds to reach the park easily using public transportation, online transportation (Grab/Gojek), or private vehicles.

## Amenities

The facilities at Embung Giwangan Cultural Park support visitor comfort while fulfilling ecotourism principles:

1. Empowerment of local communities:

The presence of cultural parks in the Southern region can certainly have a positive impact by providing economic opportunities for local communities, including micro/small/medium enterprises (MSMEs) and local artists. Every event held in this park involves community participation, both in managing

and providing for tourist needs. This will trigger business growth and economic equality in the Southern region.

## 2. Environmentally friendly supporting facilities

The area on the west and east sides of the reservoir support various outdoor activities, such as a jogging track built around the reservoir and the cultural park. The amphitheater, prayer room, and a parking area located in the courtyard of the entrance building with a capacity of 108 motorbikes, 50 cars, and 4 buses facilitate various types of tourists, from cultural travelers to visitors looking for outdoor recreation.

### **Analysis of the Tourist Attractions of Embung Giwangan Cultural Park**

#### **1. Attraction**

##### **Findings**

This park has a unique architecture that combines elements of Yogyakarta heritage, the function of the reservoir for conservation, and arts and culture programs.

##### **Analysis**

This uniqueness not only makes the park function as a recreational tourist spot but also provides an interesting educational experience. Tourists can gain insight into art, culture, and conservation in one location. This is in line with the theory of tourist attraction (Damanik and Weber, 2006) which states that attraction elements must provide educational and entertainment value to increase interest in visiting.

#### **2. Accessibility**

##### **Findings**

This park is easily accessible by public and private transportation, and has connectivity with other tourism destinations, such as Kotagede and Prawirotaman.

##### **Analysis**

This strategic location provides great advantages for reaching local and foreign tourist segments. Good accessibility also supports integration with tourist routes in the southern region of Yogyakarta, so that tourists can include this park as a part of a wider trip. This supports destination planning theory which states that connectivity with other destinations can extend the duration of tourists' visits (Pendit, 2006).

#### **3. Amenities**

##### **Findings**

Facilities such as a jogging track, amphitheater, prayer room, and parking area provide comfort for tourists.

##### **Analysis**

The availability of these facilities not only gives the tourism experience but also supports tourism sustainability by involving local MSMEs. The resulting economic impacts, such as business opportunities and increased community activities, show that complete amenities can be an important factor in empowering surrounding communities, as ecotourism principles emphasize local community participation as the main element.

Based on the analysis, the development of Embung Giwangan Cultural Park as an integrated tourism destination has several important implications for the environment, society and the tourism sector. These include improving the quality of tourist experience, preserving culture and the environment, empowering the local economy, community involvement, network and collaboration development, synergy between destinations, and positive impact on the local economy. The implications of developing Embung Giwangan Cultural Park as an integrated tourism destination give benefit for not only tourists but also local communities and the environment. With a planned and collaborative approach, this park can serve as a model for developing tourism destinations that are sustainable and beneficial to all parties.

## CONCLUSION

The research has shown that Embung Giwangan Cultural Park has benefits to preserve art, culture, and environment. Besides functioning as a green open space and supporting rice irrigation, this park also becomes a location for artistic and cultural attractions, with the potential to increase tourists' visits and have a positive impact on the local economy. Collaboration between the government, community, and businesspeople is very important to develop this park as a sustainable tourism destination. The cultural park is also expected to increase public awareness about environmental and cultural preservation, create new jobs, and balance economic and environmental needs. Optimizing the potential of the Embung Giwangan Cultural Park can be done by improving accessibility and joint promotion with other tourism destinations in the southern region.

## REFERENCES

- Badan Pengembangan dan Pembinaan Bahasa, Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi Republik Indonesia. (2016). <https://kbbi.kemdikbud.go.id/>, accessed in September 2024
- Damanik, J., & Weber, H. F. (2006). *Perencanaan ekowisata dari teori ke aplikasi*. Published in cooperation between Pusat Studi Pariwisata (PUSPAR) Universitas Gadjah Mada and Penerbit Andi. Yogyakarta.
- Dinas Pekerjaan Umum Perumahan dan Kawasan Pemukiman Kabupaten Kulon Progo. *Embung: Manfaat dan pembangunannya*, 16 November 2022, <https://dpu.kulonprogokab.go.id/detil/870/embung-manfaat-dan-pembangunannya>, accessed on 24 September 2024
- Harahap, M. (2018). *Pengantar ilmu pariwisata*. Alfabetha: Bandung
- Instagram @tamanbudaya.embunggiwangan.
- Interview with Agus Budi Rachmanto, S.IP, M.Sc. as PR and Marketing officer of Taman Pintar and involved in Embung Giwangan Cultural Park promotion, 9 September 2024.
- Legawa, Aby. *Manajemen destinasi pariwisata*, [www.abylegawa.blogspot.com, http://abylegawa.blogspot.com/2008/11/manajemen-destinasi-pariwisata.html](http://abylegawa.blogspot.com/2008/11/manajemen-destinasi-pariwisata.html) , 10 November 2008, accessed on 21 September 2024
- Miles, M.B. and Huberman, M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook (second edition)*, Sage Publications
- Nasrullah., et al. (2023). *Perencanaan destinasi pariwisata*. Yayasan Kita Menulis
- Pendit, Nyoman S. (2006). *Ilmu pariwisata sebuah pengantar perdana*. Jakarta: PT. Pradnya Paramita

Abivara, Ilia, (2024). An Analysis of Embung Giwangan Cultural Park Attractions as a New Tourism Destination in the Southern Region of Yogyakarta. *STRUKTURAL (Seminar on Translation, Applied Linguistics, Literature, and Cultural Studies)*. 2 (01), 1–20. (by editor)

---

Portal Berita Pemerintah Kota Yogyakarta, <https://warta.jogjakota.go.id/detail/index/32050>, 20 February 2024, accessed in August 2024.

Sugiyono. (2018). *Metode penelitian kuantitatif, kualitatif, dan R&D*. Bandung: Penerbit Alfabeta

Website of Yogyakarta Cultural Service of Yogyakarta, <https://kebudayaan.jogjakota.go.id/>

Website of Tourism Service of Yogyakarta

Website Taman Pintar; [www.tamanpintar.co.id](http://www.tamanpintar.co.id) , <https://tamanpintar.co.id/taman-budaya-embung-giwangan-magnet-baru-kawasan-selatan-kota-yogyakarta>, 29 February 2024, accessed in August 2024