

# Positioning Analysis of Sekotong West Lombok Regency as a Tourist Destination

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## ABSTRACT

Sekotong, West Lombok Regency is the area with the most types of tourism objects compared to others. Therefore, a "positioning" strategy is needed to identify Sekotong's potential to assist tourists. This research is based on determining the position of Sekotong as a tourist destination which is based on attributes of the tourism products. The research method used a qualitative approach with primary data collection through interviews, observation, and documentation. Based on the assessment of the ten attributes assessed, a positioning of Sekotong was found as a tourist destination with the concept of ecotourism by favoring natural conditions, food and drink, accommodation, and environmental care. It is hoped that in managerial terms, Sekotong tourism is able to increase tourist visits.

Keywords: Positioning, Sekotong Tourism, Product Attributes, Tourism Positioning

## INTRODUCTION

Tourism plays an important role in supporting the country's economy, especially as a source of foreign exchange. The tourism sector ranks third, after the automotive and banking industries, and generates important foreign exchange. Research conducted by the World Tourism Organization (WTO) also shows that the trend of demand for tourism will continue to increase in 2020 which is estimated to reach 1.6 billion people. So that it also has an impact on increasing the number of tourists on the island of Lombok, with the accumulation per year the number of tourists visiting has increased significantly, as seen in the table below.

Table 1.1  
Number of Indonesian Tourists and International Tourists Visits  
To West Nusa Tenggara in 2015-2019

NO.	Year	Indonesian Tourists	International Tourists	TOTAL
1.	2015	1,149,235	1,061,292	2,210,527
2.	2016	1,690,109	1,404,328	3,094,437
3.	2017	2,078,654	1,430,249	3,508,903
4.	2018	1,607,823	1,204,556	2,812,379
5.	2019	2,155,561	1,550,791	3,706,352

Sekotong area, West Lombok is regions have the most types of tourism objects compared to other regions. Sekotong is a remote area in the South West of Lombok Island which is quite amazing among the many favorite tourist places and destinations. Sekotong's location is quite strategic because it is quite easy to reach from anywhere. We can find various coral reefs and marine life here in the presence of dyke or small islands. Sekotong has the potential to develop into a world-class tourist destination if it is well developed. In recent years, the West Lombok Regency Government has been aggressively developing and introducing Sekotong's tourism potential to the outside world and increasing tourist visits. All of these things will not be easy to run without conducive security and order.

There are several strategic issues that need attention in relation to tourism in West Lombok Regency, especially Sekotong sub-district, namely the actualization and application of the concept of Sapta charm (safe, orderly, clean, cool, beautiful, friendly, and memorable) and awareness of tourism among the community and business actors. Tourism is not optimal. In addition, security issues are also in the spotlight for tourism in the Sekotong area.

A tourist who will visit exotic places is greatly influenced by how the tourism destination positioning is formed. The importance of positioning a tourism destination as a tourist destination will be a key strategy in the future (Kassean, 2013). According to Kotler and Armstrong (Armstrong & Kotler, 2008), Positioning is an activity that differentiates products and brands from competitors in the minds of consumers based on the attributes or benefits that the brand or product offers.

Positioning is every effort to design products and brands so that they can occupy a unique position in the minds of customers (Kartajaya, 2005). Positioning is not what you do with your product but how to position your product in the minds of potential customers (Ries & Trout, 2002). With clear positioning, a destination will make it easier for tourists to remember that destination. Besides that, it will also make it easier for the authorities, in this case, the government, to develop, manage and promote these destinations (Armstrong & Kotler, 2008). Therefore, it can be concluded that a positive perception from consumers of a product will create a good positioning.

## **METHODS**

This type of research is qualitative research to describe various alternatives to solve problems related to the positioning of Sekotong as a tourism destination. Some informants who were tourists with at least two visits were successfully interviewed with the help of an interview guide containing questions related to the attributes of Sekotong tourism products. Besides, the relevant stakeholders were also successfully interviewed by researchers.

This research begins with the initial study is to review the literature and various previous research results related to the positioning of product attributes, especially tourism products. Based on preliminary studies, to answer research problems, researchers formulate a research plan to direct the research to be effective.

Furthermore, the positioning of Sekotong as a tourist destination was obtained by collecting data through interviews, observation, and documentation. In this study, the informants recruited were 2 foreign tourists, 5 domestic tourists, 1 community leader, and 2 stakeholders. The technique of selecting informants uses purposive sampling and accidental sampling techniques, namely anyone who happens to meet the researcher who is considered suitable with the characteristics of the specified sample. Interviews were conducted using direct question and answer techniques with varying time periods. Researchers also made observations on conditions around tourist destinations.

The collected data were analyzed by categorizing them in tables with the content analysis method, which is a technique that allows researchers to study human behavior indirectly, through an analysis of their communication (Fraenkel, 2006). The data obtained were preceded by coding the relevant terms or use of words and sentences, which mostly appeared in interviews.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Tourist Rating of the Attributes of Each Tourist Destination**

The opinions of tourists are analyzed so that they can summarize the information related to the research attributes. This analysis is used to see a suitable positioning model to represent Sekotong as a tourist destination. This analysis is also able to show the strengths and weaknesses of Sekotong as a tourist destination. The results of interviews with 11 informants on the ten attributes of tourist destinations reflect the preferences of tourists towards these tourist destinations. Based on the assessment of the ten attributes assessed, a positioning of Sekotong as a tourist destination was found in the concept of ecotourism. From that aspect positioning with the concept of ecotourism, a positioning model for Sekotong can be proposed as follows.

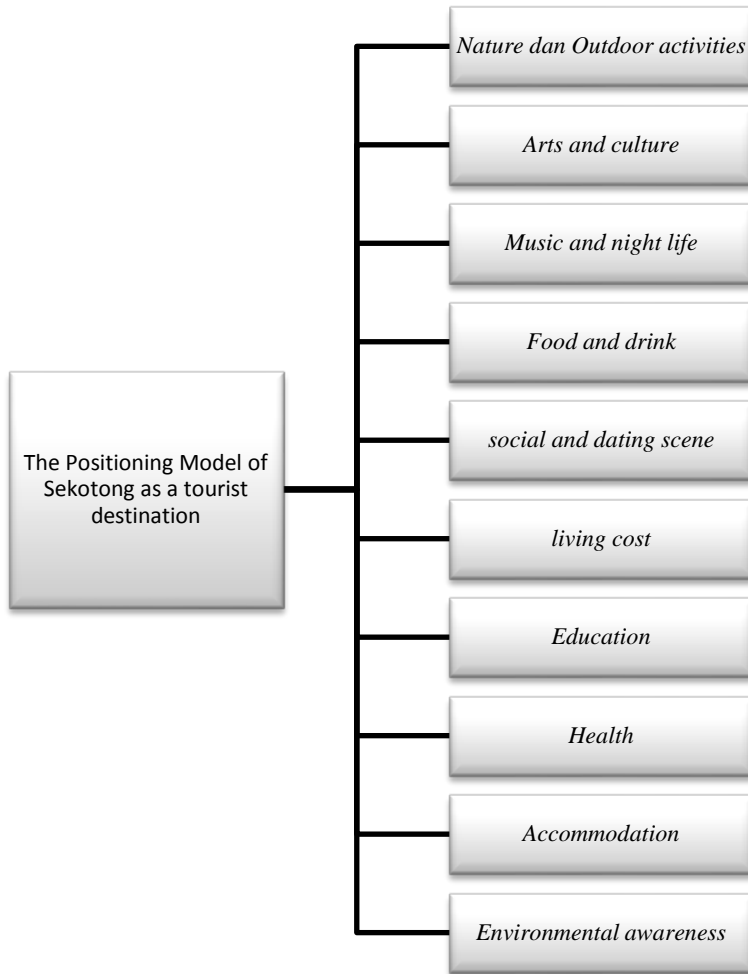


Figure 1.

The Positioning Model of Sekotong as a tourist destination is adopted from the Sasanto and Wijanarko Positioning Models

**Tourist Assessment of Sekotong's Natural Conditions and Outdoor Activities as a Tourist Destination**

Natural conditions are the main attraction of tourists in visiting a tourist destination. The beauty of the beach with sparkling white sand, blue seawater, and several enchanting natural panoramas are enough to make visitors feel at home for long in Sekotong. This is confirmed by the following interview results.

"The nature is still raw, and that's what I love it. I can do sunbathing while reading my favorite novel (The nature is still natural and that's what I like. I can sunbathe while reading the novel) "(A10 interview on September 21, 2019)

"For snorkeling, there are lots of fish and the sea where the snorkeling is shallow. The underwater is better than Gili Trawangan "(A6 interview, 15 September 2019)

From the interview quote, the natural condition of Sekotong as a tourist destination can be recognized for its beauty and can be an attraction that can be remembered by tourists. To become a popular tourist spot, in addition to beautiful natural conditions, it also needs to be supported by attractive outdoor activities. There are outdoor activities around the beach that can be done in Sekotong and become a tourist attraction, including snorkeling and diving in Gili-Gili, seeing fish and pearl breeding, and boating around mangrove tourism.

**Tourists' Assessment of the traditional cultural attractions or art of Sekotong as a tourist destination**

The arts and culture in Sekotong also received various assessments from tourists, both local, domestic and foreign tourists. Some tourist opinions can be found through the following interview excerpt.

“I've seen“ Nyongkolan ”on the weekend, and my tour guide told me that it is a traditional wedding thing in Lombok. That's fascinated me ”

(I saw Nyongkolan at the weekend, and the tour guide told us it was a traditional wedding in Lombok. Got me interested). (B10 interview on September 21, 2019)

“In Sekotong what we are looking for is more to the beach. I have never seen cultural attractions ”(B1 interview on September 14, 2019)

Researchers argue that there is a need for a program from the local government to disseminate information to the community about cultural arts so that people can preserve their unique cultural attractions that can attract tourists to visit Sekotong. However, the uniqueness of this cultural attraction is very attractive to tourists.

### **Tourist Ratings of Sekotong's Music and Nightlife as a Tourist Destination**

Unfortunately, there are no music and nightlife attractions that tourists can enjoy in Sekotong. This is confirmed by the following interviews:

“I don't think there's anything like Gili Trawangan. Because I didn't stay there long, only 3 days. ” (C6 interview, 15 September 2019)

“There is a hotel restaurant, but not live music.” (C8 interview, 21 September 2019)

So the need for input from tourism actors and local governments to innovate to hold music events.

### **Tourist Rating of Food and Beverages in Sekotong As Destination Travel**

Seafood has become a culinary identity in the Sekotong area because of its location near the beach and its ease of finding. Typical foods that can be enjoyed by tourists in these tourist destinations are found on the beach or at the Gili-Gili restaurant. This is in line with the following statement:

“When I went there, I ordered grilled fish and grilled squid but were treated to some typical Lombok foods, namely placing and Beberok Eggplant. And what's different in Lombok is that we can eat Turi Vegetables ”(D5 interview, 15 September 2019)

Food is a complement to tourism activities, food is also recognized as an expression of identity and culture. Food is an attraction in a tourist trap. Culinary diversity that can be enjoyed by tourists is a special attraction, especially foreign and domestic tourists outside the island who want to try the specialties of tourist destination areas.

### **Tourists' Assessment of Sekotong's Social Conditions as a Tourist Destination**

Apart from natural beauty, culture, and local wisdom, hospitality is one of the main success keys of destination travel. Hospitality is a personality trait of the Indonesian nation, this is reflected in the attitude of humility, courtesy, gentleness, and respect for each other, as well as the people in Sekotong. The residents do not hesitate to say hello, smile to sell food and souvenirs, or offer homestays. This is illustrated by the results of the interview as follows.

“Because we are eastern people, people there still uphold hospitality. They are very welcome. ” (E2 interview on September 14, 2019)

The interview can reveal that community interaction with tourists can change from being like a host and guest based on economic transactions to benefiting in a tourist area. Various changes in socio-cultural conditions felt by the community must be able to be directed so as not to have a negative impact on society and tourism in the future.

### **Tourists' assessment of the cost of living in Sekotong as a tourist destination**

This cost of living in the total amount of costs spent by tourists while in these tourist destinations. The cost of living in Sekotong is varied, this is in line with the following statement:

“I don't think it's too big if you need to stay the budget you need is not too expensive. For ordinary hotels, the price is at most 300-400, it's already pretty good, if you want a bit expensive, there are also ”(F2 interview, 14 September 2019)

“Very expensive. Moreover, the snacks that we usually buy can cost 2 to 3 times as much ”(F3 interview, 14 September 2019)

The various costs of living in Sekotong are influenced by demand and the products offered. On a period when the demand to travel to the Sekotong area is high, which also results in a busy flow of tourists, so the expenditure to be spent tends to be higher.

### **Assessment Traveler to Education in Sekotong as a Tourist Destination**

In tourism, there is a very strong relationship with education such as character building through tourism, appreciating culture, preserving culture, preserving biodiversity, carrying out the value of charm. For this reason, tourism education needs to be developed in the higher education system to improve the quality of the supply side, including aspects of human resources. The lack of education about tourism in the human resources of the Sekotong area can be seen from the interview quotation as follows:

"Currently, human resources still need to be improved. Because it is one of the factors that can support tourism. Maybe like giving foreign language courses. Because if we don't prepare our human resources now we will be left behind. " (G2 interview on September 14, 2019)

The lack of human resources in Sekotong will affect the development of tourism businesses there because the relationship between tourism and education is very closely related. If the level of education of the people in Sekotong is low regarding tourism, it will affect the service process to tourists which has an impact on tourist dissatisfaction.

### **Assessment Tourists on Sekotong's health as a tourist destination**

Clean tourist objects will make visitors comfortable and have good and beautiful memories of a place, which will make tourists come back to visit. Tourism objects that have potential if managed properly, including cleanliness, will have an impact on the development of the creative economy. The results of interviews regarding cleanliness in the Sekotong tourist area are as follows:

“The sanitation is not that good. The MCK is still lacking ”(H4 interview on September 14, 2019)

"So it is necessary to pay attention to this cleanliness, especially during the rainy season a lot of rubbish is scattered on the beach, there must be a public concern for it" (H2, interview, 14 September 2019)

Based on the results of the interview above, tourists feel a lack of comfort when visiting tourist areas, especially marine and land ecotourism areas due to the garbage and poorly maintained public facilities. So that tourists often complain about this. Cleanliness is an important asset to attract tourists because no tourists are interested in dirty places even though they have the potential to be visited. This is supported by Gede's research (Purnama, 2018) which states that environmental health is important to pay attention to so as not to cause disease. This attention must be directed to the fulfillment of sanitation facilities at tourist sites, food sanitation to waste management.

### **Tourist Ratings of Sekotong accommodation as a tourist destination**

Accommodation is very important for the progress of tourism in Sekotong, tourists who come to Sekotong don't need to be confused anymore about finding a resting place because lodging is already in Gili-Gili or on the beach. Accommodation really helps tourists who are visiting for a tour with the services provided by these accommodations. This is consistent with the following statement:

“The hotels are quite a lot and good. And the price is friendly. In the future, more inns will be built there. ”(I11 interview, 17 September 2019)

"Nice, clean, and not too expensive"  
(Nice, clean, and inexpensive) (I9 interview, 21 September 2019)

According to tourists, accommodation in the vicinity of Sekotong tourist destinations is affordable. However, it has a drawback that there are not too many choices of places to stay so that most tourists who visit do not spend the night.

### **Tourists' Assessment of Concern for the Environment of Sekotong as Travel Destinations**

Tourism is an important sector in development. Good tourism management will yield several benefits in various aspects. However, if not managed properly, tourism can potentially cause problems or negative impacts. The results of interviews regarding the environment of the Sekotong tourist area are as follows.

"I think they do not really care as I saw local people throw their trash carelessly" (I think they don't really care, I see residents littering) (J10 interview, 21 September 2019)

"If the people around the coast are active in maintaining the cleanliness of the environment, for example in an area where visitors come every weekend, the sellers who are thereafter they finish selling their wares always clean it." (J4 interview on September 14, 2019)

According to the observations of researchers when they went to the field to look at the location and conduct interviews, people living in tourist areas seemed to care about their environment, seen on the shady beach and mangroves, the community worked together to clean up the trash that was there and had prepared trash bins even though still from bamboo. But sometimes tourists who are not aware of it still leave trash when they leave tourist attractions. The negative impact of ecotourism is littering, which in addition to causing bad odors, can also kill plants around it (Yoeti, 2008).

### **CONCLUSION**

Positioning Sekotong as an ecotourism destination is one of the areas under development as ecotourism because Sekotong has natural resources that have been well managed to easily be visited. Tourists can visit natural attractions, namely beaches, hills, mountains, and savanna. As a tourist destination that has an ecotourism concept, the main function that must be carried out by Sekotong is a tour that is responsible for environmental sustainability and the welfare of the local community. An active role in ecotourism management is very important because natural conditions, food and beverages, and concern for the environment have a selling value as an attraction for ecotourism.

### **SUGGESTION**

#### **Managerial Suggestions**

- 1) Sekotong faces various challenges to make the area a tourist area. Therefore, it needs attention from the local government to carry out tourism development so that it has a positive influence on the community. Tourism has been proven to be able to boost the economy through investment, job opportunities, business opportunities, and in the end, it can improve people's welfare.
- 2) Sekotong as an ecotourism destination. It is hoped that it can improve musical attributes and cultural attractions by developing local cultural festivals and organizing regular traditional music performances through the participation of the Tourism Office to beat Mandalika and Gili Trawangan which are considered as the main competitors of Gili-Gili in Sekotong.
- 3) It is suggested that the educational and health attributes can be improved into excellence by providing education to people around tourist objects to provide maximum service to tourists.

#### **Theoretical Suggestions**

- 1) Further research can try product attribute positioning strategies using other theories so that it can provide a broader picture of tourism development in the Sekotong area, West Lombok Regency.
- 2) In this study, there are several products attributes that need to be improved, which are music attributes and cultural attractions, education, and health. Further researchers should focus their research on these attributes.

**Research Limitations**

This study takes a direct and open approach in communication with informants, resulting in limited informants where not all types of informants can be asked for information. Also, the presence of missing links in the methodological sequence and the lack of information can be strengthened and refined by further researchers so that the research results are more accurate and in-depth.

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