

# Destination Branding of Kalurahan Pleret as the Heritage of Mataram

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## ABSTRACT

### Keywords

Destination Branding

Kalurahan Pleret

Tourist Attractions

Indonesia, with its diverse tourist attractions, is rapidly developing and growing. One of them is the Special Region of Yogyakarta, a city known for its historical sites. This research focuses on Kalurahan Pleret, the center of the Islamic Mataram Kingdom, which holds several relics of the glory days of Kraton Pleret scattered across various hamlets. Therefore, the local government and community strive to preserve cultural assets by establishing a Cultural Tourism Object called Bumi Mataram Pleret with the slogan The Heritage of Mataram. In developing tourist attractions, finding unique attractions in a tourism area is essential. Hence, this study aims to explore the form of Destination Branding for Kalurahan Pleret as The Heritage of Mataram. This research employs qualitative research methods, utilizing data collection techniques such as observation, interviews, and documentation. Data analysis techniques include data condensation, data presentation, conclusion drawing, and verification. The results indicate that the development of tourist attractions by Kalurahan Pleret uses Destination Branding strategies. According to Morgan, N., & Pritchard (2004), this involves five stages: Market Investigation, Analysis and Strategic Recommendations, Brand Identity Development, Brand Launch and Introduction, Brand Implementation, and Monitoring, Evaluation, and Review. The findings of this study suggest that Destination Branding efforts by Kalurahan Pleret are effective in terms of promotion and developing the Tourism Village. However, there is room for improvement in management, as the human resources within the village still lack full awareness and responsibility, thus requiring external support.

## 1. Introduction

Indonesia is a country with the largest archipelago, rich in cultural diversity unparalleled by any other nation. Beyond its cultural wealth, Indonesia boasts a variety of attractions including culinary delights, natural reserves, ethnic tourism, religious sites, agricultural tourism, and more. The millions of natural wonders, cultural assets, and ancestral heritage that remain pristine in Indonesia are values we must continue to preserve. Government management of tourism is essential to attract tourists (Chatamallah, 2008).

Tourism in Indonesia can be seen in the increasing number of tourist destinations emerging. According to Law No. 10 of 2009 concerning Tourism, tourism encompasses various activities supported by various facilities and services provided by the community, entrepreneurs, government, and local government. The enactment of Law No. 22 of 1999 concerning Regional Governance grants freedom and financial autonomy to regions to regulate and maximize the utilization of their resources to generate income for the region and develop their potential.

The Special Region of Yogyakarta (DIY) is one of Indonesia's provinces known for its special status, as an educational hub, and a tourist city. The Special Region of Yogyakarta (DIY) comprises several regencies and one city, namely Bantul Regency, Sleman Regency, Gunung Kidul Regency, Kulon Progo Regency, and the city of Yogyakarta. The Special Region of Yogyakarta (DIY) also includes several Kalurahan (villages), one of which is Kalurahan Pleret. Each of these areas within

DIY offers beautiful, diverse, and appealing places to visit. One such attraction is the Cultural Tourism in Kalurahan Pleret.

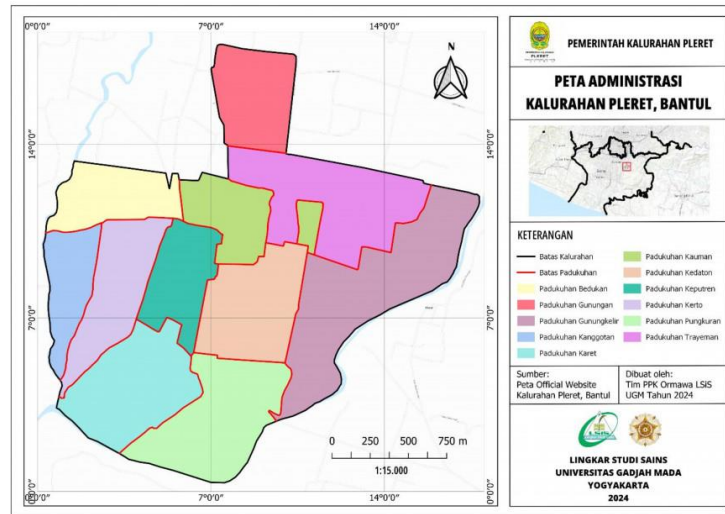


Figure 1. Map of Pleret District

Source: <https://www.pleret.id/galeri/108>

Kalurahan Pleret is one of the villages in the Pleret District of Bantul Regency, consisting of 11 hamlets and 79 neighborhoods. It was the center of the Mataram Kingdom during the reign of Amangkurat I (1646-1677), situated approximately 12 km southeast of Yogyakarta city. Consequently, Kalurahan Pleret boasts several historical remnants from the glory days of the Pleret Palace scattered across various hamlets. However, many people are still unaware that the Pleret area was once the administrative center of the Islamic Mataram Kingdom during its heyday. The Bumi Mataram Pleret Tourism Village strives to preserve this cultural asset, making it a cultural and historical tourism destination, benefiting not only as a tourist attraction but also involving the local community as tourism operators (Pleret, 2024).

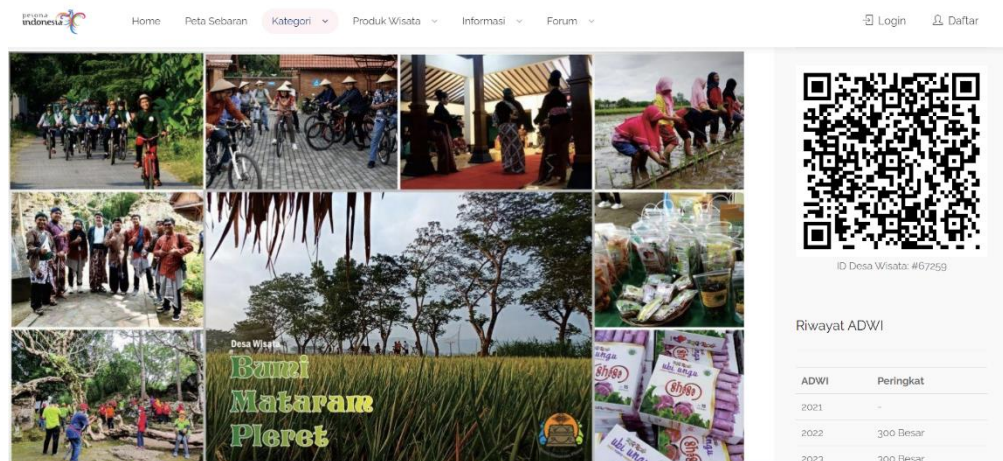


Figure 2. Tourism Potential of Pleret District

Source: [https://jadesta.kememparekraf.go.id/desa/bumi\\_mataram\\_pleret](https://jadesta.kememparekraf.go.id/desa/bumi_mataram_pleret)

Kalurahan Pleret has abundant potential for historical and natural tourism destinations. Various remnants of the Islamic Mataram Palace sites, if managed effectively, could become a driving force for tourism in Kalurahan Pleret. Management of these potentials and destinations is overseen by the Tourism Village management, known as Pokdarwis and Bumdes. The Tourism Village, named Bumi Mataram Pleret, serves as a community-based institution whose members, consisting of tourism stakeholders, have a sense of responsibility and play a role in managing tourism in Kalurahan Pleret, supporting the creation of a conducive environment for tourism development and utilizing it for the welfare of the surrounding community.

Kalurahan Pleret's strategic location, nestled between two major rivers (Opak River and Gajahwong River), and a hill named Bukit Sentono, provide ample potential for community-based tourism development to boost the local economy. Moreover, Kalurahan Pleret is renowned for its digital village initiatives, with numerous innovations in information technology implemented and integrated into a website <https://pleret.id>, which offers various features and data information.

Basically, Brand and Branding are two different things. According to (Baladi, 2011) in his book titled "The Brutal Truth About Asian Branding," a brand is the positioning of a product in the consumer's mind. (Killer, 2009) states that branding is the assignment of a name, term, sign, symbol, design, or a combination of these, intended to identify goods or services and differentiate them from those of competitors.

In realizing cultural tourism destinations, tourism providers attract the interest of potential tourists to visit these destinations. Each tourism provider leaves a positive and attractive impression, encouraging tourists who have visited before to return to the place. In managing a tourist destination, both the community and the government must play a role in the development process of natural potentials that can now become tourist destinations. Therefore, this research is interested in examining more deeply the stages of destination branding existing in Kalurahan Pleret as the Heritage of Mataram.

Using the theory of Destination branding, which is an effort to change a person's perception of a place or destination, including in discerning the differences between places to choose as a destination. Destination Brand has a meaning that goes beyond just a slogan, tagline, destination logo, and so on; rather, the brand of a destination should encompass the entire destination, including its values, philosophy, culture, and the hopes of the community or stakeholders within that destination.

The theory used in this research is the Theory of Destination Branding according to Morgan, N., & Pritchard (2004). The explanation of the Theory of Destination Branding according to Morgan, N., & Pritchard (2004) is as follows:

Destination branding is the process used to develop a unique identity and personality for all competitive destinations. The goal of branding is to "select a consistent combination of brand elements to identify and differentiate a destination as building a positive image" (Cai, 2002).

The process used to develop a unique identity and personality for all competitive destinations. Destination branding is a strategy for marketing or promoting an area. A concept of destination branding, based on passion and appealing identity, connects various aspects to facilitate people forming associations with the place. This destination branding must effectively manage consumers' minds because the competition for messages with other destinations takes place within consumers' minds (Situmorang, 2008). According to Morgan, N., & Pritchard (2004), they suggest five stages for destination branding to change the image of an area, as follows:

**Market Investigation, Analysis, and Strategic Recommendations.** This stage involves researching market potential, identifying development opportunities, and devising strategies to develop the destination. The function of market investigation, analysis, and strategic recommendation is to find and devise strategies for developing the destination.

**Brand Identity Development.** According to Morgan & Pritchard as cited in Murfianti (2010), "Brand identity development is formed based on the vision, mission, and image the area wants to create." What kind of brand identity will be created for the place. In this case, the purpose of creating a place, so that in the future, the image formed is the result of the identity owned by the destination.

**Brand Launch and Introduction: Communicating the Vision.** After creating the tagline or symbol, the next step is to introduce the brand. According to Morgan & Pritchard as cited in Murfianti (2010), brand launch can be done through various media such as advertising, direct marketing, personal selling, websites, brochures, or event organizers, filmmakers, destination marketing organizations (DMOs), and journalists. This stage involves communicating the brand through various available media.

**Brand Implementation.** In the next stage, according to Morgan & Pritchard as cited in Murfianti (2010), brand implementation is an effort to integrate all parties involved in brand formation, so that destination branding can be successful. Brand is a promise. From the government, hotels, travel

agencies, retailers to local communities, everyone involved must work hard to fulfill their promises. So that visitors feel comfortable and impressed.

**Monitoring, Evaluation, and Review.** In this final stage, an effort is made to monitor for any deviations, shortcomings, etc. (Morgan & Pritchard as cited in Murfianti, 2010). The results of this monitoring are then evaluated and reviewed for further improvements. The conclusion of the destination branding theory is the effort of a destination to form a competitive identity through a way to create a good reputation or image that can be trusted in the market.

## 2. Method

Based on the research problem formulated, this study adopts a qualitative research approach. According to Bogdan and Taylor in (Moleong, 2005), qualitative approach is a research procedure that produces descriptive data, whether in the form of written or oral words originating from individuals or behaviors under study. The method used in this research is qualitative descriptive analysis, which defines a phenomenon or research object based on current facts being studied.

Data collection is conducted through observation and interviews. Observation involves direct observation of the research object to closely observe the activities. Semi-structured interviews are conducted with tourism managers in Kalurahan Pleret, including the village head or branding team, and several supporting informants, namely local tourists, using a predefined list of questions.

The data analysis steps in this research involve using data analysis techniques (Matthew B. Miles, 2014), including data condensation, data presentation, conclusion drawing, and verification. Data condensation is the process of sorting, focusing, reducing, abstracting, and modifying material that emerges from field notes or written transcripts. The researcher presents the findings in the form of categorized narratives according to the meaning and theme related to destination branding in Kalurahan Pleret as the Heritage of Mataram.

The final step in qualitative data analysis is drawing conclusions. Drawing conclusions involves connecting data that describes conditions in the field with theoretical foundations by identifying patterns of relationships, explanations, and cause-and-effect relationships. In this study, the conclusion obtained is in the form of a report on Destination Branding in Kalurahan Pleret as the Heritage of Mataram.

## 3. Result and Discussion

### 3.1. Presenting the Results

Tourism is one of the sectors driving community economic growth, thus requiring collective management to ensure its proper development. To promote the tourism sector, various efforts in tourism development management are needed, which are realized through the establishment of a Tourism Village management. Therefore, the Tourism Village named Bumi Mataram Pleret was established as an institutional form at the community level, consisting of tourism stakeholders who are concerned, responsible, and act as managers of tourism in Kalurahan Pleret to support the conducive environment for the growth and development of tourism and its utilization for the welfare of the surrounding community.

The Bumi Mataram Pleret Tourism Village is currently under the auspices of Pokdarwis Pleret, established on June 23, 2021, by the Head of Kalurahan Pleret and Pokdarwis. Subsequently, a Decree was issued by the Head of Pleret regarding the Establishment of Tourism Village Development Management in Kalurahan Pleret Number 44 Year 2021 on July 14, 2021. Finally, the Management of Bumi Mataram Pleret Tourism Village was affirmed in the Decree of the Head of the Bantul District Tourism Office No. 045 SK/2022 concerning the Affirmation of the Establishment of Bumi Mataram Pleret Tourism Village Management, Kalurahan Pleret, Kapanewon Pleret, Bantul District. (Pleret, 2024)

Currently, the Bumi Mataram Pleret Tourism Village operates under Pokdarwis. Kalurahan Pleret, as a region with remnants of the Islamic Mataram Palace Craft with the tagline "The Heritage of

Mataram," certainly possesses historical richness manifested through numerous sites of Mataram Palace relics. The development of this tourism village highlights the history of Pleret Palace and other tourism potentials, requiring the support and involvement of all stakeholders in the tourism sector, namely the community, entrepreneurs, and local government. These sites are spread across several areas in Kalurahan Pleret and are indeed fascinating to explore.

Not only historical sites, but Kalurahan Pleret also boasts cultural arts, crafts, and natural potentials. This abundant potential makes Kalurahan Pleret one of the highly attractive Tourism Villages to visit. In general, the existing potentials are divided into three categories: (1) Historical Potential, (2) Natural Potential, (3) Arts, Culture, and Craft Potential.

To enhance the appeal of tourist visitors, Kalurahan Pleret brands itself through Destination Branding as The Heritage of Mataram. The stages of Destination Branding used by Kalurahan Pleret are in accordance with the results of interviews with the Head of Kalurahan and Pokdarwis Management of Kalurahan Pleret.

In 2023, the visitor data for Bumi Mataram Pleret Tourism Village showed a significantly high number of visitors, as observed and documented by the researcher from the tourism management of Kalurahan Pleret.

**Table 1.** Visitor Data for Bumi Mataram Pleret Tourists in 2023

Bulan	Mbulak Wilkel	Taman Benteng Mataram	Gerbang Pleret	Taman Senja Ngelo
Januari	550	560	150	
Februari	255	660	150	
Maret	129	245	100	
April	435	615	100	
Mei	425	1250	100	1150
Juni	270	433	350	450
Juli	430	570	250	550
Agustus	350	450	255	500
September	265	535	350	450
Oktober	355	1555	400	500
November	455	550	400	500
Desember	230	435	250	
Jumlah per Tahun	4149	7858	2855	4100

Source: Processed by the researcher

According to the theory used in this study, namely Destination Branding Theory, the research results are formulated accordingly. The following are the stages of Destination Branding Theory used by the researcher, tailored to the results of interviews with the Head of Kalurahan Pleret and Pokdarwis management.

**Market Investigation, Analysis, and Strategic Recommendations.** Based on the researcher's observations, Kalurahan Pleret possesses numerous potentials and historical as well as natural tourist destinations. There are many sites of Islamic Mataram Palace relics managed, which can serve as drivers of tourism in Kalurahan Pleret. To formulate strategies for developing existing tourist destinations in Kalurahan Pleret, the tourism management conducted research by formulating what exists in Kalurahan Pleret using SWOT analysis. Thus, market analysis can align with the intended targets. Developing tourist attractions for enhancement involves not only historical sites but also cultural arts and crafts as entertainment and complements to tourism. By branding through social

media, it can reach visitors according to the intended target of researchers, historians, and foreign tourists.



**Figure 3.** Logo of Bumi Mataram Tourism Village

Source: <https://pleret.id/>

**Brand Identity Development.** The Tourism Village named Bumi Mataram Pleret is an institutional form at the community level, consisting of tourism stakeholders who are concerned, responsible, and play a role as managers of tourism in Kalurahan Pleret, supporting the conducive environment for the growth and development of tourism and its utilization for the welfare of the surrounding community.

With Vision and Mission: **Vision**, Realizing competitive natural, cultural, and historical tourism in Kalurahan Pleret that benefits all stakeholders.

**Mission**, Providing unique and different travel experiences to tourists based on principles of quality and professionalism, commitment to service, and partnership orientation. Becoming a leading Tourism Village in Indonesia that promotes cultural, natural tourism and local wisdom. Participating in building and developing tourism destinations within the cluster of tourism villages and participating in local community empowerment.

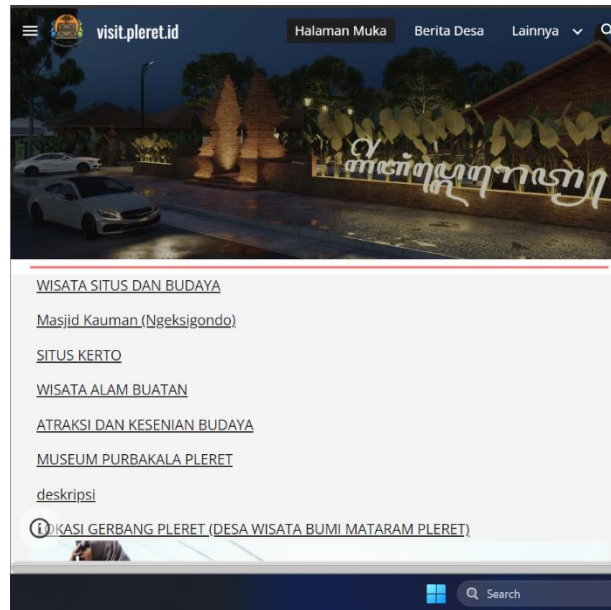
The development of tourism in Kalurahan Pleret aligns with the tagline "Heritage of Mataram." In Kalurahan Pleret, the focus is on showcasing historical sites, Mataram history, and cultural heritage by explaining history to tourists during their visits. The branding established in Kalurahan Pleret emphasizes a modern interpretation of history. For instance, Mbulak Wilkel culinary tourism allows visitors to enjoy the rice field area, provides playgrounds for children, and artificial ponds resembling fishing ponds for relaxation. Thus, the Brand Identity brought by the Tourism Village of Kalurahan Pleret is an artistic village with historical, natural, and cultural art and craft potentials processed in a modern way.

The identity brought by The Heritage of Mataram Tourism Village in Kalurahan Pleret focuses on historical potentials. Among them:

**Kerto Site.** The Kerto Site is a pendopo building, supported by the discovery of 4 pieces of guru saka umpak with a surface size of 70 x 70 cm, base size of 85 x 85 cm, and height of 67 cm. Currently, there are 2 umpaks remaining at the Kerto Site, with 1 umpak relocated to Taman Sari and placed at the Masjid Saka Tunggal, while the whereabouts of the other umpak remain unknown.

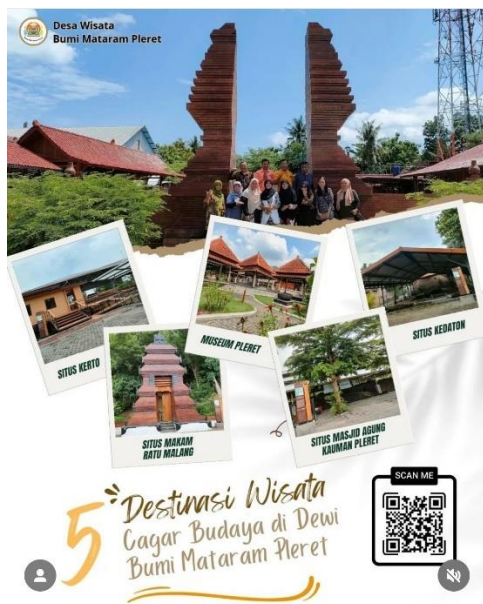
**Kauman Mosque Site.** It is one of the sites in the Pleret tourist area, which once served as the third capital of the Mataram Sultanate. According to the research of the Yogyakarta Cultural Office, this mosque was significant in its time.

The examples above, which represent the historical potentials of Kalurahan Pleret, can serve as an example of the identity promoted by The Heritage of Mataram in Kalurahan Pleret.

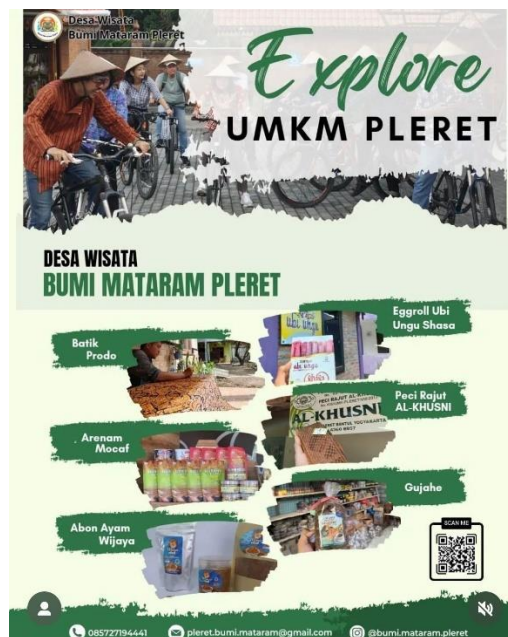


**Figure 4.** Pleret Tourism Village Website  
Source: Website visit.pleret.id

**Brand Launch and Introduction: Communicating the Vision.** Pleret Tourism Village in Kalurahan Pleret spreads information and communication through social media, which serves as a platform consistently used by Kalurahan Pleret for branding the tourism village. Various pamphlet distributions are conducted by the social media management team of Pleret Tourism Village, resulting in a bustling visitation and broad awareness of the tourism village.



**Figure 5.** Tourism Destination Pamphlet  
Source: Instagram @bumi.mataram.pleret



**Figure 6.** SME Pamphlet  
Source: Instagram @bumi.mataram.pleret



**Figure 7.** Instagram Content

Source: Instagram @bumi.mataram.pleret

With the abundance of engaging content uploaded by the Pleret Tourism Village team, the village is rapidly expanding and gaining recognition. **Brand Implementation.** The management of Pleret Tourism Village involves the entire community of the village and internal development stakeholders supported by institutions within Kalurahan Pleret that synergize for development, with Kalurahan Pleret having a masterplan. External development is supported by universities and the Prehistoric History Museum managed by the DIY Cultural Office (Kundha Kabudayan).

**Monitoring, Evaluation, and Review.** Results from interviews conducted by researchers with several tourists visiting Kalurahan Pleret indicate that the tourism branding there is quite effective, attracting the interest of tourists. However, the tourism branding of Kalurahan Pleret still needs improvement. Based on statements from tourists, the facilities in Kalurahan Pleret are described as serene and pleasant for family and friends' tourism destinations, relatively inexpensive, with comfortable road access to tourism locations. Besides, the tourism and culinary options are reasonably priced. What interested me in visiting the tourism destination in Kalurahan Pleret was the hidden gems that are still pristine and many tourism spots in Pleret that still utilize recycled materials or natural beauty, and the tourism facilities in Kalurahan Pleret are adequate, with sufficient access to tourism sites and a preserved natural feel. The culinary and shopping options are quite complete, providing visitors with a comfortable experience.

From the statements above, it can be concluded that Kalurahan Pleret has successfully implemented Destination Branding strategies. Tourists are attracted to the concept of The Heritage of Mataram at Pleret Tourism Village. Tourists' suggestions to the managers of The Heritage of Mataram at Pleret Tourism Village include maintaining cleanliness of the surrounding environment to maintain a pristine and clean atmosphere that ensures visitors' comfort and encourages return visits. They also suggest adding new attractions to enhance variety. Based on interview results, Pleret Tourism Village needs improvement in tourism development and cleanliness management so that tourists can visit comfortably and to enhance Destination Branding to attract more visitors. Through the research on



Destination Branding Strategy of The Heritage of Mataram at Pleret Tourism Village, it is hoped that strengths and weaknesses in branding can be identified, leading to future evaluations and reviews.

### 3.2. Discussion

Based on the research conducted through observation, interviews, and documentation, at this stage, the researcher will discuss and analyze in-depth the data obtained within the theoretical framework previously employed. This theoretical framework includes relevant theories structured to provide guidance in accurately understanding and analyzing the research findings. By utilizing these relevant theories, the researcher will analyze and elaborate on the findings derived from the data.

**Market investigation, analysis and strategic recommendations.** Based on the researcher's observations, Kelurahan Pleret has a lot of potential and historical and natural tourism destinations. There are many sites of the Islamic Mataram Kingdom's legacy managed and can serve as tourism sector drivers in Kelurahan Pleret. The development strategy built by Pleret Tourism Village utilizes SWOT analysis. The researcher identifies that the analysis of Pleret Tourism Village can be considered on target because the tourism village attracts its target audience using digital media. Digital media significantly influences the development of Tourism Villages that can be recognized by the public.

**Brand identity development.** Pleret Tourism Village, named Bumi Mataram Pleret, is a community-level institution whose members consist of tourism stakeholders who care and take responsibility and play a role as tourism managers in Kelurahan Pleret in supporting the creation of a conducive climate for the growth and development of tourism and utilizing it for the welfare of the surrounding community. By having a distinctive logo about culture and history, it can be seen that Pleret Tourism Village is synonymous with its history. The Vision & Mission built by Pleret Tourism Village is in line with the existing logo, namely the vision to prosper the community can be achieved through the existence of the tourism village. Having the tagline Heritage of Mataram makes the Tourism Village show the History and the tourism legacy of the Mataram Kingdom, according to the researcher, the built tagline is already in line with the theme of the village, thus making the brand identity of Kelurahan Pleret.

**Brand launch and introduction: communicating the vision.** Based on the researcher's observations, the media used is in accordance with the era of development by applying Digital Village, which makes it easier for tourists to access and explore tourism in Kelurahan Pleret. Kelurahan Pleret uses social media to brand its tourism and uses the website to review the guidebook through [visit.pleret.id](http://visit.pleret.id) and uses Instagram and Tiktok media to brand tourism so that it can be reached by a wider audience, and according to the managers of Kelurahan Pleret, these media can be said to be effective because they greatly assist branding in Kelurahan Pleret tourism village. Pleret Tourism Village disseminates information and communication through social media, social media as a facility always used by Kelurahan Pleret for branding the tourism village. Various kinds of pamphlet distributions conducted by the social media management team of Pleret Tourism Village so that Pleret Tourism Village is crowdedly visited and known to a wide audience.

**Brand implementation.** Based on the researcher's observations, the manager of tourism in Kelurahan Pleret is the entire village community because the purpose of this tourism village is to prosper the community by exploring existing potential. In addition to the internal development, it is supported by institutions from the Kelurahan Pleret region whose synergies are for development, and Kelurahan Pleret has a master plan. From external development, it is assisted by universities and the Prehistoric History Museum managed by the Cultural Office (Kundha Kabudayan) DIY.

**Monitoring, evaluation and review.** Monitoring conducted at Pleret Tourism Village is by reviewing cultural heritage and facilities provided by the Tourism Village, so evaluations are always conducted to see how much needs to be improved. Monitoring of Pleret Tourism Village by the Yogyakarta Cultural Office. Researchers reviewed that the Yogyakarta Cultural Office held monitoring and evaluation only a few times, with monitoring able to see the shortcomings that need to be developed in the analysis so that after monitoring there is development for the Pleret Tourism Village, but this monitoring has not been carried out regularly by the Yogyakarta Cultural Office, so evaluations are carried out by the internal manager of the Pleret Tourism Village to periodically review the deficiencies and improvements that must be made by the Pleret Tourism Village. With research

on The Heritage of Mataram Desa Wisata Kelurahan Pleret destination branding strategy, it is hoped that it can identify the shortcomings and advantages of branding The Heritage of Mataram Desa Wisata Kelurahan Pleret and make evaluations and future reviews.

#### 4. Conclusion

Based on the research conducted in the previous discussions, the conclusion drawn from this study is that the Tourism Village of Pleret has significant tourism potential. By employing Destination Branding Strategies, such as enhancing tourist attractions to support the appeal of tourism and presenting a themed tourism village showcasing the Heritage of Mataram, which highlights historical potentials packaged by the Tourism Village, the area of Pleret can compete effectively with other tourism villages.

The Pleret Tourism Village area has diversified attractions, including themed photo spots like Heritage of Mataram, culinary tourism at Mbulak Wilkel where visitors can enjoy the rice fields, playgrounds for children, and reservoirs designed as fishing ponds for relaxation. The development of accessibility and transportation that is readily available and easy to reach ensures comfort for tourists.

The community of Pleret is involved in managing this tourism village, both as managers of micro, small, and medium enterprises (UMKM) and as tour guides to improve the welfare of the community, allowing them to generate income. Local guides are available to explore Pleret Village, narrating the history of Mataram, while managers focus on the preservation and enhancement of historical relics.

This research conducted interviews with representatives of Kalurahan Pleret to identify stages of Destination Branding Strategies, thereby obtaining research results. Additionally, interviews were conducted with two tourists visiting Kalurahan Pleret to provide comparative insights for this study.

#### 5. Acknowledgement

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