

***Tourist Perceptions of the Closure Policy for the Inner Courtyard Zone
(Njeron) and the Destination Image of Prambanan Temple***

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ABSTRACT

The closure of the Inner Courtyard Zone (Njeron) of Prambanan Temple every Monday is a cultural heritage preservation policy that has drawn varied reactions from tourists and may affect the destination's image. This study aims to examine tourists' perceptions of the closure policy and describe Prambanan Temple's destination image following its implementation. Using a mixed-methods approach with a sequential explanatory design, the study began with a quantitative phase through a questionnaire distributed to 100 respondents with varying levels of awareness about the closure policy, analyzed using descriptive statistics, followed by a qualitative phase through in-depth interviews analyzed via data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The results show that tourists' perceptions of the closure policy fall into the good category (mean score of 3.74), with the highest score on policy evaluation (3.84), followed by policy information (3.71) and impact on visitor experience (3.66). Although the overall assessment was positive, the delivery of policy information prior to visits still needs improvement so tourists can better prepare for their visits. Qualitatively, Prambanan Temple's destination image remained positive across three indicators: cognitive (viewed as a destination with high historical, cultural, and educational value), affective (tourists felt comfortable and impressed despite restricted access), and conative (tourists still intended to revisit and recommend the site to others). In other words, the Monday closure policy has not caused a negative shift in the overall destination image, and tourists' understanding of the preservation purpose has actually reinforced this positive image. Therefore, communication strategies regarding the policy should be strengthened.

Keywords: *tourist perception, destination image, preservation policy, Prambanan Temple*