

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### **1.1 Background of Research**

Cultural heritage tourism has become one of the fastest-growing segments of the global tourism industry over the past two decades. Bibliometric studies show that research on this field has expanded rapidly, with themes such as tourist satisfaction, sustainable development, and cultural heritage management emerging as key research frontiers across many countries, with scholars from China, Spain, and Italy being among the most productive contributors (Zhang et al., 2023). This growth is further supported by findings indicating that research attention in the 2020s has increasingly shifted toward topics such as staged authenticity, world heritage, and place attachment, reflecting the field's growing theoretical maturity and its increasing relevance to policymakers and tourism practitioners worldwide (Zhang et al., 2023).

In Indonesia, cultural tourism has likewise become an effective strategy for introducing the nation's cultural heritage while serving as a significant source of foreign exchange, although its rapid growth also raises concerns regarding cultural commodification and the risk of heritage degradation (Atika & Pramono, 2026). This concern is further reinforced by an ethnographic study conducted across three Indonesian destinations, including Yogyakarta, which found that the rapid expansion of tourism infrastructure and visitor numbers has raised critical questions about sustainability, cultural commodification, and equitable benefit distribution among local communities (Madania & Ratman, 2025). This highlights the importance of well-directed policies so that the economic benefits of tourism can be achieved without compromising the authenticity and sustainability of Indonesia's cultural heritage.

Cultural tourism plays an important role in introducing a region's identity while also supporting local economic growth. In Indonesia, many destinations hold high historical and cultural value, one of which is Yogyakarta. The city is widely recognized as a region rich in cultural heritage, traditions, and history that have been well preserved

to this day. Its historical areas have become a major attraction for both domestic and international tourists seeking educational and cultural tourism experiences (Rindrasih et al., 2022).

One of the historical areas in Yogyakarta with significant historical value is Kotagede. Kotagede is known as the first capital of the Islamic Mataram Kingdom, established in the sixteenth century. This area preserves various historical heritage sites that can still be found today, such as Masjid Gedhe Mataram, the Royal Cemetery Complex of Mataram Kings, Pasar Legi Kotagede, Benteng Cepuri, and various traditional Javanese buildings. In addition, Kotagede is also well known for its silver craftsmanship, which has become part of the local cultural identity for many years (Rosilawati et al., 2019).

Despite this great potential, the promotion of Kotagede's history is still not optimal. A recent study on cultural tourism development in Yogyakarta confirms that promotion remains one of the main challenges faced by destinations in the region, alongside inadequate supporting infrastructure, even though opportunities exist through digital promotion and local community involvement (Anggraini & Jannah, 2026). Evaluations of the regional tourism office's official social media accounts likewise indicate that current content is often perceived as insufficiently informative and not consistently updated, which limits its effectiveness in reaching tourists. As a result, information about the history and cultural heritage of Kotagede remains scattered across various sources, such as articles, journals, social media, and direct explanations from tour guides, making it difficult for tourists, particularly international tourists, to obtain information that is concise, attractive, and easy to understand.

Some visual media on Kotagede's history have previously been developed, such as an infographic-based history book intended as a learning tool for junior and senior high school students. However, this medium was designed for educational rather than promotional purposes and was not presented in bilingual format. This indicates that a visual, bilingual travel guide specifically designed to promote Kotagede's history to

domestic and international tourists has not yet been developed, leaving a clear gap that this study aims to address.

In the era of globalization and digital development, effective promotional media should be able to deliver information in a concise, attractive, informative, and accessible way. One of the media that can be used is a travel guide. A travel guide is a printed or digital medium designed to present information in a concise manner through a combination of texts and visual elements (Karlinda et al., 2025). Travel guides are considered effective as promotional media because they can present information in a structured, communicative, and easy-to-understand format, making them suitable for a wide range of target users, including domestic and international tourists seeking practical and accessible destination information (Karlinda et al., 2025).

A bilingual travel guide functions not only as an informational medium but also as a promotional tool that can enhance the attractiveness of a tourist destination. The use of two languages, namely Bahasa Indonesia and English, allows information about Kotagede's history to be accessible to wider audiences. According to Gunawan (2025), bilingual travel guides help tourists obtain communicative, accurate, and context-appropriate tourism information. Furthermore, Budiharjo et al. (2022) stated that bilingual texts in tourism promotional media should deliver informative as well as persuasive messages to effectively attract tourists.

Based on the explanation above, it is necessary to develop effective promotional media to introduce Kotagede's history to broader audiences, particularly domestic and international tourists. Therefore, this study focuses on "Creating a Visual Bilingual travel guide of Kotagede Yogyakarta History as a Promotional Medium." This travel guide is expected to become an informative, attractive, and effective medium in introducing the historical value and cultural heritage of Kotagede while supporting the preservation and promotion of this heritage area.

## **1.2 Research Problem**

Based on the background described above, the research problems are formulated as follows:

1. How is a bilingual travel guides designed as a tourism information and promotional medium for the historical heritage of Kotagede?
2. How does tourist feedback reflect the effectiveness of the bilingual travel guide as a tourism information and promotional medium for Kotagede?

## **1.3 Research Objective**

The objectives of this research are:

1. To identify relevant historical information aspects of Kotagede to be included in the travel guides.
2. To create a visual bilingual travel guides in Indonesian and English as a promotional medium for introducing Kotagede's history to domestic and international tourists.

## **1.4 Advantages of the Research**

The advantages of this research are as follows:

### **1. Theoretical Advantages**

This study is expected to serve as a reference and provide additional insights into the development of travel guide. It may also contribute to evaluating the methods and materials used in creating effective and engaging travel guides as a promotional medium.

### **2. Practical Advantages**

Practically, this study offers additional information about tourism in Kotagede, Yogyakarta, and functions as a promotional tool to introduce Kotagede to a broader audience, including visitors from outside Yogyakarta and international tourists.

## **1.5 Output**

The output of this research is a visual bilingual travel guide entitled “Bilingual Travel Guide Kotagede - Explore the History, Heritage and Local Experience”, presented in both Indonesian and English to serve domestic and international tourists. The travel guide covers nine historical heritage sites in Kotagede, namely Masjid Gedhe Mataram Kotagede, Makam Raja-Raja Mataram Kotagede, Masjid Perak Kotagede, Oud Kotagêdé Tjepoeri, Between Two Gates, Pasar Legi Kotagede, Dalem Sopingan, Rumah Pesik, and Omah UGM Kotagede, alongside supporting sections such as a tourist attraction map, access information to Kotagede, general visitor information, traditional arts, silver craft, culinary recommendations, homestay options, and references.

The travel guide combines historical narratives with visual elements, including field-based photographs, maps, icons, and QR codes linking to location details, designed using a layout, typography, and color palette that reflect the historical and cultural atmosphere of Kotagede. The final travel guide printed in A5 size (148×210 mm) consists of 52 pages. The final product is produced in both printed and digital formats to ensure accessibility for a wide range of users, and will be registered for Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) protection to obtain an official Intellectual Property Rights certificate, ensuring legal recognition and protection of the product as an original work resulting from this research.