

GOLAGA TOURIST ATTRACTIONS MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

Praptiningsih

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the management of Golaga's natural tourist attractions. The research method used was a qualitative approach, with data collection techniques including observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Data analysis was conducted using the POAC (Planning, Organizing, Actuating, and Controlling) management theory. The research results show that Golaga tourism management has implemented the POAC management principles as proposed by George R. Terry. In the planning aspect, management focuses on digital promotion, collaboration with travel agents, community empowerment, and planning the addition of artificial gravity-based attractions. In the organizing aspect, the organizational structure of PERUMDA Owabong has been clearly and systematically structured, starting from the board of directors to the implementing units in the field. The actuating aspect is realized through the involvement of local communities as a workforce of 80–90%, the implementation of excellent service training, and the empowerment of local MSMEs. Meanwhile, the controlling aspect is carried out through routine evaluation of facilities, digital promotions, and monitoring of tourist reviews on social media and other online platforms. The implementation of this management has had a positive impact on increasing the number of tourist visits and achieving Golaga's revenue, which reaches billions of rupiah per year. Furthermore, factors influencing the management of Golaga's tourist attractions demonstrate a combination of potential and challenges. From an attraction perspective, the uniqueness of the approximately 1,200-meter-long ancient lava cave is the main attraction, supported by modern man-made attractions. However, the potential for educational and cultural tourism has yet to be optimally and sustainably developed. In terms of accessibility, Golaga's location is relatively easy to reach, although limited local transportation and buggy fleets remain a challenge. Basic amenities are adequate, but internet connection quality in the cave area remains limited. Meanwhile, additional services and tourism activities are well developed, but the availability of integrated tourism packages still needs to be improved. Therefore, Golaga's development strategy needs to be directed at strengthening integrated tourism packages, improving supporting infrastructure, and empowering the community in a sustainable manner to maximize tourism potential and improve the economic welfare of the Siwarak Village community.

Keywords: golaga, natural tourist attractions, tourism management, POAC.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is a strategic sector in economic development that demands the implementation of sustainable and integrated tourist attraction management strategies. Effective management aims not only to increase the number of tourist visits but also to maintain a balance between resource utilization, environmental conservation, and the welfare of local communities. According to Cooper (2008), tourist attraction management must take into account environmental carrying capacity, community involvement, and appropriate marketing strategies to ensure destinations remain high-quality and competitive. In line with this, Law Number 10 of 2009 concerning Tourism emphasizes that tourism management must be based on the principles of sustainability, providing economic benefits to the community, and preserving culture and the environment. Purbalingga Regency, located in Central Java Province, has geographic characteristics that support the management of nature tourism, particularly mountain-based tourism. Situated on the southern slopes of Mount Slamet, this area boasts a distinctive natural landscape, a cool climate, and diverse ecosystem potential. According to Gunn (1994), nature tourism attractions require appropriate management strategies to maintain the unique landscape and ecosystem while simultaneously providing a quality tourism experience. Therefore, nature tourism management in Purbalingga must be carried out in a planned and controlled manner to prevent environmental degradation due to the pressure of tourist visits.



Figure 1.1 Golaga Tourist Attractions
Source: Documentation, Praptiningsih, 2025

Figure 1.1 shows one of the natural tourist attractions of Golaga (Goa Lawa Purbalingga) located in Siwarak Village, Karangreja District. Golaga is an ancient lava cave formed from the lava flow of an active volcano thousands of years ago with a length of about 1,200 meters and a room area of 6,683 m². The unique structure of the cave without stalactites and stalagmites, as well as the presence of various cave rooms that have names and historical value, make Golaga a rare natural tourist attraction in Central Java. In addition to cave exploration, Golaga is also equipped with educational, recreational, and adventure attractions, such as interactions with animals, outbound rides, glamping, camping areas, and supporting facilities such as cafes and accommodations within the tourist area. Golaga is managed by the Regional Public Company (Perumda) Owabong, which also manages several other tourist attractions in Purbalingga. Perumda Owabong plays the primary role in planning, organizing, implementing, and overseeing Golaga's tourism operations. Management strategies include infrastructure improvements, providing tourist facilities, and promoting the area through various media, with the goal of improving service quality and improving tourist satisfaction (Partomo, 2025).

Table I.1
Number of Tourist Visits to Golaga
January - December 2024

No	Month	Traveler		Total
		Individual	Gup	
1	January	7,510	6,256	13,766
2	February	5,624	1,934	7,558
3	March	5,624	1,934	7,558
4	April	16,035	1,268	17,303
5	May	10,806	2,208	13,014
6	June	8,690	5,170	13,860
7	July	10,252	2,114	12,366
8	August	45,391	7,694	53,085
9	September	21,137	4,031	25,168
10	October	15,256	2,745	18,001
11	November	33,194	33,926	67,120
12	December	42,585	5,182	47,767

Source: Golaga Management Data, 2024.

The 2024 tourist visit data for Golaga in 2024 in Table 1.1 shows a significant upward trend with sharp fluctuations in certain months. The surge in visits occurred in August, November, and December, with tourist numbers reaching tens of thousands per month. This phenomenon indicates that Golaga is beginning to shift towards mass tourism. According to Cooper (1995), a significant increase in visits can put pressure on environmental carrying capacity, the quality of facilities, and tourism services if not balanced with appropriate management strategies. Based on initial observations, Golaga's management strategy remains centralized and dominated by management policies, while local community involvement in strategic planning remains limited. The community tends to act as operational implementers in the field, not fully involved in the decision-making process. This situation has the potential to limit the emergence of management innovations based on local wisdom that could strengthen the destination's identity

and sustainability. Furthermore, Golaga's management strategy has focused primarily on recreational attractions, while educational and cultural tourism has not been optimally and sustainably managed. Educational activities, such as pineapple processing by local MSMEs, have been implemented, but have not been consistently integrated into daily tour packages. Yet, educational and cultural tourism management holds significant potential to enhance the quality of the tourist experience while expanding economic benefits for the community. Based on these conditions, an in-depth study of Golaga tourism management strategies is needed, particularly in the context of implementing management functions, controlling the impacts of mass tourism, and optimizing the role of local communities. This study is expected to provide academic and practical contributions to formulating effective, sustainable management strategies for natural tourist attractions that balance economic, social, and environmental interests.

METHOD

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach, focusing on analyzing the management strategies of the Golaga natural tourist attraction (Goa Lawa Purbalingga). The qualitative approach was chosen because the research aims to deeply understand the management processes, strategic policies, and internal and external dynamics of tourism management, rather than to test hypotheses quantitatively. According to Creswell (2014), qualitative research allows researchers to explore social phenomena contextually through narrative and interpretive data collection. The research strategy begins with a systematic literature review as a conceptual and theoretical foundation. The literature review is used to identify strategic concepts, tourism management, POAC management, and relevant previous research. Nazir (2011) states that the literature review serves to establish a research framework and avoid repetition of previous research. The literature reviewed includes scientific journals, theses, laws and regulations, and textbooks related to natural tourism attraction management strategies.

The next stage was field data collection, conducted through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Observations were used to directly observe Golaga tourism management practices, facility conditions, and tourist activities. In-depth interviews were conducted purposively with key informants, including Golaga management, the Owabong Regional Public Company (Perumda), the village government, and local communities involved in tourism operations. Documentation included tourist visit data, the management organizational structure, and tourism promotional materials. In the data analysis strategy, this study uses POAC (Planning, Organizing, Actuating, and Controlling) management analysis as the main framework for examining management strategies. This analysis aims to identify how planning, organizing, implementing, and monitoring are applied in Golaga management. Data validity was maintained through triangulation of sources and techniques, namely comparing the results of observations, interviews, and documentation. With this research strategy, it is hoped that the results will provide a comprehensive overview of Golaga's tourism management strategy and provide applicable and sustainable strategic recommendations.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Data Description or Result

The research results show that the management of the Goa Lawa Purbalingga (Golaga) natural tourist attraction located in Siwarak Village, Karangreja District, Purbalingga Regency has implemented the POAC (Planning, Organizing, Actuating, and Controlling) management principles as proposed by George R. Terry (2006). The implementation of these four management functions contributes significantly to improving the quality of tourist destination management, visitor satisfaction, and the economic growth of the local community.

Table 3.1 Analysis of Management Strategy in Golaga with POAC

POAC aspects	Observation and Interview Results	Strategies Implemented	Information
Planning(Planning)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning is entirely under the Owabong Regional Public Company. Focus on digital promotions, providing discounts on certain events, collaborating with travel agencies/bureaus, community empowerment, and adding artificial gravity-based attractions. The Village Government only plays a role in parking management and receives monthly development funds. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online promotion through social media & official website. Discount programs for holidays and special events. - Development of artificial attractions in hilly areas. - Empowerment of local MSMEs. 	Short, medium and long term management plans have been prepared, based on the principles of environmental sustainability.
Organizing(Organizing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The organizational structure of PERUMDA Owabong and Golaga is clear. Coordination is carried out between sections in a directed manner. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear division of tasks Supervisory function by the PERUMDA Supervisory Board. 	An effective organizational structure supports synergy between departments and minimizes overlapping work.
Actuating(Implementation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 80–90% of employees come from the local community. There is excellent service training for employees. Cooperation with villages in parking lot management. Empowerment of local MSMEs in tourist areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involving local communities as the main human resources. Excellent service training. Collaboration with local MSMEs. Encourage community participation in tourism activities. 	Communities benefit directly (economy & employment), tourists receive better services.
Controlling(Supervision)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PERUMDA routinely carries out promotional controls and evaluations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular monitoring of cleanliness, security, facilities, rides. Evaluate the effectiveness of digital promotions. 	Structured control increases tourist satisfaction, as evidenced by an increase in visits and turnover of IDR 9 billion/year.

POAC aspects	Observation and Interview Results	Strategies Implemented	Information
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Facility checks are carried out every week.• <i>Monitoring</i>traveler reviews on social media & Google Reviews• Training of HR for excellent service and digital marketing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Utilizing tourist reviews as input for improvements.	

Source: Observation, Praptiningsih, 2025

In table 3.1 of the planning aspect, PERUMDA Owabong as the main manager of Golaga has prepared short, medium, and long-term plans oriented towards strengthening digital promotion, developing cooperation with travel agencies, providing discounts on certain events, empowering local MSMEs, and adding artificial gravity-based tourist attractions. This plan was prepared by considering modern tourism trends and the principles of environmental sustainability, considering that Golaga is an ancient lava cave resulting from the solidification of Mount Slamet's lava flow which has high geological value. In terms of organization, as shown in Figure 1.2, the organizational structure of PERUMDA Owabong and the Golaga management unit has been clearly and systematically structured. The division of tasks, authority, and responsibilities from the board of directors to field implementers allows for effective coordination and minimizes overlapping work. The existence of the PERUMDA Supervisory Board also strengthens the internal control function, ensuring transparent and accountable management of the tourist destination.

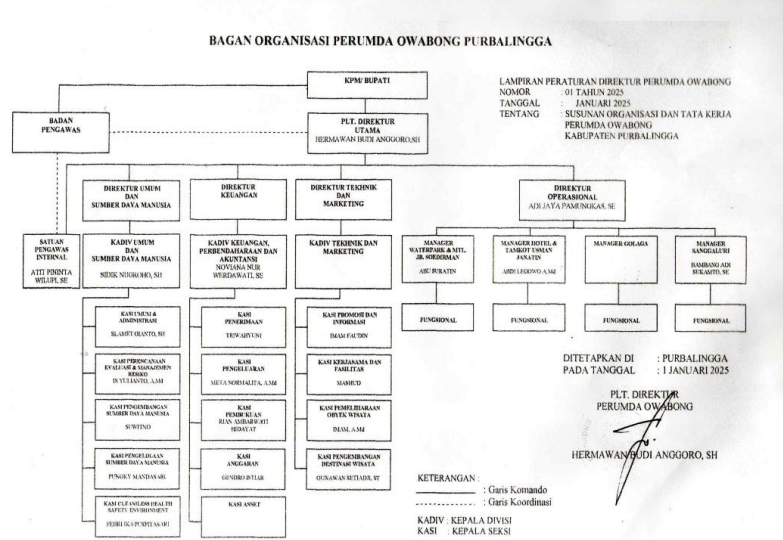


Figure 1.2 Organizational Structure of PERUMDA Owabong
Source: Documentation of PERUMDA Owabong

The implementation aspect demonstrates significant success through the active involvement of the local community. Approximately 80–90% of Golaga's workforce comes from the Siwarak Village community and its surroundings, reflecting the implementation of community-based tourism principles. Furthermore, management regularly conducts excellent service training for employees, collaborates with the village government in parking management, and empowers local MSMEs in the tourist area. This implementation has a direct economic impact on the community and improves the quality of tourism services experienced by visitors. Meanwhile, in terms of control (supervision), PERUMDA Owabong implements a structured control system through routine evaluations of facility conditions, monitoring the effectiveness of digital promotions, and analyzing tourist reviews on social media and Google Reviews. This consistent monitoring has had a positive impact on visitor satisfaction, as reflected in the

Google Review rating of 4.6 out of 5 based on more than 4,400 reviews in Figure 1.3. Another tangible impact is an increase in the number of tourist visits and Golaga's annual turnover of approximately IDR 9 billion.

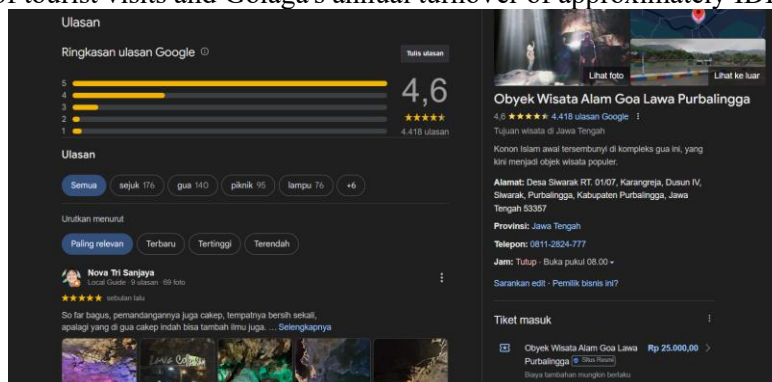


Figure 1.3 Google Review Golaga
Source: Google

In addition to management analysis, research results also show that Golaga's management strategy is influenced by a combination of internal and external factors. Based on the 3A concept of tourism (Attractions, Accessibility, Amenities) proposed by Yoeti (2008), Golaga has a strong foundation in the form of unique natural attractions, relatively good accessibility, and continuously developed supporting facilities. In terms of attractions, Golaga boasts a rare ancient lava cave, approximately 1,200 meters long, in Central Java, complemented by man-made attractions and adventure tourism activities. However, its educational and cultural tourism potential remains underutilized and tends to be incidental. In terms of accessibility, Golaga is relatively easy to reach from downtown Purbalingga, thanks to adequate road infrastructure. However, limited internal transportation and supporting facilities for visitors with special needs remain challenges that require further attention. In terms of amenities, basic facilities such as parking, restrooms, accommodation, and a culinary center are readily available and support tourism activities. However, limited internet and information technology connectivity, particularly within the cave, poses a barrier to improving the quality of service and the tourist experience. When analyzed using the 6A concept of tourism (Buhalis in Chaerunisa & Yuningsih, 2020), the attractions, accessibility, amenities, activities, and ancillary services components in Golaga are quite good, while the available packages component remains relatively weak. Integrated tourism packages for family, individual, educational, and cultural tourism have not been optimally developed, so the opportunity to increase tourist length of stay and tourism spending has not been fully realized. Overall, the research findings confirm that Golaga's management has been effective through the implementation of POAC management and the utilization of existing destination potential. However, future management needs to be directed at strengthening the integration between tourism attraction components, increasing community participation, and integrated and sustainable planning. These findings align with the views of Gunn (1994) and Cooper et al. (2005), who emphasize the importance of stakeholder involvement and a balance between economic, social, cultural, and environmental benefits in tourism destination management.

DISCUSSION

The implementation of the POAC (Planning, Organizing, Actuating, and Controlling) management function in the management of the Goa Lawa Purbalingga (Golaga) natural tourist attraction has been effective and has had a positive impact on the quality of destination management. This finding reinforces the classical management theory proposed by Terry (2006), which asserts that organizational success is largely determined by the integration of these four management functions. In terms of planning, the strategy implemented by PERUMDA Owabong demonstrates an adaptive approach to the dynamics of modern tourism, particularly through the use of digital promotion and the development of artificial attractions. This aligns with Cooper et al.'s (2005) perspective, which states that tourist destinations need to respond to changing market trends without neglecting sustainability principles. However, the research also indicates that planning has not fully optimized the potential of educational and cultural tourism, thus providing room for further development to strengthen destination differentiation. From an organizational perspective, a clear organizational structure and a strong internal oversight system contribute to effective coordination and management accountability. These findings support the concept of good destination governance, as proposed by Gunn (1994), which emphasizes the important role of management institutions in maintaining a balance between economic and conservation interests.

Implementation aspects indicate that high levels of local community involvement reflect the application of community-based tourism principles. This involvement not only improves service quality but also provides direct economic benefits to the community, thereby strengthening the social legitimacy of destination management. However, community participation remains predominantly at the operational stage and is not yet optimal in the strategic planning stage. In terms of monitoring, utilizing tourist feedback through digital media has proven effective in improving visitor satisfaction and destination performance. These findings confirm the importance of a continuous monitoring system in modern tourism destination management. Overall, the research results confirm that Golaga management is on the right track, but still requires strengthening the integration between the 3A and 6A components, especially in the development of integrated tourism packages and educational tourism, so that the sustainability of the destination can be maintained in the long term.

CONCLUSION

The management of the Goa Lawa Purbalingga (Golaga) natural tourist attraction has been implemented effectively through the application of the POAC (Planning, Organizing, Actuating, and Controlling) management functions as proposed by Terry (2006). The implementation of these four management functions has been proven to contribute positively to improving the quality of destination management, visitor satisfaction, and the economic growth of the local community in Siwarak Village. In terms of planning, PERUMDA Owabong has demonstrated its adaptability to the dynamics of modern tourism through digital promotion strategies, tourist attraction development, and empowerment of local MSMEs while still considering the principles of environmental sustainability. From an organizational perspective, a clear organizational structure and a strong internal oversight system support transparent and accountable destination governance. Meanwhile, in terms of implementation, the high level of local community involvement reflects the application of community-based tourism principles, which provide direct economic benefits while improving the quality of tourism services.

The oversight aspect also plays a strategic role in maintaining management quality through facility evaluation, digital promotion monitoring, and tourist feedback analysis. This has resulted in increased visitor satisfaction and significant economic performance for the destination. Furthermore, analysis based on the 3A and 6A tourism concepts indicates that Golaga's primary strengths lie in its unique natural attractions, relatively good accessibility, and adequate amenities. However, weaknesses remain in the development of integrated tourism packages and the optimization of educational and cultural tourism. Overall, this study confirms that the success of Golaga's management is determined not only by its natural resources but also by the effectiveness of management strategies and stakeholder engagement. Therefore, future management needs to focus on strengthening the integration between tourism attraction components, increasing community participation in strategic planning, and developing sustainable tourism packages to ensure Golaga maintains its long-term competitiveness.

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