

DEVELOPMENT OF THE PANDARATAN BEACH TOURISM OBJECT IN CENTRAL TAPANULI REGENCY

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Abstrak

Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui bagaimana upaya pengembangan yang dilakukan terhadap objek wisata tersebut, serta mengidentifikasi faktor pendukung dan penghambat dalam proses pengembangannya. Teknik analisis data yang digunakan adalah teknik analisa data deskriptif kualitatif. Informannya yaitu Staff Pengembangan Objek Wisata di Dinas Parawisata Kabupaten Tapanuli Tengah, Lurah di kelurahan Pondok Batu, Ketua Pokdarwis, Pengunjung, Masyarakat dan Pedagang di Pantai Pandaratan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pengembangan dilakukan secara kolaboratif antara pemerintah, Pokdarwis, pihak swasta, dan masyarakat. Berbagai fasilitas seperti musholla, kamar mandi umum, dan pelatihan tata kelola pariwisata telah disediakan. Namun, pengembangan masih terkendala oleh akses jalan yang buruk, kurangnya fasilitas penunjang seperti air bersih, rendahnya partisipasi masyarakat, dan masih adanya pungutan liar. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa meskipun Pantai Pandaratan memiliki daya tarik alam yang kuat dan terus mengalami peningkatan jumlah pengunjung, pengembangannya belum sepenuhnya maksimal dan masih membutuhkan penanganan secara profesional dan berkelanjutan.

Kata kunci: Pengembangan, Objek Wisata, Pantai Pandaratan

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to determine how development efforts are carried out on these tourist attractions, as well as to identify the supporting and inhibiting factors in the development process. The data analysis technique used is qualitative descriptive data analysis. The informants were the Tourism Development Staff at the Tapanuli Tengah Regency Tourism Office, the Village Head of Pondok Batu, the Chairman of the Tourism Development Group (Pokdarwis), visitors, the community, and traders at Pandaratan Beach. The results of the study show that development is carried out collaboratively between the government, Pokdarwis, the private sector, and the community. Various facilities such as a prayer room, public bathrooms, and tourism management training

have been provided. However, development is still hindered by poor road access, insufficient supporting facilities such as clean water, low community participation, and the presence of illegal fees. This study concludes that although Pandaratan Beach has strong natural attractions and continues to see an increase in the number of visitors, its development has not yet been fully maximized and still requires professional and sustainable management.

Key words: *Development, Tourist Attractions, Landing Beaches*

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia, as an archipelagic country, possesses an abundance of natural resources, cultural diversity, flora, fauna, and historical heritage. This diversity serves as a crucial asset for the development of the tourism sector, as it has the potential to attract both domestic and international tourists. The Republic of Indonesia Law Number 10 of 2009 states that tourism comprises various travel-related activities supported by facilities and services provided by the community, the government, and business actors. Meanwhile, a tourist attraction is understood as a place that offers natural or artificial beauty as well as cultural values capable of providing visitors with meaningful experiences and satisfaction.

Tourist attractions constitute a fundamental component of tourism development, encompassing the uniqueness, accessibility, and value of a location that draws visitors' interest. The development of tourism destinations is particularly important for developing countries like Indonesia, as the sector contributes to job creation, business opportunities, and overall community welfare.

Central Tapanuli Regency is one of the regions endowed with various natural and artificial tourist attractions. Data from the Tourism Office in 2024 recorded more than 439,000 tourist visits. One of the potential destinations is Pandaratan Beach, located in Pondok Batu Village, Sarudik District. This beach offers distinctive features, including natural scenery, lush trees, clear seawater, visible marine life, natural caves, and appealing sunset viewpoints. In addition to its tourism potential, the area is also rich in marine resources.

Pandaratan Beach is supported by a Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis) that serves as a partner of the local government in enhancing community understanding and participation in tourism development. Tourist visits to this beach have shown a significant increase from 2020 to 2024. However, its development still faces several challenges, such as low community participation, limited coordination between Pokdarwis and business actors, inadequate facilities and infrastructure, cleanliness issues, and the presence of illegal levies within the tourism area.

Given its substantial potential and existing challenges, a well-planned and collaborative development strategy involving managers, the community, and the government is necessary for Pandaratan Beach to grow into a leading tourism destination in Central Tapanuli Regency. These circumstances form the basis for the importance of conducting research on the development of the Pandaratan Beach tourist attraction.

METODE

The research method employed in this study is qualitative research, specifically descriptive qualitative research. Qualitative research with a descriptive–analytical approach aims to obtain an in-depth understanding of social phenomena by utilizing data in the form of words and observable actions. The descriptive–analytical approach is used to systematically describe the conditions under investigation and to analyze facts based on the research findings (Puansah, 2024, 2025; Puansah et al., n.d., 2022; Puansah, Parapat, et al., 2023; Puansah, Pulungan, et al., 2023, 2024; Puansah, Sukmana, et al., 2024; Puansah & Parapat, n.d.)(Puansya et al., 2024)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Development

Development, in essence, refers to a process of change toward a better condition. In the *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* (KBBI), development is defined as a method, process, or act of developing, which means advancing and improving something (KBBI, 2021). In the context of human resources, development is understood as an effort to enhance competencies in anticipation of future organizational needs (Gustiana et al., 2022). In the field of tourism, development encompasses efforts to improve the quality of tourist attractions and services, as well as the expansion and diversification of tourism products in quantitative terms (Wijianto, 2024). Thus, tourism development does not solely involve the improvement of physical facilities, but also includes aspects of service quality, tourist experience, and community empowerment.

Tourism and Tourism Development

Etymologically, the term *tourism* (pariwisata) derives from the words *pari* (meaning to circle, repeatedly, or completely) and *wisata* (meaning travel). Tourism is understood as temporary travel conducted by an individual or a group of people outside their place of residence for purposes of recreation, self-development, or the fulfillment of non-economic needs (Pariyanti dkk., 2020; Utama, 2014). The Republic of Indonesia Law Number 10 of 2009 defines tourism as a wide range of travel-related activities supported by facilities and services provided by the community, businesses, the government, and local authorities. The law also outlines various key terms such as travel, tourists, tourism, tourist attractions, tourism destinations, tourism enterprises, and the tourism industry affirming that tourism is multidimensional and multidisciplinary in nature.

Tourism development refers to a coordinated effort to attract tourists by providing the necessary infrastructure, facilities, and amenities, including transportation, accommodation, food and beverages, souvenirs, and services (Kastolani, 2008; Priyayi, t.t.) (Puansah, 2017). Destination development programs encompass planning, community empowerment, special-interest tourism development, event organization, and destination management support.

Components of Tourism Development and Tourist Attractions

Tourist attractions are defined as all elements that possess uniqueness, beauty, and value derived from natural resources, culture, or human-made creations that serve as destinations for tourist visits (Pariyanti et al., 2020; Revida et al., 2020). Tourist attractions may include natural landscapes (beaches, mountains, waterfalls), historical heritage, arts and culture, as well as artificial attractions. In the development of tourism destinations, several key components must be considered, including:

1. Tourist attractions, whether derived from natural, cultural, or artificial sources, which constitute the main motivation for tourist visits (Khotimah et al., 2017).
2. Tourism infrastructure, such as roads, electricity, telecommunications, clean water, and other basic facilities that enable tourists to access and enjoy the destination (Priyayi, n.d.).
3. Tourism facilities, which include accommodation, travel services, transportation, food and beverage facilities, and other supporting amenities tailored to the needs of tourists (Heryati, 2019).
4. Promotion and marketing, which involve efforts to introduce tourist attractions to the market in order to increase the number of visitors.
5. Community and environment, which function as hosts, service providers, and key determinants of destination sustainability through their attitudes, culture, and participation.

Various types of tourism can develop, including nature-based tourism (beaches, mountains, nature reserves, agro-tourism) and socio-cultural tourism (museums, historical heritage, monuments, tourism villages), each offering distinct characteristics and appeals.

Beaches and Coastal Areas

A beach is understood as a transitional area between land and sea that is influenced by tidal movements. Coastal areas refer to terrestrial and aquatic zones that are still affected by both land-based and marine activities (Sopamena & Joseph, 2019). Law Number 1 of 2014 concerning the Management of Coastal Areas and Small Islands stipulates that coastal areas constitute transitional zones between terrestrial and marine ecosystems that are influenced by changes occurring on land and at sea.

Coastal areas hold significant potential in fisheries, marine resources, energy, agriculture, and particularly tourism. As part of the coastal zone, beaches can be developed into tourism destinations that provide economic, social, and cultural benefits for local communities, provided that they are managed sustainably and with consideration for environmental carrying capacity.

The study indicates that the development of the Pandaratan Beach Tourism Object in Central Tapanuli Regency has been carried out collaboratively by various stakeholders, although the outcomes are not yet optimal. The Tourism Office has played a facilitating role by providing basic needs within the beach area, such as tents for vendors, cleaning equipment (beach sweepers), electricity supply for lighting, monitoring of cleanliness and services, and

the establishment of the Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis) “Sugu Pandaratan” as a government partner in tourism management and education. The local government has also been involved through cross-sectoral collaboration: Bank Indonesia constructed public facilities such as restrooms and signboards and provided destination management training; the Ministry of Public Works opened and improved access roads to the beach; while the TMMD (Integrated Military Service Program) built a public prayer facility (musholla) to support tourism activities.

Pondok Batu Village supports the development of Pandaratan Beach through community guidance, area management, collaboration with Pokdarwis and the Tourism Office, and promotion via social media. However, community participation remains selective: local residents are enthusiastic about economic activities (such as selling goods and operating small businesses around the beach), but their involvement in maintaining cleanliness, safety, and order has not been optimal. Pokdarwis itself has undertaken various initiatives, including organizing beach huts, providing photo spots (such as swings), implementing the 7 Principles of Sapta Pesona, promoting the destination on social media, and structuring internal roles (chairperson, security division, sanitation division, public relations, attraction division, and business division). They have also received support from the Tourism Office, Bank Indonesia, and the village government through training, monitoring, and benchmarking visits to other destinations in North Sumatra.

From the visitors’ perspective, Pandaratan Beach is considered highly attractive due to its natural beauty, its position at the foot of a hill, surrounding trees and mangroves, clear seawater, small caves, and captivating sunset spots. However, visitors also highlight several weaknesses, including difficult and slippery access roads, limited restroom and clean water facilities, scattered waste, and the presence of illegal levies or inconsistent parking fees. Local residents acknowledge that the development of the beach has brought economic benefits through business opportunities (food stalls, hut rentals, seafood sales), but they still face challenges such as low awareness among some residents, lack of cohesion between Pokdarwis and vendors, and inadequate supporting facilities such as clean water and waste bins.

Small vendors around the beach have experienced increased income in line with the rising number of visitors, especially on major holidays, yet they still complain about the steep and slippery access roads that hinder the distribution of goods and tourist mobility. In terms of price governance, efforts have been made to standardize prices for food, beverages, and hut rentals based on quality and size to maintain fairness and visitor comfort. At the managerial level, internal issues still persist, such as differing opinions among the many members of Pokdarwis, which affects organizational cohesion. Moreover, the absence of collaboration with the private sector indicates untapped investment opportunities.

Overall, the research findings show that Pandaratan Beach has significant tourism potential due to its natural beauty, strategic location near the regency capital, and initial support from the government and the community. However, its development is still hindered by: (1) inadequate infrastructure (unpaved roads, limited clean water facilities, toilets, and parking areas), (2) weak governance and supervision (illegal levies, unofficial ticketing, environmental

cleanliness issues), (3) uneven community participation and lack of cohesion within Pokdarwis, and (4) the absence of private sector involvement. Therefore, a more well-planned and sustainable development strategy is required, including improvements to basic infrastructure, strengthening of Pokdarwis' institutional capacity, expanding community participation, enforcing formal retribution systems, and creating opportunities for collaboration with the private sector so that Pandaratan Beach can develop into a leading tourism destination in Central Tapanuli Regency.

CONCLUSION

The development of the Pandaratan Beach Tourism Object in Central Tapanuli Regency has been carried out through collaboration among various stakeholders, including the Tourism Office, Pondok Batu Village, the Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis), the Ministry of Public Works, the Integrated Village Development Military Program (TMMD), Bank Indonesia, as well as the local community and business actors. The Tourism Office plays a role in providing basic facilities such as camping tents, beach cleaning tools, electricity supply, the formal establishment of Pokdarwis, and organizing benchmarking activities for Pokdarwis members. Pondok Batu Village supports spatial arrangement and promotional efforts through social media, while the Ministry of Public Works has built access roads leading to the beach. TMMD has constructed a public prayer facility (musholla), and Bank Indonesia has assisted with the construction of public restrooms and area signage. Pokdarwis contributes by managing the beach environment, implementing the Seven Principles of Sapta Pesona, and maintaining cleanliness and security in collaboration with the community. Despite its significant natural potential, the development of Pandaratan Beach has not yet been managed optimally and professionally.

Supporting factors for development include the natural beauty of Pandaratan Beach, the increase in visitor numbers from 2020 to 2024, and the existence of Pokdarwis as an officially recognized management partner. However, development efforts are still hindered by inadequate access roads, as the hilly routes remain unpaved and rocky, becoming slippery during the rainy season; limited facilities, particularly the insufficient availability of clean water in public restrooms; low community involvement in management; and the continued presence of illegal levies in the form of inconsistent parking fees. These obstacles have resulted in ineffective destination development and have prevented the existing tourism potential from being fully optimized.

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