

The potential and perception of sawah lukis ecotourism

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this research is to determine public perceptions and the potential that exists in Sawah Lukis ecotourism. The population of the research is the local community. The research sample used Purposive Random Sampling technique with a total of 55 people. Data collection methods are carried out in several ways, namely observation, in-depth interviews, and questionnaires. The data was then analyzed using qualitative descriptive analysis methods. Based on the results of observations and interviews, Sawah Lukis ecotourism actually has economic value and the potential for further development. For the sustainability of the existence of ecotourism, institutional-based promotional activities and collaboration are needed to improve the quality of promotion.

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1. Introduction

Tourism is an industrial sector that is widely adopted as an alternative to achieve economic and social revitalization in rural areas. The main role of tourism in the development of rural areas is as an engine of economic development and a contributor to the quality of life of rural communities. Meanwhile, market demand for tourist villages continues to grow. More and more people, especially urbanites, are seeking authentic natural scenery and folk customs in the quiet and peaceful countryside to escape industrialization and urbanization. North Binjai is a sub-district in Binjai City which has the largest population. If we look at each sub-district, the largest population is contributed by Cengkeh Turi Sub-district, amounting to 13,762 people or 16.25 percent of the total population of North Binjai District, with one of the characteristics of having Sawah Lukis Ecotourism village (BPS Binjai, 2020). Ecotourism is experiencing quite rapid growth. This happens, in part, due to the increasing population of most developing countries and becoming more urbanized (Rachmawati, 2021).

Tourism development models that emphasize income and growth often result in local communities being marginalized in tourism management (Kaharuddin et al., 2020). In fact, tourist attractions that are developed with support from the community are a guarantee of the sustainability of tourism development and can also improve the quality of tourist experiences (Damanik, 2013; Nasikun, 2000; Wood, 2002). (Nurinsiyah, D.N., 2015; Seifi, F., 2017; Zambrano, A.M.A., E.N. Broadbent., 2010) also revealed that ecotourism can act as a model for sustainable tourism development to provide a tourism model for local governments and local communities that not only has economic benefits, but also social and ecological benefits. Local community-based ecotourism management is also part of poverty alleviation (Kuuder, C.J.K., 2012). Changes in people's lifestyles due to the flow of modernization from outside, and many commercial facilities being built in tourism areas, as stated by (Urbanus & Febianti, 2017), believe that there needs to be

serious handling from related parties so that the development of ecotourism as a tourist attraction can truly be achieved can provide benefits to the community around the tourist attraction.

Limited community creativity in creating economic opportunities from natural and cultural potential and a lack of understanding of the community's position as a tourist attraction in rural areas are the basis for the problem of development inequality in rural areas (Richards, 2020). Creative tourism development plays a role in providing added value to regional potential and resources, and is able to encourage the creation of sustainability in rural tourism development from a socio-cultural, environmental and economic perspective (Swesti et al., 2020). Tourism, especially rural tourism, will grow if it is supported by local resource potential, local wisdom of rural communities and the creative economy. The first component, namely local potential. Local potential is the ability and resources possessed by a region to achieve high and sustainable welfare growth (Trisnawati, Aditya Eka., 2018) in (Wesnawa, 2022)

(Abdullah, 2002) explains the principles of regional performance that influence local potential, namely: (1) added value, reflecting economic productivity at least in the short term, (2) capital accumulation, absolutely necessary to increase long-term competitiveness, (3) prosperity a region, reflects past economic performance, and (4) competition driven by marketing mechanisms will improve the economic performance of a region. The second component is local wisdom. In general, local wisdom emerges through internal processes and lasts a long time as a result of interactions between humans and their environment. This long evolutionary process will culminate in the emergence of a value system that crystallizes in the form of common law, local beliefs and culture. The third component is the creative economy. The creative economy plays an important role in tourism development, and requires better knowledge and skills from the community to have a substantial economic impact on rural areas. Globalization makes creativity absolutely necessary in every sector, including the tourism sector. The creative economy is an economic activity that relies more on ideas or concepts (creative) to manage materials sourced from the surrounding environment into added economic value (Howkins, 2001)

(Wang, 2010) states that successful ecotourism depends on the quality of tourism service providers (including planners, developers, operators and managers). (Drumm, Andy and Moore, 2005) have also described the need for partnerships between government, the tourism industry, local communities, funders, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), and tourists to achieve ecotourism success. Development in the tourism sector is expected to provide benefits to society, because the tourism sector is one of the development sectors in the economic sector. Tourism activities are one of the non-oil and gas sectors which are expected to make a significant contribution to the country's economy. The effort to develop the world of tourism is supported by Law No. 10 of 2009 which states that the existence of tourist attractions in an area will be very profitable, including increasing Regional Original Income (PAD), increasing the standard of living of the community and expanding employment opportunities considering the increasing number of unemployed people currently. increasing love for the environment and preserving nature and local culture.

According to the research results of (Khoirun nisa, AU., Sulardiono, B., Suprpto, 2019) who examined the Ecotourism Development Strategy in the Kertomulyo Beach Mangrove Conservation Area, Trangkil, Pati." This area is one of the natural tourist attractions in Pati City which has the potential to be developed as educational tourism. The aim of the research is to determine the potential attraction of visitors, perceptions, aspirations and participation of visitors and the community in developing ecotourism. Data was analyzed using SWOT analysis. Respondents' perceptions regarding ecotourism attractions, facilities and accessibility are classified as good. The results of research by (Mu'tashim & Indahsari, 2021) regarding Ecotourism Development in Indonesia which aims to describe the obstacles and challenges in developing ecotourism in Indonesia along with suggestions for development strategies. The approach used in the research is descriptive qualitative with literature study. The research results show that the obstacles faced in developing ecotourism are the lack of competent human resources in managing it, the lack of community involvement and responsibility for conservation activities, the lack of facilities and infrastructure that support conservation activities, and inadequate accessibility. The challenge faced is the relatively low security of ecotourism destinations in Indonesia.

For this research, the author raised the title about the potential and public perception of the existence of Sawah Lukis Ecotourism in Binjai. Data collection methods are carried out in several ways, namely observation, in-depth interviews, and questionnaires as well as other matters related to research focused on basic and important things which will later be used to answer every problem that occurs in the field. The data

was then analyzed using qualitative descriptive analysis methods. Starting by looking at the economic potential contained in Sawah Lukis Ecotourism and analyzing its development strategy.

In developing Sawah Lukis Ecotourism, what needs to be considered is the participation of the local community. The concept of ecotourism development that involves community participation (community based ecotourism) is basically to provide opportunities for people living in areas that are tourist attractions to participate in services or other things that can encourage the economic development of the surrounding community. Ecotourism is a tourist activity that utilizes natural benefits such as the beauty and uniqueness of nature and culture, lifestyle, social structure of society, conservation, education and community revitalization. The concept of environmental education can also be a concern, according to (Weaver, 2001), the principle of education is the difference between ecotourism and other types of natural tourism. The educational principle contains an element of increasing visitors' insight into the area being visited so that visitors do not just enjoy the tourist attractions on offer. This principle can be measured through three components, namely (1) education for visitors, (2) quality experience for visitors, and (3) education for the local community.

Sawah Lukis is surrounded by rice plants which are specially cared for by farmers and managers. Even the rice plants look colorful because some of them resemble paintings. Several popular characters are depicted through the plant as a different attraction. However, there is also rice plants that is still natural because not all of it has been changed. Sawah Lukis seems to offer a special track for travelers who want to ride. Each track is not too busy so it will make you comfortable when cycling. Visitors can bring bicycles because there are no rentals around Sawah Lukis. Morning and evening are the times that are often used for cycling. While exercising, travelers also can hunt for good photo spots. If you are satisfied with cycling then you can rest in several gazebos. Enjoy the beauty of this natural destination by doing exciting activities on each of the tracks provided so that spending the weekend at Sawah Lukis will be even more enjoyable.

2. Research Method

This research uses a qualitative approach. A qualitative approach will describe phenomena according to actual conditions in the field systematically to obtain information or a clear picture of the current situation. Data collection in the research was carried out by observation, in-depth interviews, and document studies related to this research. The type of data used in this research is qualitative and quantitative data. In this research, qualitative data comes from the results of observations and structured interviews and distribution of questionnaires conducted by researchers. Meanwhile, quantitative data is data that can be calculated and measured, generally described in the form of numbers. In this research, quantitative data was obtained from the results of Questionnaire Analysis. The data sources used in this research are primary data sources and secondary data sources. Primary data in this research is data obtained directly from the research location through observation, in-depth interviews, and questionnaires. Several primary data sources will be used, such as a general description of the research location and conditions at the research location as well as the results of structured interviews using questionnaires. Furthermore, secondary data in this research is data obtained indirectly by researchers, either obtained from the research location or outside the research location in the form of literature study and documentation. research respondents were determined based on the Purposive Random Sampling Technique. This technique is used to search for samples with certain considerations (Sugiyono, 2013). At the research location, the respondents were 55 people from the Sawah Lukis ecotourism area.

To obtain perception data from the public, researchers used a Likert scale model questionnaire with five options. The answer value for each item moves from 5 to 1 which is arranged according to the flow of positive statements. Thus, the Strongly Agree (SS) option gets a value of 5, Agree (S) gets a value of 4, quite agree (N) gets a value of 3, disagree (TS) gets a value of 2 and strongly disagree (STS) option gets a value of 1. Data analysis from the Likert scale model with range values to obtain a ranking of public perceptions. A total of 10 questions in the questionnaire with a maximum value of 5 and a minimum value of 1. The following is the range calculation

$$\text{Difference per category} = \frac{\text{highest score} - \text{lowest score}}{\text{Amount Category}} = \frac{5-1}{5} = 0.8$$

Based on the calculations above, you can see the range of values for each category

Table 1. Social attitude scale

No	Attitude	Score	Range
1	Strongly agree (SS)	5	Ø 4.2 – 5.0
2	agree (S)	4	Ø 3.4 – 4.2
3	Quite agree (CS)	3	Ø 2.6 – 3.4
4	Disagree (TS)	2	Ø 1.8 – 2.6
5	Strongly disagree (STS)	1	Ø 1.0 – 1.8

(Sugiyono, 2013)

Next, to find the interval for each category, the total score (avg) is calculated. The number of N people who answered SS will be multiplied by 5, S will be multiplied by 4, N will be multiplied by 3, TS will be multiplied by 2, and STS will be multiplied by 1. After that, to find the range (R), add up all the scores from those who answered SS to STS and then divide by the number of respondents. Qualitative descriptive analysis provides a review or interpretation of the data obtained so that it becomes clearer and more meaningful than just numbers. The steps are tabulation of data obtained from the results of questionnaires, structured interviews, then processed in table form, presented with charts and text, and drawing conclusions. The results of data collection in the form of in-depth interviews, observations, and document studies regarding the potential and perception of Sawah Lukis ecotourism, and other matters related to research are focused on basic and important matters that will later be used to answer every problem that occurs in the field. Thus, the conclusions in qualitative research can answer the problem formulation in this research.

3. Results And Discussions

After conducting observations and interviews with several residents at Sawah Lukis Ecotourism, researchers created a questionnaire with 10 questions to explore community perceptions of the development of Ecotourism in Sawah Lukis. After that, a questionnaire was given to the community members of Sawah Lukis and MSME traders totaling 55 respondents. The data obtained was then analyzed simply with a range of scales which can be seen in table 2.

Table 2. Data from analysis of community perceptions regarding the development of Sawah Lukis ecotourism

No	Question	Perception Respondent					Conclusion	
		SS	S	N	T.S	STS	Avg	R
1	Development Sawah Lukis ecotourism already Good	24	22	8	1	0	234	4.25
2	Access roads and facilities already common in Sawah Lukis ecotourism organized and managed with Good Existence Sawah Lukis ecotourism is capable become	12	26	13	4	0	211	3.84
3	Power attract and bring amount visitors	21	28	5	1	0	234	4.25
4	Amount visitors who come to Sawah Lukis Ecotourism still need preferred with activity more promotions massive	24	26	4	1	0	238	4.33
5	Sawah Lukis Ecotourism has uniqueness source Power natural	22	22	10	1	0	230	4.18
6	Cleanliness Sawah Lukis Ecotourism already Good	11	28	13	2	1	211	3.84
7	Existence Sawah Lukis ecotourism gives benefit to absorption power Work in the environment surroundings	14	28	12	1	0	220	4.00
8	Facilities and infrastructure available	19	26	9	1	0	228	4.15
9	Existence Sawah Lukis ecotourism can increase opportunity business for public around	17	30	8	0	0	229	4.16
10	Happen development nearby businesses Painted Rice Ecotourism	18	30	5	2	0	229	4.16

Based on the table above, it can be concluded that the people around Sawah Lukis ecotourism strongly agree with the development of Ecotourism in the area as evidenced by the value range of 4.25. Furthermore, with a value range of 3.84, people around Sawah Lukis agree with the construction of road access and public facilities. They also agree to the cleanliness of the ecotourism area. From the results of the table it is also known that Sawah Lukis Ecotourism has unique natural resources (4.18), Facilities and infrastructure are available (4.15), The existence of Sawah Lukis ecotourism provides benefits to the absorption capacity of work in surrounding environment (4.00). The existence of Sawah Lukis ecotourism

can increase business opportunities for surrounding community and there will be development around Sawah Lukis Ecotourism business (4.16). For this reason, in encouraging and increasing the number of visitors, the community strongly agrees that the promotion of Sawah Lukis Ecotourism needs to be increased. This is appropriate to the result of the range value 4.33.

The results of reserach conducted by (Khoirun nisa, AU., Sulardiono, B., Suprpto, 2019) regarding ecotourism development strategies that can be implemented include a. developing ecotourism with the concept of ecosystem preservation and coordinating with local governments, b. increasing empowerment of surrounding communities in optimizing ecotourism area facilities, c. protect the mangrove ecosystem by making rehabilitation and enforcement of mangrove protection regulations more effective, d. improve facilities/infrastructure that can be used to minimize the impact of abrasion. This is different from (Mu'tashim & Indahsari, 2021) which discusses the obstacles and challenges in Ecotourism Development in Indonesia, along with suggestions for development strategies. Research result shows that the obstacles faced in developing ecotourism are a lack of competent human resources in its management, a lack of community involvement and responsibility for conservation activities, a lack of facilities and infrastructure that support conservation activities, and inadequate accessibility. The challenge faced is the relatively low security of ecotourism destinations in Indonesia. Therefore, the alternative model in ecotourism development offered is the implementation of guidance and training for ecotourism managers, optimizing community participation in ecotourism activities, providing facilities and infrastructure that are in accordance with the ecotourism concept, increasing ecotourism accessibility, and increasing security around ecotourism destinations.

In this research, the author discusses the perception of the existence of Sawah Lukis ecotourism in Binjai City along with the potential and analyzes its development strategy. From the results of observations, interviews and questionnaires given, the results were obtained that Ecotourism of the Painted Rice Plants (Sawah Lukis) in Binjai City has very good economic potential, where economically, the Rice Painted Rice Plants ecotourism increases the value of the agricultural sector, namely rice plants located in ecotourism locations, apart from being able to obtain production results, you can also obtain huge additional profits by making these rice plants tourist attractions combined with contemporary concepts. Apart from that, the existence of ecotourism creates opportunities for the residents of Cengkeh Turi Village to get jobs by working at the Sawah Lukis Padi Ecotourism and opening food outlets around the ecotourism location. The potential of Sawah Lukis ecotourism includes strategic location, availability of supporting facilities, and nature education. However, on the other hand, there are weaknesses, namely: a) the simultaneous planting season is one of the weaknesses of Sawah Lukis Ecotourism, where when it is harvest time, the view at Sawah Lukis Ecotourism in Binjai City becomes unattractive because there is no view. This rice plants will greatly influence the interest of visitors. b) lack of promotion in utilizing social media.

By looking at the existing potential and shortcomings, of course several strategies need to be implemented to maintain the existence of Sawah Lukis Ecotourism. There are several strategies that can be implemented, namely implementing a planting system with varying times, more active social media promotion, providing education about natural tourism, especially about rice plants, adding contemporary facilities by collaborating with agricultural concepts. Apart from that, the strategy according to (Mu'tashim & Indahsari, 2021) can also be applied to Sawah Lukis Ecotourism.

4. Conclusion

Based on the research results described in the results and discussion above, it can be concluded that the tourism potential of Sawah Lukis is in the form of natural potential, namely; (a) the existence of a large natural landscape or rice plant landscape; (b) strategic location; (c) nature education; and (d) the existence of adequate facilities, Then The public's perception of the development of Sawah Lukis Ecotourism is very positive and the majority of the public strongly agree with the efforts made so far. And the last is to increase the number of visitors, better promotions should be carried out. Therefore, the alternative model in ecotourism development offered is the implementation of guidance and training for ecotourism managers, optimizing community participation in ecotourism activities, providing facilities and infrastructure that are in accordance with the ecotourism concept, increasing ecotourism accessibility, and increasing security around ecotourism destinations (Mu'tashim & Indahsari, 2021).

Based on the researcher's direct experience in this research process, there were several limitations experienced and can be used as a reference for future researchers to pay more attention in perfecting their research because this research itself certainly has limitations, including the number of respondents from

communities around ecotourism which was only 55 people. To find out more in-depth perceptions, it would be good for the local government also be a respondent and also conduct in-depth interviews with the local regional government in relation to the local government's support for the existence of Sawah Lukis Ecotourism.

The findings in this research have several important implications, both for readers as information and for Ecotourism managers in efforts to improve quality and increase promotional activities because the existence of Sawah Lukis Ecotourism has quite good economic potential.

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