

Facility Development as a Catalyst for Coastal Tourism-Driven Economic Improvement in Batubara Regency

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Abstract. This study investigates the potential of developing coastal tourism facilities as a strategy to enhance economic growth in Batubara Regency, North Sumatra, Indonesia. Situated along the Malacca Strait, Batubara Regency boasts several beach-based tourist destinations, including Jono Beach, Bunga Beach, and Datuk Beach, which hold significant potential for tourism development. Through a mixed-methods approach comprising observations, literature reviews, questionnaires, and interviews, the research examines the perceptions and experiences of visitors and managers regarding the existing facilities and amenities at these coastal tourism sites. The data collected are analyzed using SWOT analysis to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats associated with the development of tourism facilities in the region. The findings highlight the need for improved accessibility, such as adequate parking spaces, as well as enhanced selfie photo facilities and a diverse culinary offering to cater to visitor preferences. Additionally, the study underscores the importance of leveraging the region's natural beauty, affordable prices, and community hospitality as strengths to attract tourists. By proposing strategies to address identified weaknesses and capitalize on opportunities, this research contributes to the development of a comprehensive coastal tourism plan aimed at driving economic growth and regional development in Batubara Regency.

Keywords: Development Strategy, Coastal Tourism, Improving the Economy

1. Introduction

The tourism sector is often used as one of the sources of the economy which is packed with various modern facilities. The progress of the tourism sector can have an impact on social, environmental, and economic progress (Binns & Nel, 2002). According to the North Sumatra Statistics Agency, the number of foreign tourists visiting North Sumatra increased by 164.46 percent when compared to the same period in 2022, namely from 74,498 visits in January - December 2022, increasing to 197,015 visits in the 2023 period (North Sumatra Central Statistics Agency, 2023). This increase is significant in helping stabilize the economy. So that the Indonesian government must be serious about the development of the tourism sector. It is proven that at the end of the Jokowi-JK administration in 2019, the target of foreign tourists visiting was 20 million people, while domestic tourists were 275 million people (Mandate, 2019). Tourism comprises a wide range of economic activities and can be considered the largest industry in the world (United Nations, 2001a). In the 2010-2014 period, tourism has become the fourth largest sector as a contributor to national income after oil and gas, coal, and palm oil.

Now Indonesia is developing one of the Priority Destinations in North Sumatra which is expected to be able to attract foreign tourists. So it must be managed with a good strategy and careful planning. The development of an ecotourism area management strategy is based on a zoning system of various uses and ecological principles. This ecotourism development strategy will be a strategic priority to produce ecotourism product development programs and protect biological resources (Siswanto, 2015). This development certainly requires the support of science-based data and information, including regional conditions, along with the socio-economic conditions of the community (Iskandar et al., 2011).

Batubara Regency is one of the areas included in the territory of North Sumatra. The district as a result of the division of Asahan Regency is located on the East Coast of North Sumatra which borders the Malacca Strait. The local government through the Department of Culture, Tourism, and Youth Sports of Batu Bara Regency is always trying to fix tourism aspects, especially beach tourism. This tourist location is expected to be the prima donna of tourism in North Sumatra Province (Ginting & Hidayati, 2016).

Batubara Regency has several beach-based tourist destinations that can be developed and managed to have a positive influence on economic growth and regional development. These beaches include Jono Beach, also known as Perjuangan Beach in Lalang Village, Bunga Beach in Bandar Rahmat Village, and Datuk Beach in Kuala Indah Village. Despite the potential of these coastal tourism destinations, there is a lack of research examining the most effective development strategies to maximize their economic impact on Batubara Regency and the surrounding region. This study aims to bridge this gap by analyzing the potential of facilities development as a key component of a comprehensive coastal tourism strategy

2. Literature Review

2.1 Tourism Development

Tourism development is one of the key elements for any development plan (Ismail et al., 2013). In general, tourism is one part of human life related to service, beauty, income, and also the community's economy. Tourism is a dynamic activity that involves many people and revives various fields of business. Tourism is also referred to as the tourism industry if it is in the form of a collection of tourism businesses that are interrelated in producing goods/services to meet the needs of tourists in the implementation of tourism (Ismayanti, 2010; Ingtyas, et al., 2021). Norval in Primadany's research (2016) explains tourism as the overall activity related to the entry, stay, and movement of foreign residents within or outside a certain country, city, or region.

2.2 Components of Tourism Destinations

Tourist Destinations must be supported by four main components or what is known as "4A" (Cooper et al., 1995), namely:

1. Attractions (Attraction); is a significant component in attracting tourists.
2. Facilities (Amenities); In general terms, amenities are all kinds of infrastructure and facilities needed by tourists while in tourist destinations.
3. Accessibility (Access); The main entrance or entrance to a tourist destination is important to access in tourism activities. Airports, ports, terminals, and all kinds of other transportation services are important accesses in tourism.
4. Ancillary Service; Often referred to as a compliment that must be provided by the local government of a tourist destination, both for tourists and for tourism actors.

2.3 The Benefits of Tourism for the Economic Sector

The development of sustainable tourism in countries should not only try to minimize the impact on the local environment but prioritize community participation in overcoming poverty (Neto, 2003). Community participation in regional tourism development shows that there is community control in planning, implementing, and evaluating tourism development programs (Wiloso et al., 2019). So it takes various components and strategies to manage it. Moreover, tourism is a component of an integrated approach to management strategies for sustainable development (Hall, 2001; Sutono et al., 2018).

The tourism sector can be an additional capital in increasing the country's foreign exchange. Moreover, foreign exchange earnings can vary from imports of equipment needed by tourists, repatriation of profits earned by foreign investors, and amortization of foreign debt (See UN, 1999b and 1996). It is thus clear that international tourism is one of the fastest-growing sectors of the economy (see UN, 2001a and WTO, 2001e).

2.4 Coastal/Coastal Tourism Policy on Economic Sector

Orams (1999) describes marine tourism as a recreational activity that involves traveling far from one's place of residence and focusing on the marine environment. This tourism activity will involve recreational boating, sea, and beach-based ecotourism, swimming, cruises, recreational fishing, and snorkeling (Orams, 1999; Miller, Auyong, 1991). Many facts show that marine and coastal tourism is closely related to the perceived relative lack of development (Roehl & Ditton, 1993). The consequences of a lack of development can hurt the development of tourist sites, but on the other hand will create a distinctive local culture (Duffield & Long, 1981). This development requires a role without any specific purpose from the government as a policymaker. Tourism planning must take into account economic, social and environmental considerations that reflect the diversity of factors that have an impact on tourism development (Heeley, 1981). Therefore, an understanding of the tourism policy process lies at the heart of the broader goal of integrated coastal tourism management (Romeril, 1988; Smith, 1994).

The formulation and implementation of tourism policies often present several puzzles (Hall & Jenkins, 1995). This means that there are substantial difficulties for policymakers to develop appropriate policies (Hall 2000; Hall & Jankis 1995). The policy certainly has the potential to be detrimental to tourism development (Hudson, 1996). So it is clear that government involvement in coastal tourism development is often unsuccessful because it is often not creative in decision making (Hudson, 1996; Visser, 1992; White et al., 1997; Vallega, 1994). Therefore, it is necessary to address gaps in policy and to offer insight into the success rate of coastal tourism (Farmaki, 2012).

2.5 Tourism Development Strategy

Several literature studies show how tourism development strategies are important elements that play an important role in the development of a tourist attraction. According to Suryono (2010), strategy is principally related to the following issues: policy implementation, determination of goals to

be achieved, and determination of methods or methods of using the infrastructure. Strategy is always related to 3 things, namely goals, means, and methods. Therefore, the strategy must also be supported by the ability to anticipate existing opportunities. The strategy will serve as the development of a long-term plan for the effective management of environmental opportunities and threats, given the strengths and weaknesses of the organization. Strategy formulation includes determining the organization's mission, determining the goals to be achieved, developing strategies, and establishing policy guidelines.

3. Methodology

The data analysis was carried out using the SWOT analysis method. The measured variables can be seen in the following table:

Table 1. Respondents' Assessment of Tourism Development Strategies

No	Variable	Sub Variable	Parameter				
			1	2	3	4	5
1	Accessibility	Easy way to the tourist attraction					
		Availability of parking space					
		Affordable admission					
2	Taking Selfies	Availability of selfie photo facilities					
		Beautiful scenery as a selfie photo location					
3	Culinary	Availability of places/food houses					
		Typical and delicious food					
		An affordable price					
4	Rest	Rest area availability					
		A clean and environmentally friendly environment					
		Convenience in tourist locations					

The location of the research was carried out in the Batubara Regency, specifically on Jono Beach which is also known as Perjuangan Beach in Lalang Village, Medang Deras District, Bunga Beach in Bandar Rahmat Village, Tanjung Tiram District, Datuk Beach in Kuala Indah Village, Sei Suka District. The samples in this study were visitors and managers of coastal tourism objects in Batubara Regency who met the sampling criteria and according to the research theme. To reduce deviations in sampling, the number of samples taken in this study amounted to 50 respondents. Then proportionally, each questionnaire sheet is distributed to the community around the research location, especially visitors and beach tourism managers in Batubara Regency.

The study employed a stratified random sampling technique to select the 50 respondents, ensuring representation from both visitors and managers of coastal tourism sites in Batubara Regency. The sample size was determined based on recommended guidelines for exploratory studies (cite relevant source). The questionnaire was developed based on the '4A' components of tourism destinations (Cooper et al., 1995), which include Attractions, Amenities, Accessibility, and Ancillary Services. The sub-variables and items were adapted from previous studies (cite relevant sources) and refined through pilot testing with subject matter experts to ensure content validity and reliability.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Respondents' answers to the development of coastal tourism facilities in Batubara Regency.

Table 2. Respondents' Answers to the Development of Tourist Facilities

Variabel	Sub Variabel	Skor				
		1	2	3	4	5
Accessib ility	Easy way to the tourist attraction	0	1	4	30	15
	Availability of parking space	0	2	15	9	4
	Affordable admission	0	0	0	29	21
Taking Selfies	Availability of selfie photo facilities	0	3	17	25	5
	Beautiful scenery as a selfie photo location	0	0	1	35	14
Culinary	Availability of places/food houses	0	2	2	37	9
	Typical and delicious food	0	0	32	10	8
	An affordable price	0	0	0	23	27
Rest	Rest area availability	0	0	0	39	11
	A clean and environmentally friendly environment	0	0	6	31	13
	Convenience in tourist locations	0	0	3	40	7

Source: Data Analysis Results (2021)

Based on table 2 above, it can be seen from the aspect of accessibility, respondents agree that road access to tourist sites is adequate. Respondents also agree that the price of admission to tourist sites is affordable. However, the public does not agree with the availability of parking spaces at coastal tourist sites in the Batubara Regency. So the development of beach tourism facilities in Batubara Regency in terms of accessibility needs to be addressed again by providing adequate parking spaces. Thus, visitors will feel comfortable and interested in visiting tourist sites which in turn can increase the development of coastal tourism in Batubara Regency.

From table 2 above, it can also be seen in the aspect of selfie photo facilities, respondents do not agree that the availability of selfie photo facilities is adequate, but respondents agree that the scenery at the beach tourism location in Batubara is very beautiful so it is suitable as a selfie photo location. So the development of beach tourism facilities in Batubara Regency in the aspect of selfie photo facilities needs to be improved by providing or adding various facilities and facilities that support selfie photo activities by visitors. Thus, visitors will feel more satisfied and interested in visiting tourist sites, where this can directly increase the development of coastal tourism in the Batubara Regency.

The table above also shows the culinary aspect, respondents agree that the availability of places/restaurants in coastal tourism locations in Batubara Regency is adequate and good, but respondents do not agree that the food at the beach tourism locations is unique and delicious. On the other hand, respondents also said that the price of food in tourist locations was affordable. So the development of coastal tourism facilities in Batubara Regency in the culinary aspect needs to be addressed by providing a variety of unique and delicious foods. This needs to be done to make the visitors who come feel satisfied and comfortable. Where this can directly increase the development of coastal tourism in Batubara Regency.

From the table above, it can also be seen on the aspect of resting facilities, respondents agree that the availability of resting places at coastal tourist sites in Batubara Regency is adequate and good. Respondents also agreed that the environment at the beach tourism location was clean and environmentally friendly. On the other hand, respondents also agree that the comfort in tourist locations is good. So that the development of beach tourism facilities in Batubara Regency in terms of resting facilities is adequate and makes visitors feel comfortable. However, even so, the improvement

of resting facilities also does not rule out the possibility to make it even better. This needs to be done to make the visitors who come feel more satisfied and comfortable. So that this can directly increase the development of coastal tourism in Batubara Regency.

4.2 Development Strategy carried out by SWOT Analysis

Table 3. Development Strategy with SWOT Analysis Method

Internal factors		External Factors	
Potency/ Strength	Obstacles/ Weakness	Opportunity/ Opportunity	Challenge/ Threat
a. Attractive beach views and atmosphere	a. Lack of tourist attractions	a. The growing tourism sector	a. Competition between attractions
b. An affordable price	b. Promotion is not maximized	b. Geographical location of tourist attraction	b. Natural disaster occurs
c. Culinary Diversity	c. Minimal facilities and infrastructure	c. Cultural uniqueness	c. Existence of foreign culture
d. The friendliness of the surrounding community	d. Human resources are not yet communicative	d. Technology (social media) is growing	d. Lack of local community participation
e. Availability of facilities that are popular with visitors	e. The government's attention has not been optimal	e. Road infrastructure improvement	e. Tourism-related regulations that are not yet applicable

Source: Data Analysis Results (2021)

Based on table 3 above which is an overview of the coastal tourism development strategy in Batu Bara Regency using a SWOT analysis approach, both obtained from internal factors and external factors, the results of the analysis are as follows:

a. Internal factors

Beach tourism objects in Batubara Regency have several potentials or strengths including attractive beach views and atmosphere, affordable prices for accessing tourist sites, culinary diversity at tourist sites, community hospitality at tourist sites, and the availability of tourist facilities favored by visitors even though the management is not yet managed maximum. In addition, there are also various obstacles and threats such as the lack of tourist attractions, promotions that have not been maximized, minimal facilities and infrastructure, human resources that are not yet communicative, and government attention that has not been optimal. Local governments should respond quickly if there are recreational areas that need support because with government support, the development of tourist attractions will grow more quickly (Khotimah & Pawestri, 2022)

Batubara Regency beach tourism has its charm. This tourist spot has an exciting combination of natural and artificial elements. The unique impression of Kareba usually comes from the attraction elements of the tourist attraction itself. The beaches in Batubara district attract many tourists because of their beautiful natural attractions and many facilities that can still be expanded. Batubara Regency beach tourism still requires a continuous development process. This development can be carried out in collaboration with related institutions that support the progress of tourism in the Batubara coastal area (Lestari et al., 2023).

Internal factors in developing coastal tourist attractions in Batubara Regency are critical. This is proven by the many visitors who come and feel very happy if their destination is affordable, the food is reasonably priced, and the service is excellent. These sectors certainly need to be taken seriously and supported by the government to help the economy of the people around Batu Bara Beach. Traders and tourism managers must also understand what tourists need when visiting the beach (Walton & Shaw, 2021).

b. External Factors

Coastal tourism destinations in Batubara Regency also have several opportunities or opportunities in the development of their facilities, including the tourism sector that continues to grow, the geographical location of tourist objects that are easily accessible, the uniqueness of culture,

technology, especially social media that is growing, as well as infrastructure improvements. a road where all of them can be an opportunity to continue to develop coastal tourism in Batubara. However, on the other hand, there are also various threats or challenges, including competition between tourist objects, natural disasters that can occur at any time, the infiltration of foreign cultures, lack of participation of the surrounding community, and regional regulations related to tourism that have not been implemented optimally.

The questionnaire results indicate that while visitors generally agree on the attractiveness of the beach scenery and the affordability of admission prices, there are areas for improvement in terms of accessibility, selfie photo facilities, and culinary offerings. These findings align with previous studies (cite relevant sources) that highlight the importance of providing adequate infrastructure, amenities, and diverse experiences to enhance visitor satisfaction and attract more tourists (lim et al., 2016). The SWOT analysis further reinforces the need to capitalize on the region's natural beauty and community hospitality while addressing weaknesses such as limited tourist attractions, inadequate promotion, and minimal infrastructure. These insights are consistent with the principles of sustainable tourism development (cite relevant source), which emphasize the need to balance economic, social, and environmental considerations in tourism planning and management.

By taking advantage of the beautiful beaches in Batubara Regency, the government and society will be helped by the increasingly advanced economic sector. There needs to be more than the availability of natural and beautiful beaches h to attract visitors. The community also needs to create a culture that is friendly towards visitors who want to come to the beach location. Apart from that, it supports the development of tourism areas on the coast of Batubara Regency. The government must create a budget for processing the tourism sector, starting from facilities and infrastructure, security, and collaboration with several private parties. Because with good cooperation between various institutions, the development of tourist attractions will be even better (Czernek, 2017; Semone, 2012). So visitors will be increasingly interested in traveling to the beach in Batubara Regency

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, this study has explored the development of coastal tourism facilities as a strategy to enhance economic growth in Batubara Regency, North Sumatra. The findings highlight the significance of addressing specific aspects of tourism facilities, such as accessibility, selfie photo amenities, culinary offerings, and resting areas, to create a more attractive and enjoyable experience for visitors. By leveraging the region's strengths, including its natural beauty, affordable prices, and community hospitality, while addressing weaknesses and capitalizing on opportunities, a comprehensive coastal tourism development strategy can be formulated. The implementation of this strategy holds the potential to drive economic growth and regional development in Batubara Regency, positioning it as a prime coastal tourism destination in North Sumatra.

However, it is crucial to acknowledge the limitations of this study, such as the relatively small sample size and the focus on a specific geographical area, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Future research could explore the replication of this study in other coastal regions or incorporate additional variables that may influence tourism development strategies and their economic impact. Furthermore, the successful implementation of the proposed coastal tourism development strategy will require collaboration and coordination among various stakeholders, including local authorities, tourism businesses, and community members. Continuous monitoring and evaluation of the strategy's effectiveness, as well as adaptability to changing market trends and visitor preferences, will be essential to ensure its long-term sustainability and economic benefits.

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