Community Perception of Sustainable Tourism Destination Management and Development
A Case Study at Kampa Beach, Wawonii Island, Southeast Sulawesi

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ABSTRACT
Understanding and assessing the public view of the existence of a tourist destination is essential to maintain the sustainability of the tourism industry of any type. This paper focuses more on coastal tourism or ecotourism. Ecotourism contributes to preserving natural landscapes and can be used as an alternative livelihood for coastal communities. This study aims to identify and analyze the public perception of the community at Kampa Beach as a tourist destination on the tourism potential development plan in the area. A community-based tourism approach in managing and developing tourism is offered to the community in Wawonii Island, Konawe Islands Regency, Southeast Sulawesi. The research methodology used is a mixed method of ethnographic fieldwork consisting of observation and semi-structured interviews with a small group of selected informants representing the community and content analysis of selected relevant documents from reputable national and international journals obtained from the Internet. The result shows that positive public perception of the potential of touristic destinations is directly proportional to the enthusiasm of various stakeholders involved despite insufficient community-based tourism. Weaknesses and shortcomings still exist in several areas. However, Kampa Beach has the potential to become a sustainable tourist destination.

Keywords: Community-based tourism, Natural ecotourism, Public perception, Sustainability.

1. INTRODUCTION

Studies on tourism have provided knowledge on detecting and measuring the ineffective impacts of tourism management (Diedrich & Garci’a-Buades, 2009; Okazaki. 2008; Wong, 1998). Ecotourism in a coastal area should have contributed to natural resources utilization and preservation without causing adverse impacts. Culver (2011) has described this relationship as a hate-love relationship because tourism attracts many visitors, improves local community income, and threatens ecology sustainability and social cohesion. A previous study (Hengki, 2017) showed that negative impacts should come from the local community, tourists, travel agencies, and government. Unplanned tourism area development has affected negatively, and will continue to, the coastal environment, community economy, and social-cultural, both directly and indirectly in the long or short term. (Wong, 1998)

Tourism has effectively reduced poverty in traditional communities (Croes, 2014; Gier et al., 2017; Mamengko & Kuntari, 2020). It creates employment different than traditional livelihood, e.g., local cultural product sale, recreational equipment rental services, and professional shooting services. Community-based tourism (CBT) has been extensively applied (Gier et al., 2017; Lee & Jan, 2019; Mamengko & Kuntari, 2020; Salazar, 2011). It has improved facilities such as road access, parks, cultural attractions, culinary and souvenir areas, which benefits the local community.

Measuring and predicting the tendency for tourism to decrease has been studied in anthropology, especially in developing countries, to learn about the dynamic sustainability destination (Diedrich & Garci’a-Buades, 2009; Croes, 2014). Negative perception will hinder its success and sustainability; the opposite would positively impact the life quality of the community (Woo, Uysal, & Sirgy, 2016). The CBT aimed to empower the local community, as seen in Tanzania (Salazar, 2011), Palawan, the Philippines (Okazaki, 2008), and the Northern coastal area of East Java, Indonesia (Mamengko & Kuntari, 2020). A study has also
recommended applying the CBT to develop natural karst tourism management in Pangkep-Maros, South Sulawesi, Indonesia, to become a protected geopark (Scott, 2021).

Many studies have applied for the CBT program and tested the results with extensive data collected from surveys, interviews, and field observations from heterogeneous respondents. However, no research has been carried out with relatively small homogeneous respondents and is still at the initial identification phase. Thus, this research tries to fill the gap.

Wawonii Island, currently known as the Konawe Kepuluan Regency, consists of seven sub-districts, namely West Wawonii District, North Wawonii, Northeast Wawonii, East Wawonii, Southeast Wawonii, South Wawonii, and Central Wawonii District (Figure 1). Overall, it has an area of +- 867.58 km², with a population of 30,396 people based on 2013 data (konkepkab.go.id). Konawe Islands Regency was previously part of Konawe Regency. Based on the Republic of Indonesian Law number 13 of 2013 (State Gazette of the Republic of Indonesia of 2013 Number 84 and Supplement to the State Gazette of the Republic of Indonesia Number 5415), Konawe Island Regency has become autonomous. This area is relatively new, classified as one of the underdeveloped districts (New Autonomous Region) by the Ministry of Villages, Development of Disadvantaged Regions, and Transmigration of the Republic of Indonesia. However, the natural potential of this island is quite promising to be managed and developed into an attractive tourist destination.

![Figure 1. Map of Konawe Kepuluan Regency, Southeast Sulawesi Province (Source: Office of Tourism, Youth and Sport, Konawe Kepuluan Regency)](image)

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Study on Community Perception

Community perceptions of tourism and its associated impacts are customary in examining the dynamics of tourism transformation, showing that people's perceptions differ across stages of development (Lee & Jan, 2019). This approach uses three dimensions as variables: the physical-ecological dimension, the sociological, which includes cultural and psychological aspects, and the economic dimension. The ecological dimension will assess the perception of the existence of natural resources. Abundant natural resources, unique terrain, beautiful scenery, unique species of flora and fauna increase people's awareness of the environment, which leads to more excellent environmental protection. The socio-cultural and psychological dimensions assess the positive and negative community acceptance towards destinations' management and development, putting aside the expected impact. Finally, the economic dimension will identify the attitude and belief that this can provide alternative livelihood for the community, improving their living standard.

During the research, age, gender, education, current occupation, community engagement, and economy may influence community perception. The social life concept does not entirely depend on material perceptions usually found in the lives of rural religious people (Masa Halim, Shaladdin, Amin, & Salleh, 2015). Spiritual and emotional factors become important as fundamental variables to understand human attitudes or actions. One of the most positive attitudes towards tourism is economic benefits in the early stages of tourism development (Diedrich & Garcia-Buades, 2009), (Woo et al., 2016). Socio-cultural impacts have not had their place during the early stages of development. Residents valuing their natural resources and supporting tourism development will engage more in tourism than the opposite.

2.2. Study on Community-Based Tourism

The tourism development approach, which places the community as an integral and inseparable part of tourism products, is the core of community empowerment. Engaging in community empowerment in managing local tourism is known as community-based tourism (CBT). This approach provides direct economic, strategic value to the community around tourist destinations if appropriately managed. It even indirectly contributes significantly to local revenue (Mamengko & Kuntari, 2020). Over the last two decades, this approach has benefited the destination community (Salazar, 2011; Okazaki, 2008; Ngo, Lohmann, & Hales, 2018) had this tourism been sustained and sustainable. The benefits are different from mainstream tourism, which is currently heavily criticized (Croes, 2012). CBT shows the reciprocal relationship between tourists and the local community as a particular form of alternative tourism, where tourists are not the top priority. Instead, they become part of the system.
CBT is also used to empower poor coastal communities in Indonesia (Mamengko & Kuntari, 2020). This approach provides opportunities for local communities to contribute to the management more democratically in terms of profit-sharing from tourism activities. The benefits of CBT planning lie in the process, not the outcome (Salazar, 2011). Engaging and empowering the local community can identify difficulties, power imbalance, lack of community capacity, and capital. Meanwhile, having access in the management is one way to ensure that local people with low economy benefit from tourism.

The application of CBT also shows clear parallels in the development of local communities more broadly. For example, the participatory planning philosophy recommends that control processes are in the local community. Thus, an active and sustainable society is built based on social justice and mutual respect (Blackstock, 2005).

2.2.1. Definition of Community

"Community" refers to a particular locality, such as a village community, and an indefinite locality, such as a "virtual world community." A community can also be a 'social unit' that is mutually supportive, geographically specific. Members of this community share activities, actively involve each other, identify themselves as members of the community, and usually take a joint resolution (Salazar, 2011). This self-identification becomes their identity. Finally, a community may also be the bonds between people and places creating a distinctive character and survival strength (Blackstock, 2005).

Community-managed tourism usually consists of several stakeholders, such as Local Government, Regional Government, Local Communities, and Intermediary communities. The last party connects the two previous ones. It may be in the form of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) or Tourism Awareness Groups. Another research revealed that community participation involved all stakeholders (regional government officials, residents, architects, developers, business actors, and planners) making decisions (Okazaki, 2008). Its participatory model takes a long time and faces obstacles such as uneducated participants, lack of business experience, insufficient financial support, conflicts of interest in land ownership, unfair profit sharing, and social unrest due to marginalized women's communities (Ketema, 2015). However, the ability to take part requires means and facilities to be able to be involved.

Participation from the local community requires social capital and adequate skills. The power to acquire these come mainly from the government or other stakeholders who perceive the local community as not equal partners. The local community usually has no idea where to start in terms of participating. Therefore, the government must initiate development planning to support social capital and skills training for its citizens.

The concept of social capital is obligations and expectations, information, and social norms that explain behavior, potential resources possessed by individuals in dealing with other people (Osman & Saridan, 2014). On the other hand, social competence is the overall ability to interact effectively with other people. Social capital and competencies showed in planning, marketing, operationalizing, processing finances, cooperating, making decisions. The community can obtain these competencies through education, previous experience, training, apprenticeship, or involvement in an activity or work. Thus, the local population's developed capital and social competence would enrich human capital for personal, social, and economic sustainability.

2.2.2. Criticism against CBT

CBT approach is not without criticism. Many of them refer to facts and research in several places that are casuistic. Studies argued that CBT did not develop the community but ensured the long-term viability of the profitable tourism industry (Blackstock, 2005). The argument used by CBT advocates refers to economic benefits rather than social justice (Ketema, 2015). The negative attitude of residents towards the existence of tourism is considered an issue that hinders the growth of the tourism industry. Social and environmental impacts should be avoided, for they can damage capital investment.

The community groups presented by CBT are homogeneous, in the competition for values and the power struggle is less audible. On the other hand, areas with heterogeneous community groups face competition and power or influence issues (Blackstock, 2005). Communities are co-opted to support tourism through the illusion of power-sharing but not empowered to reject all practices of social injustice (Ketema, 2015). Local control does not automatically affect participative decision-making in a tourism development case in Hawaii. The local pressure group has a significant influence, thus silences alternative local voices. In other words, power relations can alter the outcome of collaborative efforts or even hinder them (Blackstock, 2005).

3. METHODOLOGY

This research is a qualitative study guided by a fundamental theoretical approach from CBT. It critically analyses how well the commonly known CBT principles correspond to reality.
Ethnographic fieldwork was carried out in May, June, and July 2021, focusing on the Kampa Beach tourist destination in West Wawonii, Konawe Kepulauan Regency, Southeast Sulawesi. The methodology involved a mixed method of fieldwork consisting of observation, engaging two research assistants, one student of the University of Hasanuddin and one of the University of Halu Oleo. Both are from Wawonii Island. In addition to field observations, semi-structured in-depth interviews were also conducted, recorded on a mobile phone. Interviews, a typical purposive sampling, were conducted with 11 people (see Table 1). In addition, transcribed interviews, field notes, pictures, and videos recorded in WhatsApp were stored in a laptop to be available as needed.

Aside from documents and pictures retrieved from websites, other essential data were downloaded from reputed journals, both open access and paid journals. Online search used community-based tourism and community perception toward tourism as keywords. Journals obtained were selected for those relevant to the research. Decoding took place to tag texts by seeking their themes and sub-themes.

All data were decoded and interpreted based on the phenomena analyzed during forum group discussions and updated by contacting local assistants via WhatsApp group if clarifications were needed. Interpretative-phenomenological analysis (IPA)-based qualitative data analysis techniques indeed require only a small data sample. Hence, the investigation was continuously conducted simultaneously as data collecting, as qualitative data analysis does not require linear activity with data collection.

### 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.1. The Enhancement of Kampa Beach, Wawonii

Wawonii is a small heart-shaped island located in Southeast Sulawesi (Figure 1.). Reaching the island requires 3-4 sea travel hours from the Nusantara port, Kendari. The word "Wawonii" consists of two words, "wawo" meaning “above” and “nii,” meaning “coconut,” characterizing this small island full of coconut trees along the coastline.

This island has specificities, such as white sand Kampa Beach in Wawobili Village, West Wawonii District. Popular among locals, the beach is perfect for tourists to relax and offer a homey sensation (Figure 2).

#### Table 1. Informants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchants</td>
<td>2 out of 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landowner</td>
<td>2 out of 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landowner (former Head of Office of Tourism, member of Local House of Representatives.)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitor (civil servant at the Office of Tourism)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitor (students)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head of Pokdarwis of Kampa Beach</td>
<td>1 out of 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Local Government</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head of West Wawonii District (Local Government)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head of Office of Tourism, Youth and Sport (Regency Government)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 2. The Enchantment of Kampa Beach, (Personal Document)*

Not far from Kampa Beach, one can find a different atmosphere, bordered by an unusually high, long, and sharp rock, at Tanjung Beach, another destination to visit. Tanjung Beach is also in Wawobili Village, 500 m from Kampa Beach. Tanjung Beach is closer to the port located in Mata Langara Village. The wave at Tanjung Beach is not as strong as that at Kampa Beach; it is safe for children to play on. Tanjung Beach has its uniqueness; one can enjoy the sunset, enhanced with a beautiful view of tall coconut trees and colonial-era forts. When the water withdraws, local profits the time to look for seashells or other small fish, an activity they call meti-meti in the local language. Adults and children also participate in this activity besides playing with their mates (Figure 3).

*Figure 3. Underwater charm on Tanjung Beach, near Kampa Beach (Doc. konkepkab.go.id).*
Tourist destinations on Wawonii Island, especially Kampa Beach, have been managed by the local government since 2016, with a length of approximately three km, focusing mainly on Tanjung. Tanjung has clear seawater. Certain spots will be open for diving as this destination is rich with coral reefs, fish, seashells, and other beautiful marine biotas. One of the informants reported that turtles and maleo birds still exist on this beach.

The Regional Government has provided facilities such as gazebos – rest places for visitors - dispersed at several points, homestays with decent facilities, a hall for meetings, and a prayer house to support the development of Kampa Beach tourism. A spectacular natural forest laid beyond these buildings made of wood in the middle of wild grass. A contrasting view with the charming view of white sand (Figure 4). Kampa Beach is the main gate to other tourist destinations in Wawonii Island. The last two years' data shows that visitors at Kampa Beach have more dominant than at Timburano Waterfall, except for January 2019 before the Covid-19 pandemic outburst. The average number of visitors is three times greater than that to Timburano Waterfall. Local visitors dominate these visits, reaching 3-4 times greater than tourists from other parts of Indonesia. This number has declined drastically due to the pandemic. The end of the year always shows an increase in the number of local visitors.

Figure 4. The charm of the natural forest of Kampa Beach (Personal Document)

4.2. Wawonii Community Perception towards the Development and Sustainability Kampa Beach as a Tourist Destination

The informants’ answers to the questions show positive responses toward the development of Kampa Beach. The community is aware that they will benefit economically if Kampa Beach is better managed and maintained. Based on their experience, the newly renovated Kampa Beach had been invaded by large numbers of local visitors, increasing the income of the merchant community dramatically. The number of visitors correlated directly with the revenue of local merchants. Locals involved in managing destinations were not only merchants but also landowners. They gained economic benefits from leasing part of their land for the construction of kiosks. The Regional Government obtained PAD (Local Own-Source Revenue) from the entrance fee for tourist sites. However, during the pandemic, tourist sites are often closed. Based on the experience of the merchant community, their income would have increased if Kampa Beach had had entertainment facilities that could attract more visitors. The current situation only provides benefits at certain times, such as on the weekend and during the holidays and New Year's. Livelihoods from tourist destinations have not become the main livelihood for local people due to a lack of professional management. The definitive answer provided by the regional government was that it was due to budget issues. Residents in Wawobili Village are primarily fishermen, merchants, boat craftsmen, and civil servants, in addition to unstable jobs such as motorcycle taxis and online news reporters. Some civil servants would go as fishermen when time allows. It proves that the maritime spirit is in the blood of this community, that it is hard to separate them from marine life.

Community perception was optimistic when asked about their hope if Kampa Beach tourism is more developed. All informants expressed their hope enthusiastically and sounded happy and cheerful as Kampa Beach is the local pride. Moreover, the residents are closely related to one another; they have the same goals and aspirations towards the area where they were born and raised. Similarly, when asked about their expectation if outside investors are interested in the Kampa Beach development, informants immediately responded that they preferred to have local investors. Regional Government officials responded more diplomatically that outside investors would have to discuss it beforehand with the local government. Table 2 below shows Community perceptions of the management and development of Kampa Beach.

The questions aim to explore local perceptions regarding the existence of Kampa Beach as a tourist destination and the planned development program initiated by the Local Government. The positive (+) sign represents their agreement on the statement asked, the negative (-) sign their disagreement, and (+/-) expresses doubt. Theoretically, the economic dimension at the initial stage of development is the priority. Thus, it is expected that all informants gave positive (+) answers. However, concern arouses when the (+/-) response from a landowner showed his ambiguous attitudes. Further interviews revealed that an issue had not been solved between the local government and the landowner concerning the land within the tourist area.

As for the tourist destination development program, most of the local informants have no idea (-) on the program, most of them do not know what (-) it looks like; there are responses from visitors who express their doubts (+/-) since there are already supporting facilities.
Theoretically, development activities needed support from the Local Government to mobilize various parties, especially the community. It is necessary to have simultaneous and cross-sectoral collaboration to empower the community. The results of previous research in several regions showed that the success of community empowerment was due to community awareness of a sense of belonging. Each party has its formants, especially community members. The CBT program in several regions, one of them, was the Tourism Awareness Group recruited from community members. The administration was facilitated by the Local Government to mobilize various parties, such as merchants and landowners. Land ownership in some areas of Kampa Beach is still inherited land owned by seven heirs, who planted coconut trees on their property. The local government has the right to some part. According to the informants, they still retained 12 hectares of inherited land. There was no apparent legal cooperation with the Local Government regarding the management of Kampa Beach as a tourist destination. The administration was carried out dominantly by the Local Government. However, the Regional Government had formed a Tourism Awareness Group recruited from community members. Pokdarwis approached landowners to rent and collaborate for coastal tourism activities with, unfortunately, no apparent result. Therefore, the Kampa Beach management plan is still problematic. From the Regional Government's perspective, there was no significant issue as no obstacles came from the community regarding tourism facility construction, and everything went well.

Theoretically, community-based tourism management should include (1) government support; (2) stakeholder involvement; (3) fair distribution of profits; (4) sustainable utilization of local resources; (5) strengthening local institutions; (6) local, regional, and national linkages [8]. In addition, community empowerment is necessary to play an active and optimal role by providing specific job training, such as lifeguards, divers, nature tour guides, and assistance in managing contemporary, creative, and innovative businesses.

Strengthening and increasing the younger generation's capacity, roles, and initiatives is also needed to encourage them to play an active role as subjects, actors, or beneficiaries of sustainable tourism development. Hence, the Regional Government needs to empower local institutions such as the Youth and Sports division of the Tourism Office by providing training, short courses, and apprenticeships to develop sustainable coastal tourism.

Pokdarwis (task force) in Kampa Beach had been newly established in 2020. However, according to the informant, no Vision, Mission, and work program was yet available or was still being prepared. Whereas the success of the CBT program in several regions, one of which is due to having a clear vision and organizational structure along with the main tasks and precise functions of the manager and members. All parties involved must play a role in carrying out the assigned mission. The joint mission of Pokdarwis is to carry out Sapta Pesona policies, i.e., seven activities to realize a sustainable tourism destination: Security, Orderliness, Cleanliness, Coolness, Beauty, Hospitality, and Memory.

Security shall mean a presence of security guards to maintain visitors' security and safety, their belongings, and vehicles during their visit to the tourist area. Orderliness shall mean that the organization of activities related to the tourist destination, such as parking lot organization, merchant kiosks, and visitors' entrance, shall be adequately managed. Merchants shall have their permanent place to maintain the beauty and the atmosphere of the tourist destination. Kiosk ownership shall be regulated so that no party can monopolize and dominate. There shall be equal opportunity for all people to conduct their business. Cleanliness is the main point of Pokdarwis' concern. Each party shall understand that cleanliness will improve comfort by increasing the number of visitors. Cleaning staff shall be ready whenever there is a big event welcoming many visitors. Cleaning staff working...
at the beach area shall have a fixed schedule. It may work in close relation with volunteers from environmental activists.

There shall be a socialization and awareness program for all parties always to maintain cleanliness and dispose of waste in the places provided. **Coolness** shall mean to take measures to create an excellent tourist destination by offering gazebos for a place to sit in or to take a rest. Coolness may also come from well-preserved trees. **Beautiful** shall mean well-positioned sites, well-organized activities, and preservation of natural resources, fauna, and flora from irresponsible hands to make the place look beautiful. **Hospitality** would mean that this attitude shall be part of each party involved: administrators, managers, Pokdarwis members, merchants, workers, visitors. And finally, **memories**. Pokdarwis and all stakeholders shall decide highlighted sites for visitors to remember and to return.

5. CONCLUSION

The community perception and field observations related to implementing a community-based tourism program showed that the management of this tourist destination has not fully implemented CBT principles. The community, which should be a forum for organizing various parties among the locals, has just been established and has not had a precise management and work program. The last several years, the administration of Kampa Beach has still dominantly carried out by the Local Government and local individuals who are not a member of any association or institution. Thus, the result has not been optimized. However, Kampa Beach can be a sustainable tourist destination as the locals at Wawonii island show a positive response towards the existence of a tourist destination of which they are proud.

AUTHORS’ CONTRIBUTIONS

Each author has contributed equally to this manuscript. Ade Yolanda Latjuba, as the primary author, is responsible for the concept and research design. Rosnita Sari collected data and discussed them with other research assistants and the primary researcher. The primary author then writes the result of the study. Therefore, the content of this manuscript is her responsibility.

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