

# Community-Based Tourism Development in North Minahasa, North Sulawesi Indonesia

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***Abstrak-*** *This study aims to analyze the root of the problem of the community's low participation in tourism activities on Bangka Island, East Likupang Sub-District, North Minahasa Regency, North Sulawesi Province, Indonesia. This study was a descriptive study using a qualitative approach. The research method used was a Case Study conducted on Bangka Island of East Likupang Sub-District. The study was conducted from July to December 2011. The Primary data were obtained by observation, interview, and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) techniques, while secondary data were obtained by collecting documents through institutional surveys. Respondents were determined by purposive sampling technique according to the purpose of the study. Data analysis used was qualitative analysis. The results of the study showed that community participation as key stakeholders in tourism management was still low. It was indicated by the lack of manpower employed in resort businesses. The low participation of the community was caused by three factors: the lack of human resources quality which implied by poor understanding and skills, lack of capital, and lack of the role of government in community empowerment.*

***Keywords:*** *Tourism Development, Community Participation, North Minahasa, North Sulawesi.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

North Sulawesi Province is one of the provinces on Sulawesi Island that is known to be aggressively developing the tourism sector (Hakim et al., 2012). Although the income and tourist arrivals to the Province of North Sulawesi are not as high as in Bali, the climate and growth of the tourism sector in North Sulawesi can be said well developing. In the context of tourism, Bunaken Island is the mainstay of the tourism sector of North Sulawesi Province, and a cluster of small islands stretching along the north-south axis in the Sulawesi Sea. These islands have a wide variety of abundant potential natural resources but have not been fully developed as tourism objects and attractions [1], [2]. Small islands are now a global concern because of their vulnerability to global climate change and the

threat of exploitation of coastal and terrestrial resources that threaten the existence of the islands and the inhabitants. Small island development is thus directed to foster an environmentally friendly and sustainable industry to maintain the integrity of ecological systems and physical structures to avoid damage and extinction of the islands.

One of the islands that have the potential for tourism development is Bangka Island, located in Likupang Timur Sub-District, North Minahasa Regency, North Sulawesi Province. Physiographically, Bangka Island is a coastal area that has a coastal landscape, the sea with biodiversity and the beauty of the surrounding panorama that can be integrated into tourism development. As is the case in most coastal villages, a portion of the coastal landmass on Bangka Island has been utilized for residential settlements, locations for aquaculture, fishing locations, and a small number of tourism development sites. The total area of Bangka Island is 2,919 ha with a population of 2,697 people and a total of 726 households in three villages, namely Lihunu Village, Kahuku Village, and Libas Village [3].

Community-based tourism is one of the strategic approaches that are expected to contribute significantly to the three pillars of development, namely economic, social, and environmental aspects. The idea of community-based tourism emerged in the 1990s as an effort to encourage the contribution of the tourism sector in achieving sustainable development (Murphy and Murphy, 2005). Community-based tourism (CBT) is often characterized by the principle and its purpose is to increase the benefits of local communities, accept tourists in the context of locality, manage tourism to develop in the context of community involvement, and fair benefit distributions among many parties involved and others [4], [5]. CBT was a model of tourism development that assumes that tourism must depart from the awareness of the values of community needs as an effort to build tourism that is more beneficial to the needs, initiatives, and opportunities of local communities. CBT is not a tourism business that is only profit-oriented for the investors but is more related to the impact of tourism on society and environmental resources. CBT was born from a community development strategy using tourism as

a tool to strengthen the ability of local community organizations.

Based on the description above, it is clear that the development of tourism on a small island like Bangka Island should not be separated from the participation of the local community in tourism sites. The community needs to be involved, to mutually create security, comfort, protection of resources and tourist attractions, and to maintain and preserve facilities and infrastructure, which are all factors that determine the attractiveness of Bangka Island. The natural wealth of Bangka Island is the potential to be maximized for tourism activities. Likewise, the culture of the local community is an asset that can be integrated and utilized to create a competitive and sustainable tourism industry on Bangka Island. It is possible because the local community already has knowledge and policies (local wisdom) in managing natural resources sustainably which will indirectly affect the quality of island resources for the use as tourism resources and attractions.

Based on the background of this problem, this study seeks to reveal the development of the tourism sector on Bangka Island in North Minahasa Regency, North Sulawesi Province, and its relation to community involvement in the industry.

## II. RESEARCH METHOD

This study used a qualitative approach. According to reference [6], a qualitative research approach is used to examine natural object condition (natural setting) where researchers are the key instruments, data collection technique used was triangulation (combination), data analysis was inductive, and the results of the study emphasized more on the meaning of the generalization. The study was qualitative because the data collection and analysis were more qualitative. Another explanation was stated by reference [7], that qualitative research is a study that intends to understand phenomena about what is experienced by research subjects, for example, behavior, perception, motivation, actions and others holistically by means of descriptions in the form of words and language in a particular context experienced and utilizing various scientific methods.

The natural object (natural setting) in qualitative research is the object as it is, not manipulated so that the conditions at the time when the researcher enters the object, after being in the object, and after leaving are relatively unchanged. Therefore, qualitative research is often called a naturalistic study. The data criteria are actual data, the data that occurs as it is, not only is seen and said but the data that contains the meaning behind what is seen and spoken [8].

Based on the data and information collected, this study employed two methods, namely the study of the documentation of similar results of the study in different places and documents relating to the research topic, and secondly used the case study method. According to reference [9], a case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life

context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident, and where multiple sources of evidence are utilized. In general, the case study method is a more appropriate strategy: (i) if the research question starts with "how" and "why"; (ii) if the researcher has few opportunities to control the events to be investigated; and (iii) when the focus of his research lies in contemporary (present) phenomena in the context of real life. The type of case study was an explorative case study that emphasized the ability of researchers to use participant observation techniques in data collection activities. This observation technique could capture detailed empirical information from the research analysis unit.

## III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the study showed that in terms of quantity, human resources on Bangka Island were very supportive of tourism development activities. However, in terms of quality, especially the participation or involvement was still low.

Historically, people who live on Bangka Island are natives who have been living on this island for generations, started from the time of emergence in the region until now. However, it does not guarantee that they can be professional tourism agents to serve tourists visiting Bangka Island. Most of them wanted to become tourist guides but failed because they did not have the competencies to perform this job, especially the ability to communicate. Another influencing factor is the lack of adequate knowledge and understanding of tourism resources, especially nature tourism in the Bangka Island areas, making it difficult for them to communicate with the visiting tourists. Therefore, the coastal community of Bangka Island needs to improve their competencies by joining the training programs, guidance, and counseling that need to be provided by the local government through collaborative programs with related agencies. With such activities, it is expected that local people will be able to actualize themselves in tourism activities. Awareness of the local community to improve their abilities as initial participation is very important to improve the quality of Bangka Island management as a popular and in-demand tourist destination by both foreign and domestic tourists.

In one of the FGD, it was found that human resources were the main obstacle to community involvement. In this regard, reference [10] stated that the quality of human resources involved two aspects, namely the physical aspect (a physical quality which involves the ability to work) and the non-physical aspect (a non-physical quality which involves thinking ability and other skills). Therefore, efforts to improve the quality of human resources can be directed at both aspects. To improve physical quality, efforts can be made through health and nutrition programs, while to improve non-physical quality, education and training efforts are needed.

Having observed from physical aspects, the ability of human resources at the research location was very supportive. The people who live on the coasts of Bangka Island have strong physical conditions, both men and women. With a strong physical condition and energy, they work to process or utilize natural resources in the surrounding areas, especially in agriculture and fisheries. However, in terms of non-physical aspects, the level of public education, in general, was low, which indicated that the quality of human resources was also still low. The main objective of developing the tourism industry is to improve the quality of the economy of the community because the tourism sector has now become a commodity that can drive the country's economy. The problem appears then is on how to align the interests of the sustainability of the local community-based tourism industry with economic interests concerning the concept of sustainable development.

It has not been implemented in the management of tourism businesses on Bangka Island. The community tended to have low participation or engagement in the management and development of tourism due to economic factors, besides education. The economic factors referred to not merely the low level of the community's economy in meeting the daily needs, but the inability to seek capital independently to manage the available tourism potential. This capital problem can be overcome through the roles and responsibilities of the government as policymakers at the village level, for example by establishing cooperation with related institutions to promote access to capital so that the community is expected to have the ability to manage the tourism business independently.

The government is the ruler, policymaker and decision-maker in the village, but in reality, the planned and implemented program have not been able to meet the aspirations of the community in general. The local community was interested in taking a direct active role, but it was not fitted with the implementation of community-based government programs. In terms of tourism, this program was not optimal and was not carried out intensively. All activities were dominated by the government, and it seemed that the government as the program maker and policymaker still did not directly engage the community and did not attract investors to facilitate capital access to the community. It is also one of the obstacles in enhancing the participation of the community as the main stakeholder, to manage and develop a community-based tourism business independently.

The FGD revealed that thus far, the government and the owner/manager of tourism businesses have not directly involved the community in making any decisions related to tourism development. This finding proves that the community has not been actively involved from the planning to the implementation stages so that all programs that may be intended for the community were not on target. From this inaccurate target, new problems arise in the social life of the

people of Bangka Island with the local government and related agencies in developing the tourism sector.

Instead, if the tourism development directly involves the community, both in the planning and implementation stages, it is expected that the community will actively participate. However, it has not been maximized thus far, and all policies and programs have been made in the orientation of the government or related agencies.

The development of tourism in small islands often suggested the involvement of the community in every planning and implementation, yet, the success rate is far from expectation [11]. Various explanations related to these conditions often mention community factors, especially aspects of the lack of human resources, as dominant factors. In the context of tourism development in small islands that have been investigated and implemented, humans are deemed as the main objects that must be empowered. Related to this view, it is not wrong if empowerment programs always set people as the focus and target of activities as on Bangka Island, even the approaches and programs carried out are top-down.

This study reveals that the lack of community participation on Bangka Island in the tourism industry is complex. Thus, the problem of the lack of human resources cannot be seen as the sole and primary cause, but is related to other aspects related to human beings themselves, including: social capital, local community resources, natural resources, financial capital and biodiversity resources.

This study found out that the lack of community participation on Bangka Island in the tourism industry was complex. Thus, the problem of the lack of human resources cannot be perceived as the sole and primary cause but is related to other aspects and human beings themselves, including social capital, local community resources, natural resources, financial capital and biodiversity resources.

In the context of the tourism development model on Bangka Island, the community must be convinced that their involvement in tourism on the small island is not only to improve the expected welfare and economic benefits but also to participate in sustaining the implementation of the sustainable tourism industry. In principle, the development of sustainable tourism on a small island by involving the community must be directed to overcome shortcomings and create high competitiveness.

In the concept of community involvement developed by reference [12], the challenge for community involvement in developing the Bangka island tourism sector is the implementation process of three stages by making the community component as an important key. As discussed in the results of this study, there was a tendency of people to have low participation, so the first stage (integration) is to integrate all internal components of the community and to encourage a good understanding on the significance of internal capital for developing tourism on the small island.

To further enhance the enthusiasm and attention of the community, economic stimulus aspects of external factors (such as tourism market demand, prices, level of competition, and the need for specific destinations) can be proposed for consolidating the internal factors. However, It has not been done systematically on Bangka Island. There is still a gap between external factors that are exclusive as tourism entrepreneurs and internal factors that are the primary characteristics of the community. Solving these problems and then integrating aspects of external stimulus in driving the innate strength of the people on Bangka Island will be the path for strategic integration efforts.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussions, the following conclusions can be drawn:

The participation of the Bangka Island community in tourism management is still low. The root of this problem is known to be very closely related to the low quality of human resources, cross-stakeholder communication, and government regulations on aspects of sustainable tourism. The community, especially productive workers are still lack of the capacity of understanding and sufficient skills to play a role in the tourism sector until today. Community engagement is still limited to the ability to work in areas that require unskilled labor at tourism sites that are owned and managed by investors. The low quality of human resources in the tourism sector causes the under maximized management of natural and cultural potentials. It has become a challenge for any attempts to develop community-based tourism on Bangka Island.

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