

THE DEVELOPMENT OF LAKE TOBA TOURISM BY STRENGTHENING LOCAL WISDOM

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Abstract

Tourism activities become one of the necessities of modern life. The existence of the tourism sector plays a role in the economic development of a country in the world. This sector also indirectly contributes a significant impact in the development of culture in Indonesia, especially in the Lake Toba region. To develop the tourism in the Lake Toba, the role of local wisdom which spreads in the surrounding area can be a special attraction to invite tourist arrivals, besides its conservation and its magnificent natural view. This research employs a research and development approach using exploratory methods. Meanwhile, the analysis method used the analysis of Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threats (SWOT) to analyze the potential and the problems. The finding indicates that Lake Toba has potentials that can be developed to increase local tourism, those include local customs and culture, local arts, natural tourism, local culinary, heritage and traditional and cultural festivities in each region. The development of tourism focusing on local-wisdom-based can be performed by revitalizing tourist attractions, tourist promotion, and cooperation through partnerships and all related elements. The development of Lake Toba tourism through strengthening the local wisdom is a form of local culture that has a strategic value to increase local revenues which eventually improve the welfare of local communities in the area.

Keywords: Tourism Development, Lake Toba, Local Wisdom, SWOT

INTRODUCTION

Tourism activities become one of the necessities in modern life. The existence of the tourism sector plays an important role in economic development. Tourism has become a flagship that plays an important role in the country's economy and in improving the welfare of the population in Indonesia. This can be seen from the government's efforts in building and developing tourist destinations and establishing the tourism sector as one of the five leading sectors. In general, tourism is one of the sectors that plays an important role in a harmonious, planned, sustainable and responsible based on the principles of development to provide protection for the community's traditional and cultural values, environmental sustainability and as well as to protect the environmental quality in the area.

Improving community's welfare has made tourism a key sector of human needs and has encouraged people from various regions of the world to know nature and culture. Maturbongs, et al (2020) explain that tourism development can be realized by the development plans and considering to take into account diversity, uniqueness, cultural peculiarities, natural conditions and human needs. The factor to concern in tourism development is how the community and the potential in the surrounding area can be sustainably engaged and developed. Thus, the

development of a tourist area cannot be separated from the development and exploration of the existing potentials in the area.

Indonesia is an archipelagic country that has cultural tourism potentials spreading in various regions. Due to this reason, Indonesia needs to take advantage of these factors to develop tourism by strengthening local wisdom. This tourism development strategy has been carried out in Bali and the results prove that this approach is able to attract local and foreign tourists to visit. This can be seen in the increasing number of tourists every year (Malik, 2016). The tourism sector indirectly plays a role in the development of culture in Indonesia, especially in the Lake Toba area. With the existence of a tourist attraction, the area indirectly introduces its cultural diversity. The tourism sector can provide intercultural understanding through visitor interactions with local communities (Siagian et al, 2018). The government with the enthusiasm to awaken the national tourism climate has decided on five super priority tourist destinations located in the National Tourism Strategic Areas and those in the Special Economic Tourism Zones respectively, including 1) Lake Toba, North Sumatra; 2) Borobudur, Central Java; 3) Mandalika, West Nusa Tenggara; 4) Labuan Bajo, East Nusa Tenggara; 5) Likupang, North Sulawesi. Among those five super priority tourism destinations mentioned previously, Lake Toba was positioned in the first place. Thus, it can be perceived that the government pays high attention to tourism development in North Sumatra.

The Lake Toba area prioritizes tourism as the main sector of development to prosper the surrounding community. The level of tourist visits to Lake Toba in 2019 was 378,000 tourists. However, the visit decreased compared to 2018, in which as many as 420,000 tourists came to this region. This means that the Ministry of Tourism's target to invite one million foreign tourists to Lake Toba still has not yet been achieved. Apart from its conservation and natural views, to develop the tourism site in Lake Toba, the role of local wisdom spreading in the area can be a special attraction to invite tourist arrivals. Nevertheless, Lake Toba, as an asset for the tourist attraction is considered monotonous, which it only relies on its natural characteristics? To be a world-class tourist destination, natural views of the region cannot be the only measure, but it needs to explore and develop all other existing potentials in the area. Each area that is direct intersected with Lake Toba, is expected to be able to present attractive and unique destinations in their respective regions.

Local wisdom in the area intersecting with Lake Toba can be a potential tourist attraction. Therefore, it needs further development especially to attract tourists' interest. To realise this, Wibawanto (2015) explains that natural views and diversity of customs and cultures are highly needed to develop tourist areas. In supporting this, human resources with the capability and accessibility to the tourism potential are highly needed. Tourism is considered to have economic value. It can generate considerable income which will eventually have implications on local revenue to support the economy of the community in the surrounding area. The uniqueness of local wisdom can be manifested in various forms of life, including local knowledge, customs, belief systems, cultural and artistic rituals and many more. Tourism activities based on local wisdom are inherent in a particular community. There is no tourism without culture which means when an area promotes its tourism site, basically, the area also

promotes local culture. Local wisdom is a resource that becomes the capital for the development of tourism sites. The characteristics of the Lake Toba region provide a variety of colors to the cultural richness. There are various customs and cultural traditions and most of which are still preserved. All of these potential attractions provide comparative and competitive advantages if they are properly managed (Vitasurya, 2016)

METHOD

This research employs a research and development approach using exploratory methods. This method aims to seek deep information on the causes or factors that affect the occurrence of events (Arikunto, 2005). This is qualitative research focusing on natural tourist destinations and various local wisdom that exist in the Lake Toba area. The data was sourced from primary and secondary data. Primary data was obtained through in-depth interviews and observation techniques followed by focus group discussions. Meanwhile, secondary data was obtained from related agencies for the requirement of research data completion.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Tourism activities in Lake Toba are one of the sectors that play an important role in the process of development and the development of the surrounding area. It has a fundamental spectrum for the development of the Lake Toba Region. There are four related aspects that are linked to the tourism sector in Lake Toba including tourist destinations, tourism marketing, and the tourism industry and tourism institutions. The first step to take to identify tourists' interest in this tourist site is by conducting comprehensive research, interviewing the government, the elders and the local communities, followed by collecting information on the characteristics of a planned destination area as an evaluation. Lake Toba and the area that intersects with it is referred to Lake Toba region. It is a strategic location from various angles of interest, function and carrying capacity of the environment in it. This area includes the waterbody, water catchment areas, groundwater basins and natural conditions in the area. The waterbody is surrounded by seven districts and 28 sub-districts which can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1: The areas that intersect with the waters of Lake Toba

No	Districts	Sub-districts
1	Karo	Merek
2	Simalungun	Pematang Silimakuta, Haranggaol Harison, Pematang, Sidamanik, Girsang Sipangan Bolon, Dolok Pardamean
3	Toba	Ajibata, Tampahan, Sigumpar Lumban Julu, Siantar Narumonda, Porsea dan Balige,
4	Tapanuli Utara	Muara
5	Samosir	Lintong Nihuta, Sitio-tio, Harian, Pangururan, Sianjur Mula- Mula, Simanindo, Onan Runggu, Nainggolan, Palipi
6	Humbang Hasundutan	Baktiraja
7	Dairi	Silahisabungan

Lake Toba has many tourism potentials such as nature tourism, cultural tourism, beach tourism, spiritual tourism and culinary tourism. In the implementation process, the development of Lake Toba tourism is carried out based on the principles of development on the basis of benefits, kinship, fairness and equity in each supporting element. Thus, the tourist development is aimed at:

1. Introducing, preserving, developing and increasing the potential and the objects of tourist sites.
2. Spreading, expanding and leveling business and employment opportunities
3. Instilling the sense of admiring the homeland and increasing cooperation between regions
4. Increasing regional income which is manifested in increasing people's welfare and prosperity.

Tourist destinations based on local wisdom are currently growing in various regions. This makes culture-based tourism one of the local potentials in tourism development. The development of tourism based on local wisdom aims to introduce the customs and culture of the surrounding community which seems to be the identity of the area to tourists. At the same time, it preserves the culture which has an impact on increasing the economic income of the locals. Tourism potential based on local wisdom is a part of productivity and creativity that can have meaning and economic value in tourism development (Prayudi, 2020).

The discussion in this study relates to the local wisdom that supports the increase of tourism in Lake Toba. The local wisdom in each area that intersects with Lake Toba has different characteristics and uniqueness. The local wisdom carried out by the community around Lake Toba can be perceived in the cultural logic practised by the community especially in managing various aspects of their life. This aspect seems to be beneficial to continue life survivability which can be recognized through local values adopted from various aspects of life such as customs, arts, politics, agriculture, economy, religion, art and others.

Each district or area that intersects with Lake Toba has various destinations or natural tourism potentials such as hills, lakes, waterfalls and cultural activities. Those aspects have the potential to be developed. In relation to local wisdom, Lake Toba has potential that can be developed to increase local tourism such as local customs and culture, local arts, natural tourism, local culinary, heritage and others. Exploring these aspects seems to be possible since the areas have geological, cultural and historical characteristics and are supported by the participation of the surrounding community.

Bakti, et al (2018) suggest that local wisdom in the surrounding community has the potential to be developed in response to environmental dynamics following the nature of the world change. The changes are both positive and negative. Positive changes are reactivating local traditions and culture that have been left behind, which can be used as tourist objects and integrated with the natural surroundings. Thus, the tourists can visit the area by enjoying the natural scenery while being presented with the surrounding culture.

Local Customs and Culture

Jupir (2013) explains that traditional and cultural tourism are part of the products that can be used as tourism potential based on the work of humans. It can be in the form of cultural heritage or cultural values that are still preserved today. Bali as a tourist area dominantly visited by locals and foreign tourists has implemented the concept of culture-based tourism that puts forward a balance between humans, the environment and the creator (Sugiyarto et al, 2018).

The area that intersects with Lake Toba has customs and cultures that are able to attract tourists such as traditional ceremonies of death and marriage. In the community of Humbang Hasundutan Regency, marriage is carried out through several processes. The first process is Mangaririt, in which the man will choose a girl who fits his and his family's criteria. Then the process is followed by Mangalehon Tanda. This is a sign that both of them are serious. The man will give money and the woman will give sarongs. Followed by Marhori-Hori Wall (Marhusip). It takes place when the prospective groom brings all members of the nuclear family and King Hata to the bride's residence. The next ceremony is Martumpol, this is a religious blessing event. After that, the event is followed by Marhata Sinamot. This is to discuss how much the dowry is from the women. The next step is Martonggo Raja, this will invite Dalihan Na Tolu, including dongan tubu, hula-hula, and boru. The next step is Manjalo Pasu-Pasu Parbogason which is the blessing ceremony at the church. After the marriage is legal under the religion agreement, there will be an Ulaon Unjuk (Traditional Party) which refers to a large traditional party.

Local Cuisine

Harsana, et al (2020) stated that tourism is not only a physical journey passing from one place to the others with a different culture. However, it can be a packaged journey of imagination across the past and the future. This shows that the experience of traveling in the destination area cannot be separated from the consumption during the stay, which makes the culinary an important part of the tourist trip to the visited area. Tourism culinary activity is an important part of a tourist trip since every tourist needs special food from the destination which cannot be found in their place. This typical food refers to traditional cuisine in the Lake Toba area which can boost the potential of tourists to visit. As mentioned, local cuisine is a typical food that is closely related to a region and inherited from generation to generation as a part of tradition (Agnes, 2017).

Some areas that intersect with Lake Toba like Karo Regency have unique culinary, such as arsik carp, karo roast pork, lomok-lomok, terites, cipera, manuk getah kidu, cimpa unung-unung, cincan bohan, tasak teli, corn cimpa, and lemang/rires. Samosir Regency also has a unique culinary that showcases the original cooking traditions of the Austronesian people. The cuisine of Samosir Regency is known for its main seasoning andaliman, which gives taste to typical Toba Batak cuisines, such as naniura, natinombur fish, saksang, manuk napidar, dali ni horbo, gomak noodles, tuk-tuk sauce, and sasagun. North Tapanuli Regency also possess traditional culinary that likely become a favorite menu for tourists, such as putu siatas barita

cake, sihobuk beans, natinombur fish, dekke naniura, dalini horbo, ombos-ombos, pohul-pohul, and others.

Local Art

Masitoh et al. (2022) explain that art is a cultural asset that embodies a characteristic and regional identity maintained and preserved from generation to generation. The potential of local arts can be an attractive tourist attraction, creating fond memories and impressions upon the attractions. Some of the local arts produced by the community in the Lake Toba area include dances, traditional musics, and traditional clothes.

Tortor Batak Toba is a traditional dance that has been developing and preserved. This dance comes from North Sumatra which comprises areas that intersect with Lake Toba, i.e., North Tapanuli, Humbang Hasundutan, Toba Samosir, and Samosir. Tortor is a traditional dance presented with gondang music, as a medium of communication through the movements that contain an interaction with the visitors. Tortor and gondang music are performed in the open place by performing a special event called "Tua Ni Gondang", thereby the blessing of Gondang Sabangun. Another local art is traditional music, also called gondang, consisting of two parts: vocal music (ende) and instrumental music (gondang). Traditional music has a meaning closely related to the view of life, relationships, and daily activities. This traditional music is used in traditional and religious ceremonies and serves as entertainment media.

Traditional clothing is part of local art that can be a potential tourist attraction. Traditional clothes in the Lake Toba area are woven fabrics that have different names and meanings according to a certain area. For instance, in the Karo society, it is known as Uis Gara or Usi Adat Karo. While among the Simalungun society, it is known as Hiou. In the Dairi or Pakpak society, it is called as merapi-api shirt and oles cloth. It is also known as ulos cloth among the society of Samosir and Toba Samosir or Batak Toba. In general, these traditional clothes are specifically made from woven using traditional tools and silk threads. This traditional clothing is worn in traditional and religious ceremonies and in everyday life.

Local Heritage

Kartika, et al (2017) explain that heritage tourism is a tour packaged by visiting locations or places with important historical value that can be an attraction for tourists. In the field of tourism, cultural heritage can be considered as one of the important attractions by displaying heritage traces in the physical forms, such as buildings, sites, and cultural heritage areas to attract tourists (Ponirin et al, 2021).

Many cultural heritage areas can support tourism potential in the Lake Toba area, consisting of buildings and historical heritage sites. In Samosir Regency, there is a museum named Huta Bolon Simanindo. This museum is a traditional house inherited from King Sidauruk, comprising several traditional houses and a collection of relics such as parhalaan, laklak libraries, single panaluan and solu bolo. In addition to that, there is the Tomok Batak Museum which has a diverse collection of historical relics, such as war equipment, agricultural equipment, people's livelihoods, and daily equipment such as kitchen and household utensils.

The Toba Batak Museum is one of the best Batak museums in exploring the richness of Batak culture, from language to the history of the Batak society's faith. The sarcophagus is one of this museum's collections, which explains the animism and dynamism of the ancient Batak society.

Furthermore, in Humbahas Regency, there exists several historical heritage monuments that explain the culture of the local community. There is a monument to the King Sisingamangaraja Palace Museum in the most popular historical site category and has been awarded the Indonesian Charm Award. Besides that, there is the Toga Marbun monument next to Lake Toba. This monument was built by every ethnic Toba clan as a reflection that in every monument construction, they tried to find their identity and as a mark of the clan's existence.

Karo Regency has several historical heritage monuments as regional identity and cultural richness of the local community. Historical heritage monuments in Karo Regency include the Karo Library Museum, which was built on the idea of Dutch missionaries. It has collections that exhibit various ancestral heritages as well as unique and rare objects. The others are the Jamin Ginting Museum with a unique shape like a peanut, the Karo Linga Museum, and several monuments such as the Berastagi Struggle Monument, the Cabbage Monument, the Sharp Bamboo Monument, the Chess Monument, and the Lightning Monument.

Traditional Event and Local Culture

Nawangsih (2017) argues that in tourism development, local wisdom must be maintained and preserved by holding events or exposes regularly based on local traditions. Thus, in tourism activity development, the values embedded in the culture become energy that needs to be considered.

In the area that intersects with Lake Toba, the communities arrange an agenda for the annual cultural party. Karo Regency's annual cultural festival is called Year's Work. The Year's Work or Merdang-Merdem is an annual tradition that the Karo people highly look forward to. At the Year's Work, every family member away from home usually returns home to gather with their family. This annual party is held to thank God Almighty for the blessings given throughout the year.

Samosir Regency has a traditional party to introduce the culture and increase the number of tourist visits. The traditional party comprises a series of events. Each activity features various elements of the residents' culture, ranging from dance performances and music to a lively parade that showcases sigale-gale statues. It takes place for nine months, from April to December. The activities include Sigale - gale Carnival, Samosir Music International, Godang Naposo, Samosir Band Festival, Grand Fondo New York, Solu Bolon Festival, Christmas Season, Ulos Festival, and Tuak Sipingan Festival held in Samosir Regency every year. On the night of the celebration's peak, all the village communities or relatives will gather at the village hall (jambur) to enjoy the events managed by the youth organizations or village youths.

Simalungun Regency also has a traditional and cultural party called Rondang Bittang. Rondang Bittang is interpreted as "Light of the Moon". Simalungun people carry out Rondang Bittang

to express gratitude for the harvest or the result of the work. For the young, Rondang Bittang is an occasion to find a mate and a form of gratitude to Naibata (God of the Worlds). This party is thrown with various activities such as singing, reciprocating rhymes, wearing traditional clothes, playing traditional games, and dancing together (Liyansyah, 2011).

North Tapanuli Regency has an annual traditional party, called Indonesian Weaving Festival and Lake Toba Festival. The Indonesian Weaving Festival aims to promote and introduce ulos as modern clothing. In comparison, the Lake Toba Festival is an annual event held as a form of community gratitude for the existence of Lake Toba. These festivals cover various events, including art and culture. For the community in Humbahas Regency, the traditional party is called Martumba Festival. It is presented in the form of an expressive and dynamic dance normally performed by the young. This event is carried out on important days, such as district birthday celebrations, independence days, and other celebrations.

Bakti, et al (2018), in their study, reported that the future trend in the tourism sector comes from the potential of local wisdom in the local community. As such, the strategy on the pattern of tourism development based on local wisdom potentially lures tourists. Local wisdom is one of the assets that should be developed and empowered in the tourism sector.

Tourism development through strengthening local wisdom in the Lake Toba area may involve community participation as developers, conservationists, elders or traditional leaders as the sources who know the history, content, goals, benefits of the culture and its implementation, also related institutions or agencies as actors, financial, organization, and facilitators. Kharisma, et al (2017) explain planning and developing tourist destinations are complex due to the interdependence of various elements. Therefore, sustainable tourism development at the regional level requires various collaborations between elements such as elders, communities, and policymakers through optimizing the role of business, government, community, academic, and mass media aligned with the regulations of the tourism minister. Therefore, the tourism development in the Lake Toba area through strengthening local wisdom—a local culture that has strategic values and becomes a source and potential due to its uniqueness and authenticity—could attract local and foreign tourists. The following results from a SWOT analysis performed in the Lake Toba tourism area through strengthening local wisdom.

Table 2: Results of SWOT Analysis on Local Wisdom in the Lake Toba Area

SWOT Analysis Results	
Strength	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having a wide variety of potential tourism resources, such as natural, cultural, religious, and culinary tourism
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The existence of potential local wisdom-based tourism, such as customs and culture, arts, culinary, and heritage, that can be tourist attractions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having a strong local cultural identity and values that affect social life
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having customs, tribes, belief systems, and languages closely connected to local cultural heritage.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having an annual event as a local cultural attraction by displaying the local wisdom of each region.
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate infrastructure
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many tourist attractions are still private or family owned
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The potential local wisdom-based tourism has still not been optimized
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information related to tourism potential relies only on natural beauty, while other tourism potentials are still minimally presented
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotions are not carried out regularly and continuously
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delays in disseminating information, which are barriers to increasing local and foreign tourists
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited knowledge of local communities in tourism development
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited guides for tourists who will go around and learn about local culture and other tours.
Opportunity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local resources can be developed into tourism development potential through strengthening local wisdom
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local people have local skills in the form of crafts, arts, and culinary that can be local cultural attractions.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperating in developing tourism potential with the private sector and local government
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism development policies from the central government related to priority tourist destinations
Threat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The influx of foreign culture which can result in the fading of local culture
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Illegal development and logging of forests that can damage the ecology of environment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism potential is not professionally managed

Table 3: SWOT Strategy for Local Wisdom in the Lake Toba Area

SWOT Strategy	
Strength	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing the attraction of tourists who want to visit by exploring the potential for tourism development through strengthening local wisdom • Increase the potential for cultural tourism through collaboration with the government and private sectors • Organizing cultural events on a national or international scale
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing guide services for tourists who visit and want to learn about the culture and other tours. • Cooperating with mass media both print and online to facilitate the promotion of Lake Toba tourism to foreign countries • Providing training to the community to understand tourism related to services and development potential. • Providing easy accessibility for tourists • Building and improving infrastructures that support tourism
Opportunity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperating with the government and private sectors in tourism development • Improving services to visiting tourists • It is necessary to make instructions in foreign languages to make it easier for foreign tourists during their visit. • Build an information center in each area to ease tourists to find information
Threat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making strict regulations in maintaining environmental conditions, thereby remaining natural and sustainable • Developing environmentally friendly and sustainable tourism that can reduce or prevent environmental damage • Adding and improving existing services, quality, and facilities • Providing assistance and training to local communities related to tourism development through strengthening local wisdom

CONCLUSION

Based on the description above, one may conclude that tourism in the Lake Toba area can be developed by strengthening local wisdom in each area that intersects with Lake Toba. Concerning local wisdom, the Lake Toba area has the potential to develop to increase local tourism, including local customs and culture, local arts, natural tourism potential, local culinary, heritage, and traditional and cultural parties in each region.

Tourism development based on local wisdom can be performed by revitalizing tourist sites, tourist attractions, tourism promotion, and cooperation through partnerships and related elements. Thus, the development of tourism in the Lake Toba Region by strengthening local wisdom—a form of local culture that has strategic value and becomes a source and potential due to its uniqueness and authenticity—can attract local and foreign tourists. This will increase the region's original income and the local community's welfare in the Lake Toba area.

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