

## Community-Based Development of Tomohon City Center Tourism Area

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### Abstract

### Original Research Article

**Background:** Tomohon City has various tourist areas that have the potential to be developed, in which the community's participation is required in the process. This study aims to determine the implementation of the concept of community-based tourism in an effort to develop tourism potential in the downtown area of Tomohon, and to formulate an appropriate community-based tourism development model. **Methods:** This study used a descriptive qualitative method with data collection through interviews, observation and documentation studies. **Findings:** The results of this study indicate that the development of the Tourism Area in Tomohon City Center has implemented the concept of community-based tourism which fulfills five aspects including the economic, social, cultural, environmental and political dimensions. **Conclusion:** The tourism development of Tomohon City is able to drive the wheels of the economy at all levels of society and has a direct impact on the welfare of the community, as well as being able to encourage the growth and development of culture and the environment around the Tomohon City Center Area. **Practical Implications:** The tourism development model with a community-based approach can be carried out through three stages, namely the initial stage, the middle stage, and the advanced stage.

**Keywords:** Development, community-based tourism, Tomohon City.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Tomohon City, one of the cities in North Sulawesi, is a city that has a lot of natural beauty and biodiversity that grows in various regions, which then has the potential to be developed into a tourist area. Various flowers that grow into various plants, primarily cultivated in Tomohon, make it widely known as the City of Flowers. The city of Tomohon has many tourist destinations, with the beauty of various flowers being one of the competitiveness and assets of the city of Tomohon.

The city of Tomohon also has an international class exhibition and parade, namely the TIFF (Tomohon *et al.*, Festival), held annually in August. Since 2008, the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy has been working with various parties to hold the TIFF event. Starting from TIFF, organized by the Government of Tomohon, various tourist areas in other Tomohon City began to be known and visited by tourists. Not only tourism based on natural beauty, but several tourism potentials in Tomohon City, such as art and cultural

tourism, are also developing. Even the downtown area of Tomohon is one of the areas that has begun to be built and is getting spatial planning to be targeted as the next tourist destination in Tomohon. Several tourist objects can be found in the central area of Tomohon City, which is then planned to be integrated to attract tourists' attention. Tourism development indeed can not be separated from the role of the surrounding community.

Management of existing potentials is an obligation for all aspects, including government, community, and investors [1]. Based on Law No. 9 of 1990 concerning Tourism stated that the community has the same and most expansive possible opportunity to participate in the implementation of tourism. In this regard, current planning for tourism development always uses a community-based tourism approach or Community Based Tourism (CBT). According to Russell [2], CBT is a concept that pays attention to economic sustainability, pays attention to the surrounding community, and continues to maintain cultural integrity so that it does not change or mix with other cultures.

Community groups' participation at all development levels, starting from planning, implementation, and monitoring, is often neglected, so the function of authority in controlling tourism appears to be dominant [3]. The local community becomes essential and has the same status as the authorities and non-public – or private areas as one of the stakeholders in tourism promotion [4]. Community-based tourism is a form of tourism with a concept that puts forward a bottom-up approach, while sustainable tourism puts forward a top-down approach [5]. The bottom-up approach implies that the initiative for tourism development comes from the community, while in the top-down approach, the initiative comes from the government. CBT is an approach in tourism development activities that fully involve the community through participatory planning, management, and monitoring, and the community can feel the benefits directly [6].

This article was created to examine the implementation of community-based tourism to develop tourism potential in the downtown area of Tomohon. This article clearly describes implementing community-based tourism in the downtown area of Tomohon. In addition, this article also formulates a community-based tourism development model as an alternative to developing tourism area development programs in Tomohon City.

## 2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

### 2.1 Tourism Development

Based on Law No. 10 of 2009 concerning Tourism in Article 1, paragraph 3, tourism is all activities supported by all facilities and services provided by the community, business people, government, and local governments. According to Barreto and Giantari [7], tourism development is an effort to develop or advance tourist objects so that these attractions are better and more attractive in terms of places and objects to attract tourists.

### 2.2 Tourism Potential

According to Sukardi (1998) in Nawangsari [8], tourism potential is a variety of resources owned by an area or place that can be developed into a tourist attraction that can be utilized for economic interests while taking into account other aspects. A tourist spot, which is an attraction for tourists, and is owned by the tourist spot itself.

### 2.3 Society Participation

Community participation, according to Adi [9], is community participation in the process of identifying problems and potentials that exist in the community, selecting and making decisions about alternative solutions to deal with problems, implementing efforts to overcome problems, and community involvement in the process of evaluating changes that occur.

### 2.4 Community-Based Tourism (CBT)

Community-based tourism prioritizes community participation in planning, development, management, and ownership [10, 5]. According to Russell [2], CBT is a concept that pays attention to economic sustainability, pays attention to the surrounding community, and continues to maintain cultural integrity so that it does not change or mix with other cultures. Community participation (community participation) is one of the essential characteristics of community-based tourism [5].

### 2.5 Research Design

This research uses a descriptive qualitative method. The research subjects were the Government of Tomohon City and the Tourism Office of Tomohon City, directly related to community-based tourism development activities. Data collection techniques in this study used three techniques, namely interview techniques, observation, and documentation studies. Primary data is data obtained directly from the place and subject of research. In contrast, secondary data supports data in the field in the form of documentation, archives, and journals related to research. Data analysis used in this study was carried out during data collection and used Miles and Huberman's interactive model. In the interactive model, there are three types of analysis activities (data reduction, data presentation, and concluding), and data collection itself is a cyclical and interactive process.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 3.1 Tomohon City Center Area Development Through CBT

The development of a tourism area in the center of Tomohon City based on community participation in this study was analyzed using five dimensions according to Rest (1997) in implementing the concept of community-based tourism, which include the economic dimension, social dimension, cultural dimension, environmental dimension, and political dimension.

### 3.2 Economic Dimension

This dimension refers to funds for community development, the creation of jobs in the tourism sector, and the emergence of local community income from the tourism sector. The tourist area in the center of Tomohon City has a central road corridor in the middle of Tomohon City, which provides various tourism potentials in the vicinity. In this road corridor, some areas are used for trade and services, and recreation areas can attract tourists visiting Tomohon City. The existence of various tourist areas around the center of Tomohon City has also provided many opportunities and better opportunities in business development to increase the level of community welfare.

Many people also make creative efforts to take advantage of tourism area opportunities as an alternative to finding sources of income, starting from trading,

opening lodging, and providing various other services such as motorcycle taxis, tour guides, and rentals. The existence of events such as TIFF is one of the tourist attractions in Tomohon City, which has an impact on increasing people's income, both for entrepreneurs, local farmers, and the surrounding community. During the holding of the event, people's income can increase up to ten times the typical day's income. In addition, several cultural arts communities, as well as other local community communities, are also supported by the Government by procuring a budget for community development in the future to create better Tomohon City tourism.

### 3.3 The Social Dimension

This dimension refers to improving the quality of life, community pride, fair division of roles between men and women, young and old generations, and building community organization strengthening. The start of high economic activity in the central area of Tomohon City has had a positive impact on the community both from an economic and social perspective, where there has been an increase in the standard of living of the surrounding community by utilizing the existing tourism potential. Many cultural activities and festivals often held, such as TIFF, have involved many layers of society, starting from farmers, communities, entrepreneurs, and the surrounding community. Based on data from the Tomohon City Government, there has been a decrease in unemployment and crime rates in Tomohon City. On the other hand, the number of SMEs continues to increase, and most of the livelihoods of the people of Tomohon City are farmers and traders.

Every tourism activity, as well as a number of developed tourist objects, can be felt directly by the community, where all income can be managed entirely by the community. Several cultural communities and other communities have also received support from the Government with budget and facility assistance to support the development of Tomohon tourism. Based on the results of interviews with community leaders and several communities, it shows that the community is proud of the ongoing development of tourism in Tomohon City and the improvement of several infrastructures that support community activities.

### 3.4 Cultural Dimensions

This dimension refers to people's encouragement to respect the culture, foster cultural exchange, and develop a culture firmly embedded in local culture. The development of the TIFF event as an annual festival on an international scale has brought several foreign tourists as well as tourists outside the Tomohon City area with their respective cultures. The arrival of these various tourists has encouraged local community acceptance in dealing with and respecting tourists positively. The local community and the tourist area in the center of Tomohon City seem flexible and

accustomed to welcoming tourists, and even several people can use English to interact and carry out trading activities with foreign tourists.

On the other hand, the community is also encouraged to maintain the traditional art of the local community, a tourist attraction in Tomohon City. Various efforts have been made by the regional Government together with the Tomohon City Tourism Office to maintain the characteristics and culture of the Tomohon people so that they are maintained by supporting the establishment of traditional institutions and also facilitating all forms of the needs of these institutions so that they are not eroded by the culture that comes from outside.

### 3.5 Political Dimension

This dimension refers to the participation of residents, increasing the power of the wider community, and guaranteeing rights in managing natural resources. In increasing the active participation of the community in the development and management of Tomohon City tourism, both at the planning and monitoring stages, the local Government has implemented several policies and programs. Some of the policies include.

1. Conducting training and facilitating training for tourism creative economy actors;
2. Increasing the capacity of tourism human resources through training and training; and
3. Increasing synergy by coordinating and collaborating with the Central Government, North Sulawesi Provincial Government, and all tourism stakeholders.

### 3.6 Community-Based Tourism Development Model

The tourism development model with a community-based approach can be seen in several stages, including the initial stage (beginning), the middle stage (middle), and the advanced stage (advanced). In the early stages, the Government's role is very central, considering that the Government has a vision and mission in regional development, so the Government's commitment to tourism development is included in the regional development mission. The management of tourist objects at this stage is still in the form of instructions from the local Government to the community.

In the middle stage, the Government and the private sector must work together to foster sustainability guarantees for tourism development programs which will also create trust in the eyes of the public. Because at this stage, the community has started to feel the benefits of the tourism industry where they live, this condition will raise awareness, and a sense of belonging to the tourism industry will emerge as part of themselves and their lives.

Furthermore, at the advanced stage, roles are balanced between the actors involved in the tourism industry. The relationship between the Government, the private sector, and the community is getting closer and

more balanced between one and the other. In this condition, the tourism industry is expected to be profitable not only in increasing Regional Original Income (PAD) and for several parties alone. However, the tourism sector has also provided benefits to the general public. Tourism culture has also been ingrained in people's activities and awareness of maintaining the sustainability of natural resources in the vicinity.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The development of the Tourism Area in Tomohon City Center has implemented the concept of community-based tourism, which fulfills five aspects in it. The tourism development of Tomohon City can drive the wheels of the economy at all levels of society and directly impact the welfare of the community, as well as encourage the growth and development of culture and the environment around the Tomohon City Center Area. The tourism development model with a community-based approach can be carried out through three stages: the initial, middle, and advanced. The community is involved in every tourism development so that active participation is formed, fostering awareness within the community and synergy between its actors.

**Author's Contribution:** The sole author designed, analyzed, interpreted and prepared the manuscript.

**Competing Interests:** Author has declared that no competing interests exist.

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