

Evaluation of the Tourism Management System from a Social, Economic and Environmental Perspective in Suka Makmur Village, Deli Serdang Regency

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This study aims to evaluate the tourism management system in Suka Makmur Village, Deli Serdang Regency, from three main perspectives: social, economic, and environmental..

Research methods: The research was conducted in Suka Makmur Village, Kutalimbaru District, Deli Serdang Regency, North Sumatra. The research employed a descriptive method with a qualitative approach through interviews, participatory observation, documentation, and questionnaires administered to tourists and local residents.

Results and discussion: The findings indicate that, from an economic perspective, tourism management has positively contributed by increasing income, creating jobs, and fostering micro-business growth, although product diversification and promotional effectiveness still require improvement. From a social perspective, community participation is relatively high in operational management and communal activities, yet the involvement of youth and enhancement of managerial capacity remain necessary. Environmentally, some ecotourism principles have been implemented, including nature conservation and cleanliness efforts, though waste management and environmental education need strengthening. The SWOT analysis identified weaknesses such as limited infrastructure and promotion, challenges including fluctuating visitor numbers and environmental degradation risks, and opportunities in developing culture-, nature-, and culinary-based products.

Implication: Recommendations include enhancing digital promotion strategies, diversifying tourism products, strengthening community roles, and fully integrating ecotourism principles.

Keywords: tourist village, tourism management, ecotourism, community participation, sustainability.

INTRODUCTION

The tourism sector is recognized as a key driver of economic growth in many countries, including Indonesia. While the development of tourist destinations in both urban and rural areas is intended to enhance community welfare and preserve natural and cultural resources (UNWTO, 2022), the effectiveness of such initiatives often depends on the quality of the management system applied. Previous studies show that many rural destinations in Indonesia still face structural and managerial challenges, particularly in integrating social, economic, and environmental dimensions (Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, 2021). This situation highlights a research gap, as few evaluations have comprehensively assessed tourism management systems by combining these three perspectives. Therefore, this study aims to evaluate the tourism management system in Suka Makmur Village, Deli Serdang Regency, focusing on social, economic, and environmental aspects to identify strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for sustainable development. However,

optimizing these benefits depends heavily on the quality of the tourism management system implemented. In practice, tourism destination management in various regions in Indonesia, particularly in rural areas, still faces a number of structural and technical challenges. Many tourism management initiatives lack effective integration of social, economic, and environmental aspects, resulting in suboptimal benefits (Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, 2021).

The development of tourism villages is one of the Indonesian government's strategies to encourage local community-based economic growth and cultural and environmental preservation (Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, 2021). Suka Makmur Village, one of the villages in Deli Serdang Regency, possesses natural and cultural potential that could be developed into a tourist destination. However, this potential has not been matched by an optimal tourism management system, encompassing social, economic, and environmental aspects. Evaluating the tourism management system is a crucial step in identifying the effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of a tourist destination. This evaluation encompasses aspects of planning, implementation, monitoring, and the ongoing impact of the management (Lestari & Wibowo, 2022). Through a comprehensive evaluation, weaknesses in the existing system can be addressed, and more inclusive, innovative, and environmentally friendly management strategies can be developed.

From an economic perspective, tourism management in Suka Makmur Village has not yet significantly impacted the well-being of the surrounding community. Village tourism should be an alternative source of income and create new jobs (Susanti et al., 2019). The lack of diversification of tourism products and weak promotion have led to low tourist visits, which has limited local economic activity. Tourism management is not solely focused on economic growth but also requires a socially-based approach that places local communities at the forefront. Tourism destination development that does not directly involve the community often leads to failures in sustainable management and low perceived benefits for local residents (Suryanto & Anjani, 2020). From a social perspective, community involvement in tourism management remains partial and unstructured. Local community participation is crucial for fostering a sense of ownership and the sustainability of village tourism programs (Fitriani et al., 2020). The lack of education and community empowerment has limited villagers' role in tourism development to a passive role.

Nature tourism has significant potential to drive economic development while simultaneously contributing to environmental conservation. However, in practice, nature tourism management often faces serious challenges related to environmental degradation due to unsustainable tourism activities (Sujana et al., 2020). The lack of implementation of ecotourism principles has led to various nature tourism areas experiencing ecosystem damage, waste pollution, and disruption to local flora and fauna (Dewi et al., 2021). Environmental tourism management requires synergy between the government, local communities, and tourism industry players to maintain the sustainability of natural resources. The community-based ecotourism (CBET) approach is an effective strategy for optimizing economic benefits without neglecting conservation aspects (Widodo et al., 2020). However, CBET implementation remains limited due to low environmental awareness, community capacity in tourism management, and weak management regulations (Rustiadi et al., 2019).

Management policies oriented towards the principle of carrying capacity have also not been optimally implemented. Yet, the sustainability of nature tourism destinations is highly dependent on the environmental carrying capacity of the area (Putra & Haryanto, 2019). Furthermore, the lack of a sustainable environmental monitoring system exacerbates the negative impacts of tourism in many locations (Fandeli et al., 2018). Globally, the principles of sustainable tourism have become a primary reference for tourism development (UNWTO, 2018). Indonesia has formulated various policies related to ecotourism and sustainable tourism, but their implementation still faces various obstacles (Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, 2020).

From an environmental perspective, uncontrolled tourism activities can lead to environmental degradation, such as river pollution, vegetation damage, and a decline in the quality of tourist areas (Purnomo & Hidayat, 2018). Therefore, ecotourism-based management aspects that adhere to nature conservation principles need to be a primary focus in tourism planning and implementation in Suka Makmur Village. Evaluation of the tourism management system from these three dimensions (social, economic, and environmental) is crucial for identifying weaknesses, developing opportunities, and formulating more effective and sustainable management strategies. The evaluation results are expected to provide practical recommendations for tourism village managers and the local government in optimizing the potential of Suka Makmur Village as a competitive and resilient tourist destination.

RESEARCH METHODS

The research was conducted in Suka Makmur Village, Kutalimbaru District, Deli Serdang Regency, North Sumatra. This research is descriptive with a qualitative approach. This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach with the aim of describing, analyzing, and evaluating the tourism management system in Suka Makmur Village from a social, economic, and environmental perspective. This approach was chosen to gain an in-depth understanding of the actual conditions in the field. According to Creswell & Poth (2018), qualitative research is an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. It emphasizes rich description, context, and participants' perspectives, making it suitable for evaluating community-based tourism management.

Schreier (2017) emphasizes that qualitative content analysis is a systematic method for describing the meaning of qualitative material by assigning successive parts of the material to categories of a coding frame. This approach enables researchers to structure large amounts of textual data while maintaining the depth of qualitative interpretation. Data analysis techniques are the process of systematically collecting data to help researchers draw conclusions. Qualitative data analysis in this study is a systematic search process to obtain information from interviews, field notes, and other materials so that it is easily understood and knowledge can be communicated. The data analysis techniques used in this study are as follows:

a. Content Analysis

This technique is used to identify and analyze the content of textual data and documentation obtained during the research.

1. Collection of Textual and Documentary Data. Collect data in the form of Respondent Questionnaire, interview transcripts, observation

notes, village regulations, tourism group documents, and visual documentation (photos, brochures, promotional media).

2. Initial Coding. Code the data content by marking related information
3. Data Categorization. Group codes into main categories or topics according to three research perspectives.
4. Content Analysis. Analyze the frequency, intensity, and context of category occurrences in the data
5. Interpretation and Narrative Development. Develop a narrative based on the analysis to describe the strengths and weaknesses of the tourism management system in Suka Makmur Village from three perspectives.

b. SWOT Analysis

A SWOT analysis is a strategic analysis technique used to identify and evaluate the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats within the tourism management system in Suka Makmur Village. This technique is useful for understanding the internal position (strengths and weaknesses) and external conditions (opportunities and threats) related to village tourism management, including social, economic, and environmental aspects.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of interviews with village heads, community leaders and tourists are explained in the following table.

Table 1: Respondent Interview Results

Analysis Aspects	Key Findings	Economic Impact	Recommendation
Contribution to Community Welfare	Increase employment opportunities and community income through tourism, trade and service businesses.	Improvement of local economy, higher money circulation in the village.	Expanding the types of tourism-based businesses and providing skills training for residents.
Diversification of Tourism Products	Tourist attractions are still dominated by natural potential, there is not much innovation based on culture/creativity.	Income potential is not optimal due to limited product variety.	Develop integrated tourism packages that combine nature, culture, culinary delights, and local crafts.
Promotion Effectiveness	Promotion is carried out through social media and external collaboration, but has not been integrated professionally.	The reach of the tourist market is still limited, promotions have not had a big impact on the surge in visitors.	Improve digital marketing strategies, village branding, and collaboration with travel agents and media.

[Source: research data]

Based on the research results, the tourism management system in Suka Makmur Village has demonstrated a positive contribution to improving community welfare from an economic perspective, although challenges remain in optimizing its potential. Tourism activities have created new job opportunities, increased

community incomes through the trade, service, and accommodation sectors, and encouraged the growth of micro-enterprises. Tourism product diversification is still in its development stage, with most attractions focused on natural resources and not fully utilizing local culture and creativity. Promotionally, marketing efforts have been conducted through social media and collaborations with external parties, but their effectiveness has been limited due to limited resources and an unintegrated promotional strategy. Therefore, a management strategy that involves active community participation, tourism product innovation, and improved promotion quality is needed to support the village's economic sustainability.

a. Tourist Assessment of Suka Makmur Village Tourism

Primary data were collected through interviews, participatory observation, documentation, and open-ended questionnaires. In addition, a Likert scale instrument was used to capture tourists' and residents' perceptions regarding key aspects of tourism management. The use of the Likert scale in this study does not indicate a mixed-methods design, because the numeric data were not subjected to statistical or inferential analysis. Instead, the Likert responses were transformed into categorical interpretations (low, medium, high) and functioned as supportive evidence to triangulate and strengthen the qualitative findings. This strategy is consistent with qualitative content analysis, where limited quantification may be applied to enhance the descriptive presentation of categories without shifting the paradigm of the research (Schreier, 2017). Data on tourist or visitor assessments of tourism in Suka Makmur Village was obtained through a questionnaire instrument using a Likert scale. The tourist assessment index calculation refers to Ferdinand's calculation, which uses three range categories: low, medium, and high. The following is the result of processing the data on tourist assessments of tourism in Suka Makmur Village.

Table 2: Results of the Tourist Respondent Questionnaire

Assessment Aspects	Statement	Index Results	Assessment Categories
Economy	The tourism products offered are quite diverse.	8.25	High
	Tourism promotion has been carried out well and comprehensively.	8	High
	Tourism in this village opens up business opportunities for the community.	8.75	High
Social	The existence of tourism increases social interaction and togetherness among residents.	8.5	High
	Local cultural values are maintained despite tourism development.	9.25	High
Environment	Tourism management pays attention to environmental sustainability.	8.75	High
	The cleanliness of the tourist environment is always maintained.	9	High

	There are waste and garbage management facilities in the tourist area.	8.25	High
	Tourism activities do not damage the surrounding environment.	9	High
	Information about ecotourism is conveyed to visitors.	8.5	High

[Source: research data]

Table 2 shows that all responses for the economic, social, and environmental aspects assessed by tourists fall into the high category, with an index range of 7.50 to 10.00. In addition to tourists, the Suka Makmur Village community also provided assessments for these three aspects, with the following results.

Table 3: Results of the Local Community Respondent Questionnaire

Assessment Aspects	Statement	Index Results	Assessment Categories
Economy	The presence of tourism in this village increases community income.	9.25	High
	I feel the direct economic benefits from tourism activities.	8.75	High
	The tourism products offered are quite diverse.	8.25	High
	Tourism promotion has been carried out well and comprehensively.	8	High
	Tourism in this village opens up business opportunities for the community.	8.75	High
Social	I am involved in tourism activities or management in this village.	7.75	High
	Communities are involved in decision-making regarding tourism	8	High
	The existence of tourism increases social interaction and togetherness among residents.	8.75	High
	Local cultural values are maintained despite tourism development.	8.5	High
	Tourism activities have a positive impact on the quality of life of the community.	8.75	High
Environment	Tourism management pays attention to environmental sustainability.	8.75	High
	The cleanliness of the tourist environment is always maintained.	8.25	High
	There are waste and garbage management facilities in the tourist area.	8.5	High
	Tourism activities do not damage the surrounding environment.	8.5	High

Information about ecotourism is conveyed to visitors.	8.25	High
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[Source: research data]

Based on the table 3, it is known that all answers for the economic, social and environmental aspects assessed by the community fall into the high category, with an index range of 7.50 to 10.00.

b. SWOT Analysis

Based on research data, the weaknesses in tourism management in Sikabung Kabung can currently be summarized in several main points.

- 1) Food and beverage facilities are limited , in the form of a lack of restaurants, stalls and snack vendors around tourist locations, and culinary variety for tourists is still minimal.
- 2) Inadequate accessibility , where the roads to tourist locations are damaged or difficult to pass and the journey to tourist attractions is time-consuming and uncomfortable.
- 3) Network and information limitations , where internet signals are uneven and only support certain providers and lack of promotion and dissemination of information about destinations outside the village.
- 4) Management and cleanliness need improvement . Cleanliness is not yet fully maintained; trash is still found, albeit in small amounts. Management's responsiveness in handling crowds and maintaining a quality tourist experience needs improvement.

Based on research data, the most prominent challenges in developing tourism in Sikabung Kabung can be concluded as follows.

- 1) Inadequate road access . Many roads leading to tourist locations are damaged, unpaved, and difficult to navigate, making the journey to destinations less comfortable for tourists.
- 2) Limited supporting infrastructure. Internet connections are still weak or unstable in tourist areas, and facilities such as MSMEs, food stalls, and other tourism support facilities are lacking.
- 3) Environmental management and natural attractions . There are still remnants of unfinished land cultivation, affecting the aesthetics of the area. The challenge is to maintain the cleanliness and beauty of the river and camping area for the long term.

Based on research data, tourism development opportunities in this village can be summarized in several main points.

- 1) Development of culinary and accommodation facilities by adding restaurants, stalls and food vendors around tourist locations, providing accommodation or resting places for tourists, and opening mini markets or shops for tourist needs.
- 2) Development of local MSMEs by developing regional culinary businesses and selling typical Karo souvenirs to increase local appeal and economy.
- 3) Infrastructure improvement by improving roads and access to tourist locations to make them easier to reach and adding bathing facilities in the river area.

- 4) Improving environmental cleanliness and preservation by maintaining the cleanliness of rivers and tourist areas and preserving forests to keep them beautiful.
- 5) Tourism promotion by inviting influencers or promoters to introduce tourism to the wider community.

Table 4: IFAS (Internal Factor Analysis Summary)

No	Internal Factors	Weight	Rating	Weighted Score
Strengths				
1	The natural beauty and rivers are still pristine	0.15	4	0.60
2	Natural tourism potential for bathing & camping	0.10	4	0.40
3	Local cultural attractions	0.08	3	0.24
4	Community enthusiasm for developing MSMEs	0.07	3	0.21
Weaknesses				
5	Lack of restaurants and accommodation	0.15	2	0.30
6	Road infrastructure to the location is damaged	0.18	1	0.18
7	Limited internet network	0.10	2	0.20
8	The cleanliness of the tourist area is not optimal	0.07	2	0.14
9	Management is not yet responsive when there are many visitors	0.10	2	0.20
Total	1.00	-	2.67	

[Source: research data]

Table 5. EFAS (External Factor Analysis Summary)

No	External Factors	Weight	Rating	Weighted Score
Opportunities				
1	Potential for developing culinary and souvenir MSMEs	0.15	4	0.60
2	Addition of bathing and rest facilities	0.10	3	0.30
3	Promotion through influencers & digital media	0.12	4	0.48
4	Increasing sustainability-based attractiveness	0.08	3	0.24
5	Nature tourism & ecotourism trends	0.10	3	0.30
Threats				
6	Environmental damage caused by visitors	0.15	2	0.30
7	Competition with other natural tourist destinations	0.10	2	0.20
8	Dependence on season/weather	0.10	2	0.20
9	Risk of environmental degradation	0.10	2	0.20
Total	1.00	-	2.82	

[Source: research data]

In this study, the Likert scale was applied only as a supporting tool to categorize respondents' perceptions into levels (low, medium, high). The

research results were not determined solely by numeric ratings, but rather by integrating these categorical perceptions with qualitative findings obtained from interviews, participatory observation, and documentation. Thus, the Likert scale functioned to provide an organized representation of respondents' views, while the core interpretation and conclusions of this study were derived from qualitative content analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the research findings, the tourism management system in Suka Makmur Village has made a positive contribution to the community's economy, primarily through increased income from tourism services such as homestays, culinary delights, local transportation, and tour guides. This impact is evident in the improved welfare of several community groups directly involved in tourism activities. Tourism product diversification is also emerging, for example, the development of integrated nature tourism packages that combine agrotourism, trekking, and environmental education. Promotional strategies implemented through social media, collaboration with travel agents, and participation in tourism exhibitions have helped increase tourist visits, although promotional effectiveness still needs to be improved through stronger destination branding. These findings align with research by Oktaviani and Satriawan (2020), who found that community-based tourism management in Nglanggeran Tourism Village significantly contributed to increasing residents' incomes, primarily through strengthening superior tourism products and consistent digital promotion. Similar findings were also revealed by Rahmawati et al. (2022), who studied tourism management in Pentingsari Village, Yogyakarta, where tourism product diversification and social media-based marketing were shown to increase the competitiveness of the tourism village while providing a multiplier effect on the local economy. By adopting a similar strategy, Suka Makmur Village has the potential to expand its tourism market and strengthen its economic contribution to community welfare.

This research shows that the level of local community participation in Suka Makmur Village is quite high in operational aspects, such as serving as tour guides, homestay providers, local product sellers, and cultural attraction managers. This involvement reflects a strong sense of belonging to the sustainability of the tourist destination. Furthermore, there are collective efforts to maintain the cleanliness and sustainability of the destination, although coordination between parties still needs to be improved to optimize management synergy. Community participation is also evident in decision-making through village deliberations regarding tourism programs, although the roles of women and the younger generation still need to be strengthened.

These findings align with research by Rachmawati and Cahyono (2019), which demonstrated that active community participation in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of tourism management in Samiran Tourism Village can improve social sustainability and strengthen community ties. Meanwhile, research by Wulandari et al. (2021) in Cibuntu Tourism Village, Kuningan, demonstrated that community empowerment through training and mentoring can encourage broader participation, particularly among women and youth. This is relevant for Suka Makmur Village, which can expand community capacity through tourism management training and the development of creative products based on local culture.

The research revealed that the implementation of ecotourism principles in Suka Makmur Village has begun through environmental conservation efforts, such as prohibiting littering, using environmentally friendly materials in tourist facilities, and reforestation activities in trekking areas. Tourist and community awareness of the importance of environmental sustainability is also being continuously raised through environmental education programs. However, challenges remain related to waste management, which is not yet fully based on the reduce-reuse-recycle (3R) principle, and limited supporting facilities such as integrated waste treatment facilities.

These findings are consistent with research by Prasetyo et al. (2020) examining the implementation of ecotourism in Baluran National Park, where the success of eco-based tourism management is heavily influenced by collaboration between the community, government, and park management in maintaining ecosystem sustainability. Research by Kurniawan and Saputra (2021) in Batusangkar Tourism Village also revealed that implementing ecotourism principles not only maintains environmental quality but also enhances the destination's image and attracts a segment of tourists who care about nature conservation. This suggests that Suka Makmur Village needs to integrate conservation programs as part of its ecotourism destination branding.

CONCLUSION

Tourism's contribution to the economy of Suka Makmur Village is evident in the increase in community income, the creation of jobs, and the development of micro-enterprises around the destination. However, tourism product diversification remains limited to natural resources, thus not fully exploiting the potential of local culture, cuisine, and crafts. Promotional efforts have been made to utilize social media and collaborate with external parties, but branding strategies are still needed to reach a wider market and significantly increase visitation. The Suka Makmur Village community is quite active in tourism management, as evidenced by their involvement as managers, service providers, and supporting businesses. Social support manifests itself in the form of cooperation, mutual assistance, and a willingness to provide facilities for tourists. However, this participation still faces obstacles such as limited skills, a lack of tourism management training, and the under-emphasized role of the younger generation in product and service innovation. The management of nature tourism in Suka Makmur Village has implemented some ecotourism principles, such as maintaining the cleanliness of the tourist area, regulating visitor flow, and preserving the environment by limiting environmentally damaging activities. However, awareness and discipline among some visitors and business operators still need to be improved. Continuous education, provision of waste management facilities, and stricter regulations will be key to ensuring the environmental sustainability of this tourist destination.

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