

THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE TANGKAHAN ECOTOURISM IN NAMO SIALANG VILLAGE, LANGKAT REGENCY

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Abstract

Ecotourism is one of the sustainable alternative tourism developed in Indonesia, one of which is the Tangkahan Ecotourism destination. Namu Sialang Village is one of the villages directly connected to Tangkahan Ecotourism. This ecotourism destination has a history of illegal logging to the thoughts and behavior of the surrounding community for sustainable changes in Tangkahan's nature. The development of Tangkahan Ecotourism certainly has an impact on the people of Namu Sialang Village. According to UNWTO, one aspect of impact is socioeconomic sustainability. This study uses sustainable socioeconomic indicators issued by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) Criteria assessment agency on the consideration of the character of Namu Sialang Village as an area around the Tangkahan Ecotourism conservation area. Indicators of socioeconomic sustainability are used to see the benefits of the local economy and the natural environment. The subjects of this research are the people of Namu Sialang Village, to be precise in Kwala Gemoh and Kwala Buluh Hamlets. The purpose of this study was to determine the impact of the development of Tangkahan Ecotourism on the economy of the people of Namu Sialang Village. The research method used is a quantitative approach with quantitative analysis tools using a statistical package for the social science (SPSS) tools. The results of this study indicate the impact of tourism development in Tangkahan which has been carried out following the principles of ecotourism development. Where the percentage of positive responses from the community, which is 70%, feels the benefits of the local economy, is involved in community participation, and receives support from the development of Tangkahan Ecotourism.

Keywords: Sustainable Tourism; Ecotourism; Economic Impact; Socio-Economic Conditions; Rural Communities

A. INTRODUCTION

Tourism development potentially triggers the growth of regional economic. This is also emphasized by Hartono (1974:45) that the sector that becomes an asset in job creation is tourism. Over time, tourism as a travel pattern is moving towards tourist interest that is focused on environmentally sound and sustainable tourism activities. This leads to various choices of sustainable tourism destinations. This gave birth to various typologies of tourism from sustainable tourism, namely ecotourism, and ecotourism. According to Fennell (2015:17), One of the components mentioned in explaining the existence of sustainability is conservation and community participation that can provide local benefits. Indonesia as a country that has potential and natural wealth has 54 National Parks spread to various regions in Indonesia as protected areas and nature conservation efforts. Gunung Leuser National Park is an area where Tangkahan thrives. Tangkahan which is also known as Ecotourism Tangkahan is one of the 88 National Tourism Strategic Areas (KSPN) listed in Government Regulation Number 50 of 2011 concerning the National Tourism Development Master Plan (RIPPARNAS). The Tangkahan Ecotourism / Tangkahan Ecotourism area is under the management of the Gunung Leuser National Park (TNGL). Administratively, Tangkahan is located in two villages, namely Namu Sialang Village and Sei Serdang Village, Langkat

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Regency. Tangkahan Ecotourism has a history of being known as one of the areas for exploitation of forest products or illegal logging as a livelihood for the people who come from the villages of Namo Sialang and Sei Serdang. Tangkahan There is a phenomenon of behavior and mindset changes in the surrounding village community, namely by making Tangkahan a sustainable conservation area.

This is also stated by (Wiratno, 2013) in his book entitled *From Illegal Logging to Leuser Conservation (Tangkahan and Leuser Ecotourism Development)* that since the creation of the Tangkahan Ecotourism Area the management has been carried out by the surrounding community by preserving the forest land. There has been a change in the actions and mindsets of young people since the 2000s so that the next generation can feel and see the forests and fauna in the Tangkahan area. With a change in mindset and transition from illegal logging habits, the people of the two villages agreed to develop tourism known as the Tangkahan Ecotourism Area and form the Tangkahan Tourism Institute (LPT). According to the official website of the Gunung Leuser National Park (TNGL), Tangkahan is part of the GLNP which is under both regulations and conservation interests that have an economic impact on the area, in this case, the village around the Tangkahan Ecotourism Area.

The potential of ecotourism, one of which can be seen from the existence of Tangkahan ecotourism in Langkat Regency, was also emphasized by the Head of the Langkat Regency Tourism and Culture Office (Head of Langkat Regency Disparbud). That the existence of the tourism sector and its development will have an impact on the economic growth of the community, especially the people who live around tourist objects. The development of the tourism sector in an area has an impact on increasing regional income and creating jobs. This also supports the vision and mission of the Regent of Langkat in realizing sustainable tourism in Langkat, namely "Making Langkat advanced, prosperous and religious, through the development of environmentally friendly tourism and infrastructure." Both of these things support the development of sustainable-based tourism or sustainable tourism, one of which is in Tangkahan Ecotourism.

According to previous research related to the impact of developing tourism activities on the economy of local communities in tourism areas, it was written by (Simanjuntak, 2009). This study explains that Ecotourism Tangkahan provides benefits in the form of economic opportunities for communities around the area, and increases community income sources but has not been so significant in the development of the area.

Regional tourism development has an impact that can be seen from the influence of tourism development on tourist destinations. This can be seen from three aspects, namely socio-economic, socio-cultural, and environmental (UNWTO). This research focuses on one of the pillars, namely socio-economic sustainability through indicators issued by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC). The sustainable development goals or known as the Sustainable Development Goals were issued in 2015 and consist of 17 Sustainable Development Goals. This research will look at sustainable development goals or goals that intersect with the socio-economic pillars of sustainable tourism. The goals related to the socio-economic pillar consist of SDG No. 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth and No. 16 Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions.

According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), this economic aspect must be able to ensure economic activity in the long term properly and provide socio-economic benefits to all stakeholders fairly. This can be seen through permanent employment, income-generating opportunities (opening a business), and social services to local communities, as well as helping to reduce poverty.

With the increase in people's sources of livelihood, it is expected that the welfare and social conditions of the community will increase. Based on the concepts that have been mentioned and looking at the state of Namo Sialang Village, Langkat Regency through secondary data, it was found that the urgency that became the basis for conducting research was that there was no significant economic impact

on the people of Namo Sialang Village through ecotourism activities in Tangkahan. This prompted the study of economic conditions in Namo Sialang Village which is directly adjacent to the Tangkahan Ecotourism Area. For the description of the phenomena that have been mentioned, this research is entitled "Economic Impact of Tangkahan Ecotourism Development in Namo Sialang Village, Langkat Regency".

B. RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a quantitative approach with a descriptive method. The method used in collecting this data is the distribution of questionnaires as the primary data source with the research subjects of the people of Namo Sialang Village, Kwala Buluh, and Kwala Gemoh Hamlets where these two hamlets are hamlets with the closest radius around Ecotourism Tangkahan. The number of samples (N) of respondents is 210. The sampling technique uses Isaac Michael's table from a total population of 520 people with an error rate of 5%. The primary data is also supplemented by secondary data in the form of documentation studies from the Tangkahan Tourism Institute and the Namo Sialang Village Office as well as field observations. Secondary data was obtained through interviews with several sources. The data analysis in this research is quantitative with statistical product and service solutions (SPSS) data processing tools.

C. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

1. Development of Tangkahan Ecotourism

The findings of primary data indicate the suitability of the Tangkahan Ecotourism development principle with the actual conditions of the Namo Sialang Village community. This suitability can be seen from the positive response of the people of Namo Sialang Village to each indicator component of local economic benefits. Where if it is associated with the concept of Ecotourism according to Fennell (1999) sustainable nature-based tourism sees experience and education about nature, which is managed using a certain management system and pays attention to negative impacts, namely with low impact on the environment and is not consumptive and locally oriented in terms of this includes the control, benefits, and business activities of the local community or community. This has indicated the achievement of a community experience and education about nature and there has been management that takes into account the negative impact on the environment. Ecotourism that has been implemented by the community around Ecotourism Tangkahan is not consumptive but it has not been proven whether it is locally oriented which includes control, benefits, and local community business activities. This can be seen from one of the achievements of community participation indicators from the role of the Langkat Regency Tourism Office in showing assistance in terms of marketing community products in Namo Sialang Village.

The development of Tangkahan ecotourism shows the positive impact received by the community on empowerment programs through ecotourism activities, equal and fair working opportunities, community involvement in the development of Tangkahan ecotourism, support for local communities in business development as seen from the increase in the number of MSMEs in Namo Sialang Village, and implementation activities that take into account the preservation of nature and the environment in Tangkahan. Community empowerment from the development of Tangkahan ecotourism has been able to be carried out by providing program socialization and education related to sustainable principles which are also represented by primary data directly involved in Tangkahan ecotourism activities. Local economic benefits are also achieved along with increasing employment and increasing types of business fields by the

community. This shows that the development of Tangkahan ecotourism in principle has an impact on the people of Namo Sialang Village who are directly involved in Tangkahan (workers, guides, entrepreneurs) or indirectly (entrepreneurs outside the tourist area).

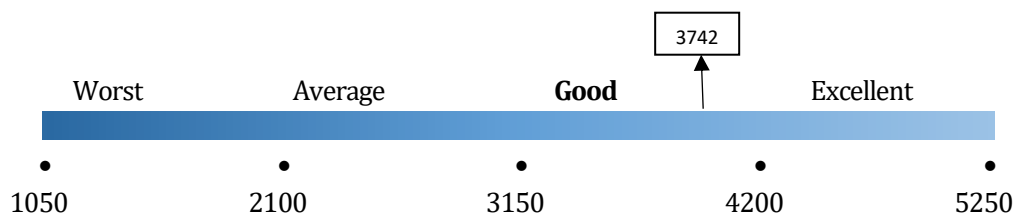
2. Socio-Economic Condition of the Community

The social condition of the people of Kwala Buluh and Kwala Gemoh Hamlets, Namo Sialang Village is seen through secondary data covering education, employment, and MSME levels. The economic conditions, it is found through the elaboration of the indicators of the Global Sustainable Tourism Council, namely in the aspect of delivering local economic benefits which are divided into local economic benefits, community participation, and support for local communities. These three aspects are related to the development of Tangkahan Ecotourism as follows:

a. Local economic benefits

The local economic benefit has a total score of 3742 which is obtained from the sum of the total results of respondents' answers from each component of the question. The total score shows the average agreement or means that the development of Tangkahan ecotourism has had an economic impact on the people of Namo Sialang Village. The total score obtained a percentage of 71% which indicates the existence of sustainable nature-based tourism that focuses on experience and education about nature, which is managed with a certain management system and pays attention to negative impacts, namely with low impacts on the environment. This shows that the position of the total score of the five indicators of the dimensions of local economic benefits is in the good quadrant. It can be concluded that the economic benefit indicator with a total score of 3742 indicates the position of the score is in quadrant three, which is good which indicates that the manager has carried out management, and planning, and is under the dimensions of local economic benefits in sustainable tourism.

Figure 1. Local Economic Benefits



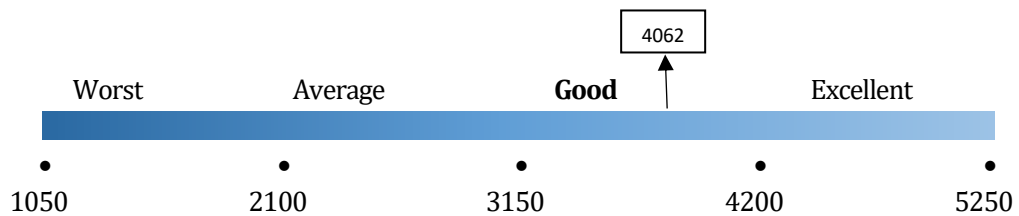
Souce: Proceed by Researcher, 2021

b. Namo Sialang Village Community Participation

The total score of local community participation is 4062 which shows the total score of each question related to local community participation is in a good position. It can be seen from the local community participation table that the percentage of the total score is 77%. The total score indicates that the average agrees or means that the development of Tangkahan Ecotourism has an economic impact on the people of Namo Sialang Village, which can be seen from the participation of local communities. Meanwhile, 77% shows the percentage of local community participation in the development of Tangkahan ecotourism which shows that sustainable nature-based tourism has been running and focuses on experiences and education about nature. Ecotourism Tangkahan is managed with a certain management system and pays attention to negative impacts, namely with low impacts on the environment.

This shows the position of the total score of the five indicators of the dimensions of local economic benefits is in the third quadrant which can be concluded as a sustainable socio-economic achievement in a good position.

Figure 2. Local Community Participation

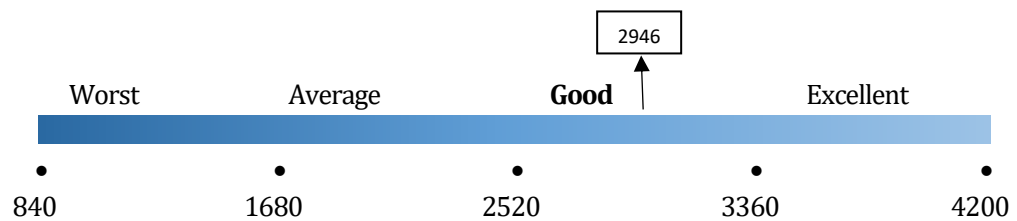


Source: Proceed by Researcher, 2021

c. Local Community Support

This shows the position of the total score of the five indicators of the dimensions of local community support is in the third quadrant which can be concluded as sustainable socio-economic achievement in a good position. The total score is 2946 and the percentage of the total score is 71% indicating the average agreement or means that the development of Tangkahan Ecotourism has an economic impact on the Namo Silang village community through the support received by the local community. The development of ecotourism with an average value of agreeing to shows that there is support for the community in a good position, showing the support received by the community to the level of education and assistance in the development of sustainable nature-based tourism that focuses on experience and education about nature, managed with a clear management system and pays attention to the impact negative ie with low impact on the environment. Meanwhile, there is one component that is not approved by the community regarding the promotion carried out by the Langkat Regency Tourism Office in helping the sale of local products.

Figure 3. Local Community Support



Source: Proceed by Researcher, 2021

3. Impact of Tangkahan Ecotourism Development on the economy of the Namo Sialang Village Community

The development of Tangkahan Ecotourism which is under the principles of ecotourism leads to the achievement of sustainable development goals related to the socio-economic pillars of this research topic. The implementation of ecotourism-based development that has been carried out in Tangkahan since 2006 shows that comprehensive planning through understanding accompanied by assistance in its implementation has an impact on the economic conditions of local communities who can benefit from the economic potential of Namo Sialang Village. Without the exploitation of nature and the harmonization of nature and humans, the welfare of the Village community and nature is sustainable.

The economic pillars that are the focus of this research relate to the achievement of sustainable development goals or Sustainable Development Goals No. 8 and No. 16. Where Goal No. 8 states there is sustainable, inclusive economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all. Economic growth is seen in the working population of Namo Sialang Village which increased from 2015 to 2016, and an increase in the level of education seen from the number of elementary, junior high, and high school students in Namo Sialang Village. However, there is a decrease in the number of small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) consisting of grocery stores, food, and beverage stalls, and restaurants/restaurants. Economic growth is also seen from the index of developing villages in Namo Sialang Village which shows the position of the Developing Village index.

This indirectly also shows poverty reduction which is also included in the goals of sustainable development. Goal No. 16 mentions promoting peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, providing access to justice for all, and building effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels. From the results of research related to the two sustainable development goals, it can be concluded that there is an achievement in the level of local economic benefits felt by the community, where these indicators include job opportunities, policies that support residents in their job search, training in human resource development efforts. HR) Namo Siilang Village, there are regulations related to work safety, and regulations related to fair work wages. The processed data from the respondents shows the average value of agreement which shows the harmony between the theory and the economic conditions of the people of Namo Sialang Village. The results showed the application of the concept of ecotourism. However, the direct benefits have not been fully felt by the community in the economic sector because only a few communities are directly related to tourism activities in Namo Sialang Village, the people who are directly affected are mostly located in the two closest hamlets of Ecotourism Tangkahan, Kwala Buluh and Kwala Gemoh.

D. CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussion, it can be concluded that the ecotourism development carried out in Tangkahan has provided economic benefits for the people of Namo Sialang Village under the principles of ecotourism development that empowers local communities and preserves the sustainability of the natural environment of the destination.

The application of the ecotourism concept in Tangkahan has shown success in providing a sustainable economic impact that empowers the community following sustainable socio-economic achievements as seen from delivering local economic benefits, the GSTC indicator. The socio-economic conditions of the people of Namo Sialang Village show an increase in the number of people who have jobs,

a decrease in the number of community-owned businesses, and an increase in the number of students getting an education.

The positive impact of the development of Tangkahan Ecotourism on the community's economy is shown in terms of aspects of local economic benefits of 71% and community participation of 77%, as well as support for the community of 70%.

After analyzing and discussing, several suggestions were found for research related to the development of further ecotourism where;

1. Further research is needed on other pillars of sustainable tourism, namely socio-cultural and environmental in sustainable tourism to find research results related to the balance of the three pillars in Ecotourism Tangkahan.
2. The need for socialization or a form of concrete assistance from local governments in supporting the development of Tangkahan Ecotourism. The role of local governments with related agencies is expected to overcome the development of marketing promotion strategies for tourism products, both goods, and services. One of them is in the form of handicraft products made by the residents of Namo Silang village in supporting the community's economy by selling handicrafts to tourists in Tangkahan.
3. Synergy is needed to maintain sustainable ecotourism development by the Langkat district government, Namo Sialang Village officials, the community, and the Tangkahan Tourism Institute. The form of synergy involves all tourism stakeholders in Tangkahan. It is expected to form a program that can monitor and control the Tangkahan Ecotourism activities of the relevant stakeholders.
4. Strengthening coordination between local government and village level with the Tangkahan Tourism Institute in the development of tourism in Tangkahan as an effort to prevent conflicts between the people of Namo Sialang Village and surrounding villages which are directly adjacent to Tangkahan Ecotourism.

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