

The Role Of Bukit Kubu In Tourism Development In Berastagi

Peran Bukit Kubu Dalam Pengembangan Pariwisata di Berastagi

Anastasya Dwika Simanjuntak^{1*}, Azzahrah Andrianti², Siti Aisyah³, Yessika Apriani Simanihuruk⁴, Meisuri⁵ 

^{1,2,3,4,5}Universitas Negeri Medan, Indonesia

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ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini mengkaji peran Bukit Kubu dalam pengembangan pariwisata Berastagi, destinasi populer di Sumatera Utara, Indonesia. Bukit Kubu dengan pemandangan alamnya yang indah dan kemudahan aksesnya menyimpan potensi besar sebagai daya tarik wisata. Penelitian tersebut berfokus pada pemahaman bagaimana Bukit Kubu berkontribusi terhadap pertumbuhan pariwisata, dampak pariwisata terhadap masyarakat lokal dan lingkungan, serta tantangan dan peluang yang dihadapi dalam pengembangannya. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif, mengkaji sumber-sumber sekunder untuk memberikan analisis yang komprehensif. Temuan-temuan tersebut menyoroti bahwa Bukit Kubu memainkan peran penting dalam mendorong pariwisata dengan menarik pengunjung lokal dan internasional, memberikan dampak positif terhadap perekonomian lokal sekaligus menimbulkan tantangan kelestarian lingkungan.

ABSTRACT

This study examines the role of Bukit Kubu in the tourism development of Berastagi, a popular destination in North Sumatra, Indonesia. Bukit Kubu, with its beautiful landscapes and ease of access, holds significant potential as a tourist attraction. The research focuses on understanding how Bukit Kubu contributes to tourism growth, the impact of tourism on local communities and the environment, and the challenges and opportunities faced in its development. The study uses a qualitative descriptive method, reviewing secondary sources to provide a comprehensive analysis. Findings highlight that Bukit Kubu plays a key

role in driving tourism by attracting both local and international visitors, positively impacting the local economy while posing environmental sustainability challenges.

1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of the key sectors in economic development, particularly in regions with rich natural and cultural potential. Berastagi, located in the highlands of North Sumatra, is known as an attractive tourist destination with various natural attractions, such as mountains, fruit gardens, lakes, and cool air. Among the many tourist spots, Bukit Kubu stands out as a location with the potential to be developed into an appealing tourist destination. With its beautiful scenery and relatively easy access, Bukit Kubu offers a unique experience for visitors. This study aims to analyze the role of Bukit Kubu in the development of tourism in Berastagi. Specifically, the research will explore how Bukit Kubu can become a tourist attraction, the impact of tourist visits on the local community, and the challenges and opportunities in developing tourism in that location. Based on the background provided, the research questions in this study are as follows:

1. What is the role of Bukit Kubu in the development of tourism in Berastagi?
2. How does tourism affect the local community and the environment around Bukit Kubu?
3. What are the challenges and opportunities in developing tourism at Bukit Kubu?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

a. Tourism Concepts

*Corresponding author

E-mail addresses: anaastasya17@gmail.com (Anastasya Dwika Simanjuntak)*

E-mail addresses: azzahrahandrianti@gmail.com (Azzahrah Andrianti)

Tourism has become one of the most dynamic and rapidly growing sectors in the world. According to the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), global tourism continues to show stable growth, with the number of international tourists reaching over 1.4 billion in 2019, up from 25 million in 1950 (UNWTO, 2020).

According to Riani, Ni, K. (2021), tourism is a popular phenomenon to be developed as a source of non-oil state revenue, as the tourism industry relatively does not cause pollution or environmental damage.

According to the Republic of Indonesia Law Number 10 of 2009 on Tourism, tourism refers to all activities related to tourism that are multidimensional and multidisciplinary, arising as a manifestation of the needs of every individual and state, and the interaction between tourists, local communities, fellow tourists, the government, regional governments, and businesses. Tourism is a journey undertaken by an individual or group of people to visit a certain place for recreation, personal development, or to study the unique attractions of the destination within a temporary period. A tourist is a person who engages in tourism.

Tourism, as a social and economic phenomenon, is not limited to the act of traveling itself but also involves various aspects, including interactions between tourists, local communities, culture, the environment, and the economy. According to Leiper's (2019) tourism theory, tourism consists of three main elements:

- 1) Origin : The place where tourists begin their journey,
- 2) Travel Route : The path taken by tourists to reach the destination,
- 3) Tourist Destination : The place where tourists spend most of their time during the vacation.

Tourist destinations are the focal point of tourism because this is where the main interaction between tourists and the local environment occurs, and it is also where the positive and negative impacts of tourism are most visible (Sharpley, 2022). In the context of Bukit Kubu, this location can be considered a major tourist destination in Berastagi, attracting a variety of tourists, both domestic and international. The tourism potential of Bukit Kubu lies not only in its natural beauty but also in its historical and cultural attractions.

Nature-based tourism is a subcategory of tourism that involves travel to natural areas with the aim of enjoying landscapes, flora, fauna, or unique natural experiences (Honey, 2021). Ecotourism, which is part of nature-based tourism, emphasizes a sustainable approach to managing tourist destinations, involving environmental conservation, cultural preservation, and the participation of local communities in tourism activities (Fennell, 2020).

b. Theories of Tourism Development

To understand the dynamics of tourism development in Bukit Kubu, the most relevant theory is the Tourism Area Life Cycle (TALC) introduced by Butler (1980). This theory explains how a tourist destination develops through several stages: exploration, introduction, development, consolidation, and eventually either decline or rejuvenation. In the exploration stage, the destination is known only to a small group of adventurers. As promotion and infrastructure develop, the destination becomes widely known and experiences an increase in the number of visitors.

In the case of Bukit Kubu, the destination is currently in the consolidation stage, where its popularity has stabilized, but it is beginning to face challenges related to environmental sustainability and visitor comfort. Butler (1980) argues that at this stage, it is crucial for destination managers to start addressing sustainability issues and the long-term impact of tourism on the environment and local communities. Poor management can lead to the destination entering the decline stage, where visitor numbers drastically decrease due to a decline in the quality of the destination.

Another relevant theory is the concept of sustainable tourism development, which emphasizes the importance of balancing economic, social, and environmental aspects of tourism management (Sharpley, 2009). According to this theory, tourism must be managed in such a way that it not only provides economic benefits to the local community but also ensures the sustainability of the environment and local culture. This concept is highly relevant for Bukit Kubu, considering the challenges it faces related to environmental conservation and the integration of local culture in tourism development.

c. History and Culture of Berastagi

Berastagi is one of the main towns in the Karo Highlands, located about 70 kilometers from Medan, North Sumatra. Berastagi is famous as a mountain tourism destination with a cool climate and stunning natural scenery. The town is situated between two active volcanoes, Mount Sibayak and

Mount Sinabung, offering dramatic views and a unique challenge for adventurous tourists (Rodenwaldt, 2021). Since the Dutch colonial era, Berastagi has been a favorite retreat for Dutch officials due to its refreshing climate and strategic location.

Culturally, the Karo people who inhabit Berastagi have a rich and diverse cultural heritage. They are known for their strong traditions, the unique Karo language, and their distinctive traditional houses. The Karo traditional house, often called "siwaluh jabu," is a large communal house that can accommodate several families and is built without the use of nails. This house reflects the spirit of mutual cooperation and togetherness in Karo society (Purba, 2001).

Cultural festivals, such as the Flower and Fruit Festival held annually in Berastagi, are also major tourist attractions. Visitors can enjoy flower parades, traditional dances, and various local cultural activities. This tradition not only promotes Berastagi's rich flora but also helps preserve the cultural heritage of the Karo people amid the currents of modernization.

d. Description of Bukit Kubu

Bukit Kubu is one of the most famous natural tourist destinations in Berastagi. It is located not far from the center of Berastagi and covers a large area with vast green lawns surrounded by lush pine trees. The area is known for its unspoiled natural beauty and tranquil atmosphere. In addition to being a family-friendly tourist spot, Bukit Kubu often serves as a venue for various recreational activities and large events, such as music festivals, kite-flying competitions, and corporate gatherings.

One of Bukit Kubu's main attractions is the opportunity for visitors to enjoy the fresh mountain air while participating in various outdoor activities such as kite flying, horseback riding, or simply strolling around the hill. Bukit Kubu also offers tourism facilities like restaurants that serve local Karo cuisine and comfortable accommodations with views overlooking the green hills.

Historically, Bukit Kubu was once part of a Dutch colonial plantation and retreat area, and it still retains some ancient colonial-era buildings. With its strategic geographical location and easy accessibility from Medan, Bukit Kubu has become a favorite destination for both domestic and international tourists seeking peace and natural beauty.

e. Relevant Studies

Research on nature tourism and the role of destinations in regional economic development shows that natural tourist attractions, such as Bukit Kubu, can have a significant impact on the local economy, both in terms of increasing community income and creating job opportunities. A study by Sibarani (2020) found that the rise in the number of tourists in Berastagi, particularly in Bukit Kubu, has had a positive economic impact on the surrounding community. This study also emphasizes the importance of infrastructure improvements, such as roads and public facilities, to support sustainable tourism growth.

Another relevant study is research conducted by Ginting (2018), which discusses how tourism in Berastagi, including Bukit Kubu, can be integrated with the concept of ecotourism to maximize environmental conservation and local community empowerment. Ginting notes that while Bukit Kubu has attracted many tourists, the potential for ecotourism development in the area remains underutilized. There is a need for a more systematic approach to involving local communities in tourism activities, as well as stricter regulations to protect the environment.

3. METHOD

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach, aiming to deeply understand the role of Bukit Kubu in the tourism development of Berastagi. The descriptive qualitative approach was chosen because it allows researchers to provide a detailed picture of the role of Bukit Kubu based on data from various written sources. The focus of descriptive research is to uncover actual facts and provide a comprehensive understanding of tourism management and its impacts at Bukit Kubu.

The data used in this research comes from secondary sources, obtained through academic journals, books, articles, government reports, and other publications relevant to the tourism development in Berastagi, specifically Bukit Kubu. The literature reviewed includes studies on nature tourism, the history and culture of Berastagi, as well as related studies discussing the development of similar tourist destinations. Some of the sources used include reports from the North Sumatra Tourism Office, tourism journals, and previous research on similar natural tourist destinations.

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

a. The Role of Bukit Kubu in the Development of Tourism in Berastagi

Bukit Kubu, located on a vast hill in Berastagi, is one of the main tourist destinations that significantly contributes to the development of tourism in Karo Regency. Known for its expansive green landscapes, fresh air, and panoramic hill views, this place has become a popular location for both domestic and international tourists. Various outdoor activities such as playing, picnicking, dining, and recreational games make Bukit Kubu a top choice for families and groups of tourists seeking outdoor recreation.

In addition to being a favored spot for recreation, Bukit Kubu often receives high reviews from visitors who feel a sense of pride and connection to this destination. Its popularity plays a role in enhancing the overall image of tourism in Berastagi, not only due to its natural beauty but also because of its contribution to the local economy. This place offers various affordable accommodations and is often used as a meeting venue, which further adds economic value to the surrounding community.

With its strong appeal, Bukit Kubu plays an important role in the development of tourism in Berastagi, providing memorable nature tourism experiences and contributing to the growth of the tourism industry in the region. The presence of this destination enhances the economic welfare of the local community through increased tourist visits, which drive the growth of tourism services such as restaurants, accommodations, and other outdoor activities.

b. The Impact of Tourist Visits on the Community and Environment around Bukit Kubu

Positive Impacts	Negative Impacts
<p>Tourist visits to Bukit Kubu significantly boost the local economy by increasing demand for services such as restaurants, accommodations, and tour guides, directly benefiting local businesses through higher income. Positive reviews from visitors enhance the reputation of these services, attracting even more tourists and creating a positive cycle of economic growth. Additionally, the local community experiences a strengthened cultural identity and pride in Bukit Kubu as a tourist destination, which reinforces residents' attachment to their region and motivates them to preserve local cultural values and natural beauty. This collective identity adds value to tourism in the area. The high demand from tourists also presents opportunities for new business development, allowing local residents to offer additional services like recreational equipment rentals, souvenir sales, and transportation services. As the tourism sector continues to grow, small and medium enterprises can thrive, increasing local income and supporting a more sustainable economy in the long term.</p>	<p>The increasing number of tourists at Bukit Kubu can have negative effects on the environment if not balanced with sustainable tourism practices. Poorly managed tourism activities have the potential to damage the area's natural beauty, leading to issues like litter accumulation, vegetation degradation, and water and soil pollution. Without special attention to cleanliness and environmental preservation, this area could lose its appeal, threatening the long-term sustainability of tourism. Therefore, measures must be implemented to maintain cleanliness, manage waste, and protect local ecosystems to preserve Bukit Kubu's natural beauty.</p>

c. Challenges and Opportunities in Developing Tourism at Bukit Kubu

Number	Challenges	Opportunities
1.	Lack of Public Facilities : Inadequate public amenities diminish visitor comfort.	Infrastructure Improvement : Enhancing facilities can provide a better visitor experience.
2.	Infrastructure Improvements : Poor signage and access hinder the tourist experience.	Long-term Development : Growing tourism can lead to expanded services and job creation.
3.	Environmental Preservation : Balancing tourism growth with the protection of natural beauty is crucial.	Family-Friendly Atmosphere: Promoting Bukit Kubu's natural beauty can attract more family tourists.

4.	Managing Tourist Flow: Effective strategies are needed to prevent overcrowding and environmental degradation.	Positive Image Promotion: Aggressive marketing can further strengthen its appeal as a leading natural tourist destination.
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5. CONCLUSION

Bukit Kubu significantly contributes to the development of tourism in Berastagi by offering unique outdoor experiences that appeal to families and groups. Its natural beauty and accessibility have led to an increase in tourist visits, boosting the local economy through services like accommodation, dining, and guided tours. However, increased visitor numbers also raise concerns about environmental degradation, necessitating the implementation of sustainable tourism practices. The research underscores the need for better infrastructure and environmental management to maintain Bukit Kubu's appeal and ensure long-term sustainability.

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Bukit Kubu has an important role in developing tourism in Berastagi as an iconic natural tourist destination. Known for its green views, cool atmosphere and large open areas, Kubu Hill is often a favorite place for local and foreign tourists to relax, play and enjoy the fresh air. This location is also a strategic point that supports Berastagi tourism activities as a whole, both as a place for picnics, outdoor sports, and various cultural events and local celebrations. With its attractive natural potential and complete facilities, Bukit Kubu contributes significantly to increasing the tourist attraction of Berastagi as well as supporting the economy of the surrounding community through the tourism industry.

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