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DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY OF PEH PULO BEACH AS A SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DESTINATION IN SUMBERSIH VILLAGE, PANGGUNGREJO SUBDISTRICT, BLITAR REGENCY

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Abstract
Coastal tourism has significant potential to stimulate economic growth and improve community welfare in Indonesia's coastal areas. Sumbersih Village in Panggungrejo Subdistrict, Blitar Regency, is home to Peh Pulo Beach, a coastal attraction characterized by white sandy beaches and a pristine natural environment. Despite its high tourism potential, the development of Peh Pulo Beach remains suboptimal due to inadequate road accessibility, limited supporting facilities, weak digital promotion, and constrained human resource capacity in tourism management. This study aims to formulate development strategies for Peh Pulo Beach as a sustainable tourism destination based on local social, economic, and environmental conditions. A qualitative research approach was employed through in-depth interviews with two key informants, the Head of Peh Pulo Hamlet and a local resident who serves as the village office caretaker, supported by field observations and documentation. Data were analyzed using the Miles and Huberman interactive model, consisting of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings indicate that poor accessibility, insufficient tourism facilities, and the absence of structured digital promotion are the main barriers to tourism development, while strong community support constitutes a critical enabling factor. Therefore, strategic priorities include improving access infrastructure, enhancing tourism facilities, empowering local communities, strengthening digital promotion, and addressing regulatory barriers to support sustainable tourism development.

Keywords: Coastal Tourism, Sustainable Coastal Tourism, Development Strategy, Tourism Accessibility, Community Empowerment.

INTRODUCTION

A tourism destination is a geographical area that possesses tourist attractions, adequate supporting facilities (amenities), and accessibility to attract and serve tourists [11]. A destination is not merely a place but a system of interacting elements, including natural and cultural attractions, transportation facilities, accommodation, and integrated services. This concept emphasizes that tourism destination development must consider all these aspects to provide tourists with satisfying experiences while delivering economic and social benefits to the local community.

Coastal tourism is one of the sectors with great potential to drive economic growth and improve the welfare of communities in Indonesia's coastal areas. Coastal regions offer unique natural beauty, including sandy beaches, coral reefs, mangroves, and rich cultural heritage, which serve as major attractions for tourists.

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Figure 1. Peh Pulo Beach

The preservation of ecosystems and local environmental conditions highly influences the success of coastal tourism development. Tourism development in coastal areas must also involve local communities to ensure that economic benefits are felt directly and improve people's living standards.

Sumbersih Village is located in Panggungrejo Subdistrict, Blitar Regency, East Java. Administratively, this village covers approximately 6,420 hectares and borders Kaligambir Village to the north and east, the Indian Ocean to the south, and Serang Village to the west. It is classified as a developing village with a Human Development Index (IDM) value of 0.6770. One of the main attractions of Sumbersih Village is Peh Pulo Beach, known for its beautiful white-sand beach and pristine natural surroundings. The beach's panorama, adorned with small islands resembling Raja Ampat, white sands, and natural cliffs, attracts both domestic and international tourists. The community, therefore, nicknames it the "Raja Ampat of Blitar Regency."



Figure 2. Entrance gate to Sumbersih Village, Panggungrejo District, Blitar Regency

However, the great potential of Peh Pulo Beach has not been fully realized due to inadequate management and development. One of the main obstacles is poor accessibility, where the road to the location is poorly maintained, steep, and becomes muddy during rain. This inadequate infrastructure creates difficulties for tourists and results in a low number of visitors. In addition, human resources in the tourism sector in Sumbersih Village are still limited, resulting in unprofessional management of the tourism destination.

The development of the tourism sector in Sumbersih Village is crucial to stimulate the local community's economic growth. This can begin with the construction of road infrastructure and tourism facilities, which have the potential to significantly boost the village's economic growth, such as increasing community income and creating new jobs.

Several previous studies have examined Peh Pulo Beach from different perspectives. Kuntarto and Murnisari [3] analyzed tourism potential, tourist awareness, and their influence on domestic tourist satisfaction, while Lestari [4] focused on tourism development from the perspective of visitors. Although these studies provide valuable insights into the attractiveness and visitor perceptions of Peh Pulo Beach, they remain limited in scope and do not comprehensively address development strategies based on local socio-economic, environmental, and institutional conditions. In particular, previous research has not explicitly incorporated local stakeholder perspectives nor formulated integrated development strategies grounded in sustainable and community-based tourism principles.

In addition, studies on sustainable coastal tourism development in Indonesia have generally focused on broader regional contexts or comparative cases [6][7][11], leaving a gap in location-specific, qualitative investigations that capture grassroots conditions and governance dynamics at the village level. Therefore, there is a lack of empirical research that formulates practical development strategies for Peh Pulo Beach by integrating environmental sustainability, community involvement, and local governance perspectives.

This study contributes to the existing literature by addressing these gaps through a qualitative approach based on in-depth interviews with key

local actors and field observations. The novelty of this research lies in its focus on formulating a development strategy for Peh Pulo Beach that integrates sustainable tourism principles and community-based perspectives within a specific coastal village context. The findings are expected to provide practical insights for local stakeholders and policymakers while enriching academic discussions on sustainable coastal tourism development in developing regions.

Therefore, this study aims to formulate development strategies for Peh Pulo Beach as a sustainable and community-based tourism destination in Sumbersih Village, Panggungrejo Subdistrict, Blitar Regency. The formulated strategies are expected to optimize tourism potential, improve community welfare, and support the sustainable preservation of the coastal environment.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

This study employed a qualitative research approach to understand and describe the potential for tourism development and formulate appropriate development strategies based on social, economic, and environmental conditions. The research was conducted at Peh Pulo Beach, Sumbersih Village, Panggungrejo Subdistrict, Blitar Regency. The study location was selected purposively due to its significant tourism potential and the absence of structured tourism development planning.

Informan and Sampling Techniques

The study involved two key informants, selected through purposive sampling based on their relevance and knowledge of the tourism conditions at Peh Pulo Beach. The informants consisted of:

- The Head of Peh Pulo Hamlet, who represents community leadership and has an important role in local decision-making related to tourism development
- A local resident who also serves as the village office caretaker, responsible for maintaining the village office, and who possesses practical knowledge of daily village activities and local conditions.

The informant selection criteria included: (1) being a resident of Sumbersih Village; (2) having direct experience with social and environmental conditions surrounding Peh Pulo Beach; and (3) being familiar with community activities and informal tourism practices in the area. These informants were considered capable of providing complementary perspectives from both formal leadership and local community viewpoints.

Data Collection

Data collection was conducted through in-depth semi-structured interviews with both informants to explore their perceptions, experiences, and expectations regarding the development of Peh Pulo Beach as a tourism destination. The interview topics included tourism potential, existing challenges, community involvement, and future development aspirations. In addition, direct field observations were carried out to examine physical conditions, accessibility, tourism facilities, and ongoing tourism activities. Documentation, in the form of photographs, was also used to support the observational findings. Data triangulation was applied by comparing information obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation to enhance data credibility.

Data Analysis

Data analysis followed the interactive model of Miles and Huberman as described by Saleh (2023), consisting of data condensation (reduction), data display, and conclusion drawing and verification [12]. During the data condensation stage, interview transcripts and observational notes were coded and categorized to identify relevant themes related to tourism development. The reduced data were then organized and presented in narrative form and summary tables to facilitate pattern identification during the data display stage. Finally, conclusions were drawn and continuously verified by re-examining the data to ensure consistency and validity in formulating development strategies for Peh Pulo Beach. These analytical steps were conducted iteratively throughout the research process.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Local Stakeholders' Perceptions and Expectations

Interviews with village officials indicate that Sumbersih Village has not yet been officially designated as a tourism village; however, tourism

development has been incorporated into the village head's vision and mission. The main expectation of village officials is to obtain government funding to improve basic tourism infrastructure, particularly road access to Peh Pulo Beach. Collaboration with private investors remains limited due to unresolved regulatory and land-use issues.

From a destination development perspective, governance readiness and institutional support are essential components of successful tourism destinations [11]. The strong support expressed by both village officials and local residents reflects a favorable social foundation for tourism development. The local community hopes that effective tourism development will enhance the local economy and provide employment opportunities for residents. Similar findings were reported by Rozaki et al. [10], who emphasized that community acceptance and local institutional support are critical factors in sustaining coastal tourism economies. This condition suggests that Peh Pulo Beach possesses substantial social capital that can support community-based tourism development, provided adequate policies and infrastructure are in place.



Figure 3. Road to Peh Pulo Beach



Figure 4. Road to Peh Pulo Beach

2. Physical Accessibility and Tourism Facilities

Field observations in April 2025 reveal that road access to Peh Pulo Beach remains inadequate, characterized by steep terrain, muddy surfaces during rainfall, and scattered rocks that hinder visitor mobility (Figures 3 & 4). Although partial concrete paving has been implemented, the road condition is currently deteriorating. In addition, directional signage is unclear, and supporting facilities such as public toilets and prayer rooms are poorly maintained and limited in number (Figure 5).



Figure 5. Supporting Facilities (restrooms)

Accessibility and basic amenities are fundamental elements in tourism destination systems [11]. Inadequate infrastructure not only reduces visitor comfort but also weakens destination competitiveness. These findings are consistent with those of Musaddun et al. [6], who found that insufficient infrastructure is a major constraint to sustainable coastal tourism development. Without improvements in access and facilities, the tourism potential of Peh Pulo Beach cannot be optimally realized. These findings highlight the urgent need to improve facilities and infrastructure to enhance the visitor experience and strengthen the destination's image.

3. Limited Digital Promotion and Destination Visibility

The development of Peh Pulo Beach is further constrained by limited and unstructured promotion, particularly through digital platforms. Despite the site's considerable natural appeal and uniqueness, the destination remains relatively unknown to the general public and potential tourists. This situation contrasts with other tourism destinations in Blitar Regency that have effectively leveraged social media and digital platforms to attract more visitors and investors. Currently, there is no officially managed social media account dedicated to promoting the destination, resulting in low visibility among

potential tourists. In the context of contemporary tourism development, digital media plays a strategic role in destination branding and market expansion [5].

This finding contrasts with successful coastal destinations that actively utilize digital promotion to attract visitors and investors [13]. Therefore, strengthening digital marketing strategies is essential to enhance the competitiveness and sustainability of Peh Pulo Beach tourism development. Also expected to increase tourist arrivals, solidify Peh Pulo Beach's status as a leading tourism destination in Blitar Regency, and generate significant positive impacts on the local economy, cultural preservation, and environmental sustainability.

4. Development Strategy for Peh Pulo Beach Based on Sustainable and Community-Based Tourism Principles

Sustainable marine tourism development should emphasize natural resource conservation, community empowerment, and collaboration among governments, communities, and businesses [7]. Research in Pekalongan Regency indicates that sustainable coastal tourism development strategies include identifying potential and problems, determining priority development areas, and implementing effective management policies [6]. Both quantitative and qualitative approaches are employed to determine the most appropriate and sustainable strategies. In light of the social and physical conditions identified, a comprehensive development strategy for Peh Pulo Beach should prioritize several key aspects:

Sustainable coastal tourism emphasizes environmental conservation, community empowerment, and multi-stakeholder collaboration [7][8]. Based on field findings and supported by previous studies [6][10][2], the development strategy for Peh Pulo Beach should prioritize:

- **Infrastructure improvement**: Priority should be given to repairing and upgrading the roads leading to Peh Pulo Beach to improve accessibility. Enhanced and comfortable access will likely increase tourist interest and stimulate investment in the tourism sector.
- **Upgrading tourism facilities**, such as restrooms and prayer rooms, is necessary, alongside the installation of clear and informative directional signage. Adequate facilities are essential to improve visitor comfort and provide a satisfying tourism experience.
- **Community empowerment**, through training and capacity-building initiatives, is crucial for effective tourism destination management that aligns with community-based tourism principles. Empowering the community ensures that locals directly realize economic benefits and encourages their active participation as key stakeholders in tourism development.
- **Digital promotion enhancement** to strengthen destination branding and market reach. This step can increase destination visibility, attract more tourists, and enhance Peh Pulo Beach's reputation as a premier tourism destination in Blitar Regency. This includes professional management of official social media accounts, collaboration with influencers and tourism communities, leveraging Blitar Regency's branding, developing a dedicated tourism website for Sumbersih Village, and promoting the destination through events and local festivals.
- **Regulatory coordination is** to facilitate cooperation with private investors while ensuring environmental sustainability. This coordination is essential to ensure smooth and sustainable investment processes.

Aspect	Current Condition	Implication
Accessibility	Poor road condition, steep and muddy	Limits tourist arrivals
Facilities	Limited and poorly maintained	Reduces visitor satisfaction
Promotion	Informal, unstructured	Low destination visibility

Community Support	Strong local support	High potential for CBT
Institutional Support	Limited funding and regulation	Slows development process

Table 1. Summary of Peh Pulo Beach Condition

By implementing these strategies in an integrated and systematic manner, the development of Peh Pulo Beach can proceed effectively and sustainably, yielding positive outcomes for the local community and preserving the surrounding environment.

CONCLUSION

Peh Pulo Beach possesses significant potential as a coastal tourism destination in Sumbersih Village. However, its development remains constrained by limited infrastructure, inadequate supporting facilities, and suboptimal promotion. Strong social support from village officials and the local community is a vital asset for driving sustainable, community-based tourism development. An effective development strategy should prioritize improving road access to enhance accessibility while simultaneously upgrading supporting facilities to ensure visitor comfort. Furthermore, empowering the local community through training and active involvement is crucial to guarantee that residents directly experience economic benefits. Planned and integrated digital promotion is also key to expanding market reach and strengthening the destination's image. Addressing regulatory barriers to cooperation with private investors is necessary to facilitate smooth, sustainable investment processes.

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations. The research relied on a limited number of informants. It employed a qualitative approach, which may not fully capture the perspectives of all tourism stakeholders or quantify the economic and environmental impacts of tourism development. In addition, the analysis focused on current conditions rather than longitudinal observation of tourism dynamics.

Future research is recommended to involve a broader range of stakeholders, including tourists, local entrepreneurs, and government agencies, and to apply mixed-method or quantitative approaches to measure tourism impacts more comprehensively. Further studies may also explore destination resilience, carrying capacity, and governance models to strengthen sustainable coastal tourism development in Peh Pulo Beach and similar destinations.

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