

Potential of Mangrove Forest Tourism with A4 (Attraction, Amenity, Accessibility, Ancillary) in Kulu Village, Wori District North Sulawesi Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: Minahasa Utara has now become one of the continuously developing regions thanks to the ongoing construction, especially due to its status as a Special Economic Zone (SEZ). The Likupang SEZ is expected to become the center of regional economic growth, thereby positively impacting the surrounding areas, including Kulu Village located in North Minahasa Regency, North Sulawesi, which has various natural tourism potentials that have not yet been fully utilized. Some of them include captivating diving and snorkeling spots, exotic mangrove forests, and Paniki Island, which holds a wealth of local ecosystems and culture. The development of tourist attractions is directed as a mainstay sector to drive economic growth, increase local revenue, expand job opportunities, and enhance the recognition and marketing of products in order to boost the tourism industry. Kulu Village in Wori District, which has an area of mangrove forest, beautiful sea views, and cool air, makes it a good location for a tourist destination. With the conduct of this research, the potential of the Mangrove Forest Tourism can be known by many people and can be visited by tourists.

Research method: The method used involves direct observation in the field with the managers of the Mangrove Forest Tourism to understand the potential it possesses as well as the available facilities. Data analysis conducted based on the 4A. (Attraction, Accessibility, Amenity, Ancillary).

Result and dicussion: The results of this study indicate that mangrove forest tourism has the potential to become a leading tourist attraction in North Minahasa, supported by existing facilities and good management. Accessibility that can be reached even though the road conditions are good enough to be traversed by two vehicles at the same time. Amenities available at the Mangrove Forest Tourism site include gazebos, restaurants, and a mini café with a fairly complete menu. And the support from the local government and the North Minahasa Regency Tourism Office. Overall, the Mangrove Forest Tourism in Kulu Village has great potential as an attractive and sustainable ecotourism destination if it continues to be well-managed and supported by adequate infrastructure.

Implication: The implications are ecological preservation, the benefits of mangrove forests for the surrounding economic development, and cultural empowerment through sustainable planning. The challenges also include limited infrastructure, environmental risks, and accessibility gaps. Addressing these issues encourages balanced development and community engagement.

Keywords: Activities, Accessibility, Amenities, Ancillaries, Kulu Village, Tourism

INTRODUCTION

Tourism has significant potential for continued growth, driven by socio-economic changes and rising incomes globally, leading to increased demand for travel. The tourism industry is now recognized as a basic human need and an essential part of human rights that must be protected. According to Muljadi (2014), the global tourism industry has shown consistent growth year by year.

In Indonesia, tourism plays a crucial role in supporting the national economy, contributing significantly to foreign exchange earnings and driving economic development. As Jaffe & Pasternak (2004) noted, the sector helps reduce unemployment and increase productivity. As a strategic sector, tourism is vital for national progress by developing attractions and leveraging existing potential. Law No. 10 of 2009 on Tourism emphasizes the need for equitable business opportunities and benefits while adapting to changes at all levels. According to Indonesian dictionary, tourism potential can be defined as the attractiveness, uniqueness, strength and ability possessed by an object that has the possibility to develop something that becomes real or real, and in other words tourism potential is everything owned by a tourist destination area that is useful for the development of the tourism industry.

In North Sulawesi Province, optimizing the region's tourist potential is seen as a key strategy to attract more foreign visitors, ensuring they have safe and enjoyable experiences

The development of tourist attractions is aimed at becoming a leading sector that contributes to economic growth, increases in local revenue, job creation, as well as enhanced promotion and marketing of products to develop the tourism industry. According to Cooper in Febriana (2015), tourist attractions must have four components, namely: attraction, accessibilities, amenities, and ancillary service.

A tourist attraction is something that becomes an attraction and can impress tourists in the form of a sense of satisfaction, comfort, and a sense of enjoyment to tourists who see it or carry it out. In this case, it changes natural attractions, culture, and artificial attractions.

Accessibility (convenience) of facilities that provide ease of reaching tourist destinations.

Amenities are the availability of facilities such as lodging, restaurants, entertainment venues, local transportation, health facilities and others.

Ancillary, activities are supporting services in tourist destinations. These supporting services can be in the form of local guides, massages, equipment rentals and so on

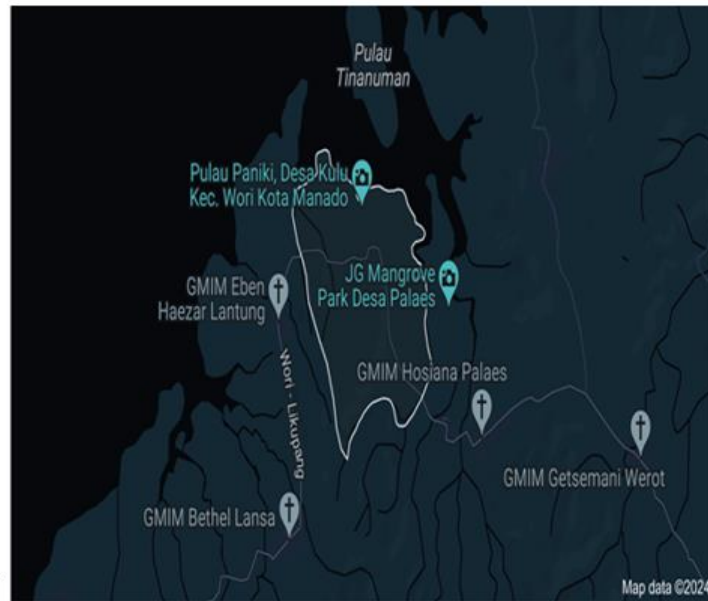


Figure 1. Location of research

Minahasa Utara is now one of the continuously developing regions, especially due to the ongoing development, with its status as a Special Economic Zone (SEZ). The Likupang SEZ is expected to become an economic growth center in the area, which will have a positive impact on the surrounding regions, including Kulu Village located in North Minahasa Regency, North Sulawesi. This village has various natural tourism potentials that have not been fully utilized, such as attractive diving and snorkeling spots, exotic mangrove forests, and Paniki Island, which is rich in local ecosystems and culture. One of the famous tourist attractions in Kulu Village is Paniki Island, which boasts extraordinary natural beauty and is only visible during low tide, forming an atoll or expanse of white sand that captivates tourists. In addition, the unique mangrove forest tourism potential, which is rarely found elsewhere, becomes an important asset in the development of regional tourism. The study aims to identify the facilities and infrastructure at the mangrove forest tourist attraction and to understand the profile of tourists visiting the site. This area has great potential to become a favorite destination. Based on that background, one of the highly potential tourist areas in North Sulawesi can be highlighted. With the conduct of this research, the potential of Mangrove Forest Tourism can be known by many people and can be visited by tourists.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research has been carried out in Kulu Village, Wori District and the research time is from March to September 2024. The research uses a qualitative research approach as a scientific method often employed by a group of researchers in the social sciences. Qualitative research is conducted to build knowledge through understanding and discovery. The qualitative research approach is a process of research and understanding based on methods that investigate a social phenomenon and human issues. Primary data in this study were collected through observation, interviews, and questionnaires. Observation and interviews were conducted to gather information related to optimizing tourism and creative economy management in Kulu Village, Wori District, North Minahasa

Regency. The questionnaire was created with closed-ended questions, taking into account aspects related to the research topic. Here are the methods used in this research : 1) Observation. According to Basrowi (2012), observation is defined as a data collection technique conducted through careful observation and systematic recording. This method allows researchers to obtain a real and clear picture of the facts found in the field. In the context of this research, observations were conducted in Kulu Village, Wori District. 2) Interviews. According to Andra (2018), interviews are one of the research methods used to collect information through a question-and-answer process between the researcher and the relevant informant. 3) Documentation. This method involves the direct collection of data in the form of photos and videos from locations relevant to the research to support more accurate research results. Flowchart of research activity implementation to achieve solutions :

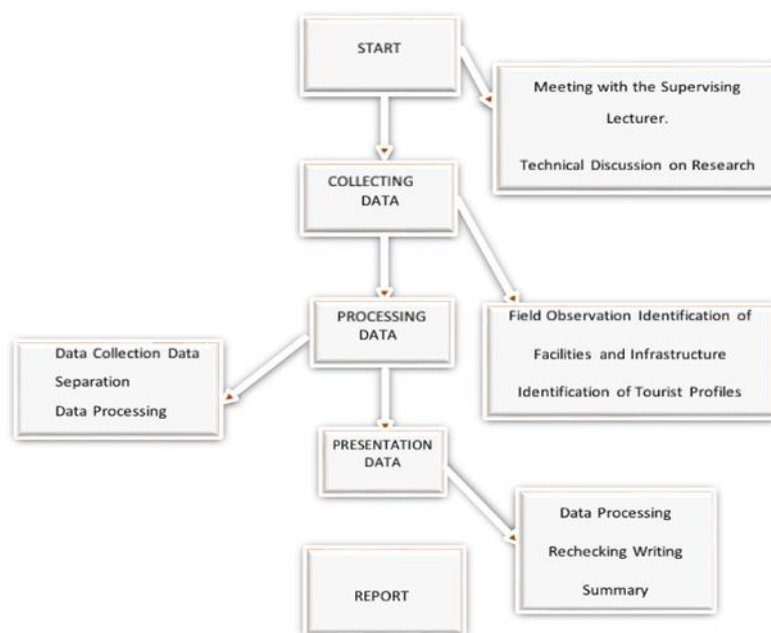


Figure 2. Flow Chart of Research

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Mangrove Forest Tour in Kulu Village, Wori District, North Minahasa Regency, is conveniently located, with a 60-minute drive from Sam Ratulangi Airport and a 30-minute drive from Grand Luley Hotel in Manado. This makes the destination easily accessible for both local and international visitors.

Tourist Profile:

Visitor data over a one-month period reveals the age distribution of tourists visiting the Mangrove Forest. The majority of visitors are in the age range of 21-30 years, making up 33% of the total, followed by those in the 31-40 years age group at 30%, and the 41-50 years age group at 25%. Visitors aged 5-10 years and over 60 years represent the smallest groups, with only 2% and 5%, respectively. This suggests that the Mangrove Forest site is particularly popular among young adults, with fewer children and older adults visiting the attraction.



Figure 3. Tourist Profile

Supporting Components of the Tourism Site Based on the 4A Framework: Attractions:

Richard and Wilson (2006) explain that attractions are an important key in a tourist destination which motivate tourists to visit destination and fulfil their recreational demand. Attractions can be any form which fulfil the utility of tourists or visitors at the destination, these included, culture, mountains, community, scenic beauty, gastronomy and many others (Andrianto, and Sugiana, 2016). The Mangrove Forest offers various attractions that make it appealing to tourists. The views presented in the mangrove forest are very interesting with lots of marine biota that can be directly seen with the naked eye. Among these is a colorful bridge, which features decorative lighting, adding to the visual appeal of the area. The bridge also serves as a pathway for visitors to explore the site further, enhancing their experience.



Figure 4. Mangrove Forest

Accessibility:

Accessibility is one of key components in order to attract tourists. Several studies say that access is the basic infrastructure that helps the growth and development of tourist destinations (Jovanović and Ilić, 2016). The journey to the Mangrove Forest is relatively smooth, with well-maintained roads.

The access from Manado to Kulu Village Wori District is notably good, contributing to an enjoyable travel experience for tourists, which is crucial for maintaining high visitation rates. Along the road from Manado to Kulu Village, tourists are treated to views of rural houses and plantation areas.



Figure 5. Accessibility

Amenities:

Aminities are a form of additional service to tourists so that tourists can feel comfortable and add value to the overall tourism activities at the destination. Amenities are considered as complementary facilities with accommodation and accessibility which are needed for tourists' satisfaction, amenities can be "tangible and intangible facilities used to obtain pleasure of the visitors at the destination" (Robustin et al., 2018, p. 95)

For the comfort and convenience of visitors, the Mangrove Forest area is equipped with several amenities. A restaurant offering a diverse menu allows tourists to enjoy local and international cuisines, enhancing their stay. In addition, several gazebos are available for relaxation, allowing tourists to enjoy the natural surroundings in comfort. Local people also provide boats if tourists want to do water activities such as snorkeling, fishing, or just boating around the pier.



Figure 6. Food Stall and Gazebos

Ancillary Services:

The Mangrove Forest's tourism site is supported by various ancillary services provided by local authorities, including the Kulu Village Government and the North Minahasa Regency Tourism Office. These services play a vital role in maintaining the operations and ensuring the safety and satisfaction of tourists. Their involvement also supports the growth and development of tourism in the area.



Figure 7. Local Authorities Office

The Mangrove Forest in Kulu Village is a well-established tourist attraction that benefits from strong support in terms of accessibility, attractions, amenities, and ancillary services. The destination is particularly popular among young adults, with solid infrastructure, good road access, a range of amenities, and supportive local governance. These factors collectively contribute to the site's

potential for further growth and its capacity to provide a positive experience for visitors.

CONCLUSION

The potential of mangrove forest tourism in Kulu Village, Wori District, North Sulawesi, can be effectively evaluated using the A4 framework: Attraction, Amenity, Accessibility, and Ancillary services. Here's a conclusion based on this framework:

Attraction

The mangrove forest in Kulu Village is a unique natural resource with high potential as a tourist attraction. Its biodiversity, ecological significance, and scenic beauty provide an excellent opportunity for eco-tourism and educational tourism. Activities such as mangrove exploration, and learning about the ecosystem can be developed further to attract both domestic and international tourists.

Amenity

Current amenities, such as rest areas and basic facilities, may be limited or underdeveloped. To unlock the full potential of mangrove forest tourism, it is essential to invest in improved infrastructure, such as clean restrooms, food and beverage stalls, and interpretive signage to enhance the visitor experience.

Accessibility

Accessibility remains a key factor in determining the feasibility of tourism development. While Kulu Village may have basic road access, the condition of these roads and transportation options should be improved to facilitate easier travel for tourists. Clear signage and maps, as well as organized tours, can further enhance accessibility.

Ancillary Services

Support services, including guides, local accommodations, and security, play a vital role in ensuring a safe and enjoyable experience for visitors. Training programs for local guides, eco-tourism workshops for community members, and partnerships with local businesses could strengthen ancillary services and create a more sustainable tourism ecosystem.

Based on the discussion above, it can be concluded that the Mangrove Forest tourist attraction in Kulu Village has the potential to become a leading tourist destination in North Minahasa. This is supported by visitor data over the past month, which shows a positive trend across various age groups and the presence of several attractions in the Mangrove Forest Tourism. Accessibility that can be reached even though the road conditions are good enough to be traversed by two vehicles at the same time. Amenities available at the Mangrove Forest Tourism site include gazebos, restaurants, and a mini café with a fairly complete menu. And the support from the local government and the North Minahasa Regency Tourism Office. Overall, the Mangrove Forest Tourism in Kulu Village has great potential as an attractive and sustainable ecotourism destination if it continues to be well-managed and supported by adequate infrastructure.

Recommendation

Recommendations can be made to further enhance the Mangrove Forest Tourism in Kulu Village and ensure its sustainable development:

Infrastructure Improvements:

Although the road conditions are already suitable for travel, enhancing signage and road maintenance can improve accessibility further, especially for tourists unfamiliar with the area.

Developing additional parking spaces and transportation options (e.g., shuttle services from major hotels or transport hubs) could provide more convenience for tourists.

Marketing and Promotion:

Strengthening marketing efforts through digital platforms, social media, and partnerships with tourism agencies can attract a broader range of visitors, both domestic and international.

Promoting the site as an eco-tourism destination, highlighting its environmental and conservation aspects, can attract eco-conscious travelers.

Expansion of Amenities:

Consider adding more amenities such as restrooms, shaded areas, and seating arrangements along key walking trails or viewing spots to improve comfort for tourists.

The addition of more dining options or food stalls with local specialties could further attract visitors, especially during peak seasons.

By implementing these recommendations, the Mangrove Forest Tourism in Kulu Village can become a leading eco-tourism destination, attract more visitors, and ensure sustainable growth that benefits both the local community and the environment.

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