



Optimizing the Performance of Local Tour Guides: A Case Study of Meat Tourism Village, Toba District

Hetty Claudia Nainggolan¹, Rosdiana Pakpahan^{1*}, Wilda Khairannur¹

¹Politeknik Pariwisata Medan, Indonesia

*Corresponding author email: rosdiana.pakpahan90@gmail.com

Article Info

Article history:

Received January 17, 2024

Approved February 5, 2024

Keywords:

Optimization,
Competence, Tour
Guide

ABSTRACT

This research discusses the development aimed at enhancing the technical competencies of Tour Guides in Meat Tourism Village. The research findings are outlined in several responses to the problem formulations, namely the technical competency conditions of local tour guides in Meat Tourism Village and the formulation of strategies to enhance the technical competencies of local tour guides in Meat Tourism Village. This research was conducted using descriptive analysis methods through interviews, observations, documentation, and literature review. Optimizing the role of local tour guides in Meat Tourism Village, Toba District, has a positive impact on tourism development, although not yet fully maximized, especially in the economic sector. The limited number of tourist visits to Meat necessitates improvements and evaluations of the tourism experience, as well as an understanding of tourism ethics. The optimization of the role of local tour guides in Meat Village not only contributes to the enhancement of knowledge and skills of the guides but also creates more satisfying tourism experiences for visitors. By designing diverse and appealing tour routes, tour guides are capable of presenting the holistic beauty of nature, history, culture, and local uniqueness. This provides opportunities to attract more tourists and enhance the destination's appeal.

Copyright © 2024, The Author(s).

This is an open access article under the CC-BY-SA license



How to cite: Nainggolan, H. C., Pakpahan, R., & Khairannur, W. (2024). Optimizing the Performance of Local Tour Guides: A Case Study of Meat Tourism Village, Toba District. *Jurnal Ilmiah Global Education*, 5(1), 359–365. <https://doi.org/10.55681/jige.v5i1.2391>

INTRODUCTION

Tourism has become one of the largest industries in the world and is a major source of foreign exchange in various countries. Indonesia, with its diverse cultural and local wisdom across provinces, has the potential to capitalize on this diversity as a tourism asset. Successful tourism development involves collaborative efforts, under the principle of "Building with the community", ensuring that tourism development benefits the local population. Essentially, communities have the right to participate in tourism management, as stipulated in Article 19 paragraph 2 of Law No. 10 of 2009 on Tourism.

One emerging trend in tourism activities is the concept of Village Tourism. Village tourism involves the development of a region based on its basic potential and local empowerment. This form of tourism engages the local community in its development, often referred to as community participation. A tourist village is a place characterized by certain traits and values that attract tourists interested in rural life. Its main allure lies in the unique lives of village residents, which cannot be found in urban areas. Village tourism leverages the natural resources and activities found in a village, such as agriculture and culture. Thus, a tourist village can be defined as a village with tourism potential and supporting facilities presented within a community structure integrated with tradition.

North Sumatra has significant tourism potential, including cultural, historical, religious, natural, and maritime tourism, each offering unique attractions to tourists. North Sumatra is among the ten provinces designated as national tourist areas. Toba Regency is an area with immense tourism potential that can enhance the value of tourism in North Sumatra Province. In 2022, Toba Regency officially certified 36 tourism villages. One of these villages is Meat Tourism Village, categorized as an emerging tourism village located in Tampahan Sub-district. Meat Tourism Village's potential lies mainly in cultural and natural tourism, as well as educational tourism, with its renowned cultural and natural attractions, including the popular "1000 tent" tourism.

The development of tourism in village areas has become an effective strategy to improve local economies, preserve culture and the environment, and provide authentic experiences for tourists. One key element of successful village tourism is the presence of competent and quality tour guides. Village tour guides play a crucial role in providing enjoyable, informative, and satisfying tourism experiences for visitors. They serve as local ambassadors, introducing the unique history, culture, and attractions of the village. Competencies of village tour guides encompass knowledge of history, culture, local wisdom, as well as communication, interpretation, and service skills (Pakpahan, 2018)

Continuous improvement of village tour guide competencies is essential to ensure optimal tourism experiences. Competency enhancement can be achieved through training and education programs focusing on local knowledge, guiding skills, tourism management, and personal development, including communication skills. With improved competencies, village tour guides are expected to provide accurate information, explain cultural values appropriately, promote environmentally friendly practices, and provide excellent service to tourists. Competent guides can also play a role in preserving cultural heritage, promoting local crafts, and developing sustainable tourism activities. (Pakpahan, 2023)

However, enhancing village tour guide competencies is also met with challenges, such as limited resources, knowledge gaps, lack of understanding of sustainability, and changes in tourist trends and preferences. Therefore, research and collaborative efforts between the government, local communities, and other stakeholders are needed to identify existing needs and challenges and design effective competency enhancement programs. With improved competencies, village tourism can become an attractive destination, providing valuable tourism experiences for visitors while maintaining local environmental and cultural sustainability.

METHODS

The research method employed in this study is qualitative research with a descriptive approach. The reason for using qualitative research is because it allows the researcher to address issues or complex descriptions that are in line with the complexity of the object being studied. This research was conducted in the area of Meat Tourism Village, Toba Regency, North Sumatra Province, during the months of January to February 2024. The data sources used were primary and secondary data. Data collection techniques used in this study included direct observation, interviews, literature review, and documentation.

The informants in this study were members of the Meat Tourism Village community organization (Pokdarwis) and local residents. The technique for determining key informants in this study was by selecting individuals who are knowledgeable about the research topic. The data analysis technique used in this study was descriptive analysis, which describes actual events based on facts and data obtained from the research location. The author also employed categorical data analysis techniques, which involve organizing categories from a set of findings based on specific criteria, thoughts, institutions, or opinions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Geographical Conditions Toba District covers an area of 2,021.80 square kilometers, accounting for 3.19% of the total area of North Sumatra Province. Toba District is located between 2°03'–2°40' North Latitude and 98°56'–99°40' East Longitude. The region of Toba District is situated on highlands, with elevations ranging from 900 to 2,200 meters above sea level. The topography and soil contour of Toba District vary, including flat, sloping, inclined, and steep terrains. Its soil structure is unstable and located in a seismic and volcanic area. Being close to the Equator, Toba District is classified as a tropical climate region. Like other districts in Indonesia, Toba District experiences both dry and rainy seasons. The dry season typically occurs from January to July, while the rainy season spans from August to December, with transitional periods in between.

Climate Conditions Toba District has a tropical climate with two distinct seasons: the rainy season and the dry season. The first rainy season occurs from August to January, while the second rainy season is from March to May. The dry season usually falls in February, June, and July. In 2023, the highest rainfall in Toba District was recorded in November, reaching 395 millimeters, while the lowest rainfall was in February, at 21 millimeters. The highest number of rainy days was observed in July and December, with 25 days, while the lowest was in February, with only 2 days.

Agriculture/Plantation crops are generally managed through community efforts. Plantations managed by plantation companies are relatively small. Coffee is the main commodity of plantation crops managed by the local community, with promising prospects. In terms of planting area, coffee is the widest cultivated crop compared to other plantation crops. The coffee planting area in 2016 was 3,558.83 hectares. Unlike other community plantation crops, coffee is spread across all districts, with Habinsaran District having the largest coffee plantation area compared to other districts in Toba District. Besides coffee, other plantation commodities include rubber, benzoin, cloves, and sugar palm.

Boundaries Toba District is bordered by:

1. North: Simalungun District
2. South: North Tapanuli District
3. East: Asahan District and North Labuhanbaru District
4. West: Samosir District and Lake Toba.

Table 1 District data in Toba Regency

No	Name of District	Number of Villages/Subdistricts
1	Ajibata	19
2	Balige	6
3	Bonatua Lunasi	7
4	Borbor	25
5	Habinsaran	8
6	Laguboti	16
7	Lumban Julu	15
8	Nassau	12
9	Parmaksian	9
10	Pintu Pohan Meranti	19
11	Porsea	22
12	Siantar Narumonda	14
13	Sigumpar	8
14	Silaen	17
15	Tampahan	19
16	Uluan	17

Source: Toba Regency Regional Government 2024

The Meat Tourism Village is located in the Tampahan Sub-district. Meat Village is situated on the outskirts of Lake Toba, offering breathtaking natural beauty that can be seen and enjoyed by tourists. Enclosed by two hills covered with pine forests and diverse vegetation, coupled with vast rice fields, makes this village exceptionally beautiful. The village also boasts stretches of white sand, clear water, and calm waves, allowing tourists to engage in tourism activities comfortably. Therefore, discovering and tapping into the natural potential of Meat Village, given its panoramic views of the expansive lake set against the backdrop of beautiful and lush green hills, as well as various other tourist sites such as cultural sites, is crucial for development and realization by both the government and tourism investors.

Meat Village is situated beneath the hills with a population of approximately 900 inhabitants and an area of approximately 300 hectares. The primary occupations of Meat Village residents are fishermen and traditional cloth weavers (ulos artisans). Additionally, Meat Village is also one of the locations for the annual event known as the "1000 Tenda Kaldera". This event is a

community-based festival aimed at developing tourism through art and culture.(Kristiana et al., 2019)

The development of tourism and culture in Meat Village is supported by various parties, one of which is PT Inalum. In this regard, PT Inalum assists in the development of art and culture in Meat Village by creating creative spaces, art studios, and reading corners for village children. This program, initiated from December 2019 to March 2020, collaborates with Rumah Karya Indonesia to create a creative space center, reading room, and preservation of cultural values.

Some attractions in Meat Tourism Village include:

1. Wisata 1000 tenda
2. Wisata Marsolu
3. Wisata Budaya (Manortor, Rumah Adat Raguhitang)
4. Air terjun Lombang Gurgur
5. Tuktuk Simundi
6. Agrowisata padi
7. Edukasi Martonun

Based on the results of the research conducted through interviews and observations, it is evident that the local tour guides in Meat Tourism Village are not yet optimal, especially in providing tourism services. Tourists visiting Meat Tourism Village rarely utilize the services of local tour guides but instead prefer to explore independently. Optimization of local tour guides in Meat Village can be achieved through "To Conduct To Direct," which involves organizing and executing tourist activities, "To Point Out," which guides tourists to desired attractions, ensuring their comfort, and "To Inform," providing information and explanations about visited attractions. It is hoped that through this optimization, local tour guides can enhance their communication skills with both local and international tourists.

Tourists visiting Meat Tourism Village with the assistance of local tour guides, whether for cultural or natural tourism, must make appointments or reservations in advance. This indicates the optimization of the work of local tour guides in providing good guidance and enjoyable service to tourists, thereby increasing tourists' interest in revisiting. Optimization or tactics as local tour guides in an overall approach related to the implementation of ideas, planning, and execution of activities within a specific timeframe are essential in enhancing and developing existing tourism.

Optimal local tour guides have demonstrated excellent tourism services by guiding tourists to desired attractions, ensuring their comfort throughout the journey, and providing a sense of security during visits to Meat Tourism Village. These local tour guides are members of the Indonesian Tour Guide Association (HPI) of Toba District, North Sumatra. They have obtained licenses from the HPI (Indonesian Tour Guide Association).

To perform their duties as tour guides, HPI imposes boundaries stipulated in the local tour guide code of ethics derived from the decisions of the 8th HPI national working meeting on November 28-30, 2007, in Manado, with enrichment from the provisions of Law No. 10/2009 and Government Regulation No. 52/2012. In carrying out their duties and professional discipline responsibly, as explained in the HPI code of ethics document, local tour guides must:

Always adhere to the laws and regulations of the Republic of Indonesia. b. Uphold the positive image of Indonesian tourism based on the Pancasila philosophy as the nation's way of life. c. Wear the license card issued by the government or authorized parties when performing duties. d. Care for the environment based on the master plan established by regional and central authorities. e. Understand the local community's culture, customs, and traditions in tourism development. f. Maintain the reputation of fellow local tour guides and work partners intentionally or unintentionally. g. Strictly refrain from disclosing state secrets to tourists that may negatively impact the nation's image. h. Avoid performing tour guide duties outside the provisions of the license and language specified in the local tour guide certificate issued by the competent government authority.

The main purpose of tourists visiting Meat Tourism Village is nature tourism, particularly attending the annual 1000 Tenda festival. Optimization of the role of local tour guides is crucial to enhance tourists' experiences and support tourism development in a destination, including in the case of Meat Tourism Village, Toba District. The existing local tour guides in Meat Village still need to improve their knowledge of history, culture, communication skills, and time management to effectively interact with tourists. Local tour guides also need to have a deep understanding of the tourism potential in Meat Village, enabling them to explain local stories and values that can attract tourists' interest. The Meat Village tour guides have also played a role in designing diverse and interesting tourist routes to ensure tourists can explore various aspects of Meat Village. The routes created also involve visits to natural, cultural, and educational attractions (martonun). Meat Tourism Village has involved the local community in tour guiding because they are the ones who understand the area and its potentials the most. With this optimization, it is hoped that the role of local tour guides through these steps will lead to an improvement in the tourism sector in Meat Village, Toba District, and have a positive impact on local economic and cultural development.

CONCLUSION

Optimizing the role of local tour guides in Meat Tourism Village, Toba District, has a positive impact on tourism development, although not yet fully realized, particularly in the economic aspect. The limited number of tourist visits to Meat necessitates improvement and evaluation of tourism, along with understanding tourism ethics. Optimization of the role of local tour guides in Meat Village not only contributes to enhancing the knowledge and skills of guides but also creates a more satisfying tourist experience. By designing diverse and appealing tour routes, guides can present the holistic beauty of nature, history, culture, and local uniqueness. This provides opportunities to attract more tourists and enhance destination appeal.

Thus, optimizing the role of local tour guides in Meat Tourism Village is not just about creating extraordinary tourist experiences but also about empowering the local community and ensuring destination sustainability. With this holistic approach, Meat Village in Toba District has the potential to become a leading tourist destination that maximally benefits all involved parties. The recommendations from this study are as follows:

Optimizing local tour guides is a crucial step in enhancing tourists' experiences and advancing the tourism of Meat Village. Therefore, it needs to be optimized through the improvement of knowledge and the development of skills by local tour guides. Enhancing

knowledge can be obtained through training conducted by the Tourism Department or universities collaborating with Meat Tourism Village. Meanwhile, skill development can involve improving communication skills, leadership, and the time management of the tour guides themselves. Finally, utilizing technology, by leveraging technology as one of the promotional tools for the tourism village, will provide benefits that can be realized by the village through increased tourist visits.

REFERENCES

- Bromley, P., 1994, *Interpretation in Countryside Recreation: A Handbook for Managers*. London: E & FN Spon.
- Bungin, Burhan. 2007. *Penelitian Kualitatif Komunikasi, Ekonomi Kebijakan Publik dan Ilmu Sosial Lainnya*. Jakarta: Prenada Media Group.
- Cole, M. L., & Stavros, J. M. (2013). Creation of the SOAR Profile: An innovative tool to evaluate strategic thinking capacity. Poster presented at Research Day 2013, Lawrence Technological University, Southfield, MI.
- Dann, G. M, 1997, *The Language of Tourism: A Sociolinguistic Perspectives*. Wallingford: Cab International.
- Jumail, M. 2017. *Teknik Pemanduan Wisata*. Yogyakarta: ANDI.
- Kristiana, Y., Pakpahan, R., & Mulyono, S. T. (2019). Pengembangan Pariwisata Berbasis Masyarakat Di Kawasan Seberang Kota Jambi (Sekoja). *Prosiding Konferensi Nasional Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat Dan Corporate Social Responsibility (PKM-CSR)*, 2, 1047–1053. <https://doi.org/10.37695/pkmcsr.v2i0.274>
- Kuo, I-Ling, 2002, The Effectiveness of environmental interpretation at resource-sensitive tourism destinations. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 4, 87-101.
- Kusmayadi dan E. Sugiarto. 2000. *Metodologi Penelitian dalam Bidang Kepariwisata*. Jakarta: PT Gramedia Pustaka
- Mancini, M., 2000, *Conducting tours: A practical guide.*, South-Western Publishing Co., Cincinnati.
- Pakpahan, R. (2018). Implementasi Prinsip Pariwisata Berbasis Komunitas Di Desa Wisata Nglingsgo Yogyakarta. *Jurnal Master Pariwisata (JUMPA)*, 05, 129. <https://doi.org/10.24843/jumpa.2018.v05.i01.p07>
- Pakpahan, R. (2023). Development of Tourism Travel Patterns in Lau Bagot Tourism Village Dairi District. *Jurnal Ilmiah Global Education*, 4(2), 1061–1068. <https://doi.org/10.55681/jige.v4i2.932>
- Pitana, I Gde. dan Surya Diarta, I Ketut. (2009). *Pengantar Ilmu Pariwisata*. Yogyakarta: Andi.
- Pond, K., 2003, *The professional guide: Dynamics of tour guiding.*, Van Nostrand Reinhold, New York.
- Sugiyono. 2008. "Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif Kualitatif dan R&D". Bandung: Alfabeta.
- Suyitno. 2015. *Pemanduan Wisata*. Surabaya: CV. Graha Ilmu.
- Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 10 tahun 2009 tentang Kepariwisata
- Welgemoed, M., 2001, *The Tourist guide as culture broker: A South African scenario* Dalam Robinson, M, dkk. *Tourism and culture: Image, identity and marketing*. New castle: University of Northumbria.