



RESEARCH ARTICLE

Optimizing Accessibility to Increase the Tourist Attraction of Florida Baths in Namukur Village, Sei Bingai District, Langkat Regency

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to optimize accessibility to increase tourist attractions in the Florida Baths of Namukur Village, Sei Bingai District, Langkat Regency. Using a qualitative descriptive approach, data is collected through interviews, documentation, and observations from tour guides, business actors, and local communities. The results show that inadequate road conditions, lack of direction signs, and limited transportation are the main obstacles. However, the natural beauty and the support of the local community is a significant strength. Increased accessibility is expected to increase the number of visitors and local income. SWOT analysis identifies the need for facility improvement and more aggressive promotion. In conclusion, investment in infrastructure and road facilities, along with community involvement and effective marketing strategies is very important for the sustainable development of tourism in the Florida Baths, while maintaining environmental and social sustainability).

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Introduction

Langkat Regency, North Sumatra Province, is an area rich in tourism potential. With an area of 6,273 km² and a population of around 1,078 million people, this area offers various interesting destinations, one of which is the Florida Baths. Located in Namukur Village, Sei Bingai District, this bath attracts visitors with its beautiful natural charm, characterized by lush trees and clear rivers. This natural beauty makes it a favorite choice for local and surrounding communities for recreation and relief, especially during weekends and holiday season.

The main attraction of the Florida Baths lies in the characteristics of its fresh and natural water, which invites visitors to soak and enjoy the peaceful atmosphere. Basic facilities such as rest areas and small stalls that sell food and soft drinks also support the comfort of visitors. In addition, the affordable entrance ticket price, only Rp 10,000 per person, and the relatively easy-to-reach location from major cities such as Medan (about 1 hour) and Binjai (about 30 minutes), adds to its attractiveness as a popular natural tourist destination. Tourism growth is currently one of the mainstays of the national economy (Faried,2023).

However, behind that great potential, Florida Baths face a significant obstacle that hinders its attractiveness, namely accessibility issues. The road infrastructure to the location is still very limited and inadequate. Currently, the main road from the center of Sei Bingai District is still mostly in the form of a rocky dirt road with an average width of only 2 meters. This condition causes inconvenience and risk for visitors, especially for those who use private vehicles.

Data from the Langkat Regency Public Works Office (2024) confirms this infrastructure problem. From the total length of the 10 km road to the Florida Bath, only 35% are in good condition. Most of the roads, which is 42%, are in moderate condition, while the remaining 23% are in bad condition (18% slightly damaged and 5% severely damaged). Such road conditions directly affect the comfort and safety of tourists' travel, potentially reducing the interest of tourists to return.

In addition to the physical condition of the road, the lack of clear direction signs and clear information along the route is also an important problem. This often causes confusion for tourists, especially those who come from outside the region and are not familiar with the local route. Lack of adequate information can divert potential visitors to other destinations that are more accessible and have better guidance (Faried,2023).

Natural factors also worsen accessibility problems. During the rainy season, the condition of the rocky dirt road becomes very slippery and difficult to pass, even has the potential to cause the vehicle to sink. The threat of flooding at some points can also cut off access to tourist locations, causing temporary closures and losses for local managers and business actors. This challenge shows that increasing accessibility requires not only physical intervention but also consideration of environmental factors.

The consequences of this poor accessibility are very visible on the number of tourist visits and the local economy. Difficulties in reaching the location, long travel times, and inconvenience have the potential to reduce tourist interest, which in turn reduces revenue from the tourism sector. This has a direct impact on small businesses that depend on tourist visits, hindering investment, and creating a negative cycle that hinders economic growth and tourism development in Namukur Village as a whole.

However, tourist visit data to the Florida Baths shows a fluctuating trend but tends to increase from 2020 to 2024. This increase reflects the intrinsic appeal of the strong Florida Baths. In line with that, local community income from various types of tourism-related businesses also experienced a significant increase from 2020 and 2024, with a percentage increase of 83.3% to 105.9%. This shows that with increased accessibility, the economic potential that can be explored is much greater.

Given the important role of the tourism sector in the regional economy and the welfare of local communities, accessibility optimization is the key to maximizing the attractiveness of Florida Baths. The increase in road access and other supporting infrastructure is expected to not only increase the number of visitors but also to have a sustainable positive impact on the local community economy.

Therefore, this research focuses on "Optimizing Accessibility to Increase Tourist Attraction in Florida Baths in Namukur Village, Sei Bingai District, Langkat Regency". This research aims to deeply analyze existing accessibility barriers, evaluate their impact on tourism attraction and local economy, and formulate concrete and sustainable strategies to increase accessibility. Hopefully, the results of this research can provide new insights and practical recommendations for local governments and related stakeholders in an effort to develop Florida Baths as a more attractive, comfortable, and sustainable tourist destination..

Method

Research Approach

This research uses a qualitative descriptive approach that aims to describe empirical phenomena or facts that occur in the field in detail and thoroughly by using various data collection methods such as in-depth interviews and questionnaires. This research is a case study that focuses on the analysis of the role of accessibility in infrastructure development in Florida Bath, Namukur Village, Langkat Regency. With this approach, researchers can collect in-depth data on how the role of accessibility in infrastructure development.

Population and Sample

(Ismiyanto, 2003) Population is all subjects or totality of research subjects which can be in the form of people, objects or things that can be obtained and can provide research information (data). The population in this study includes the entire community and visitors to the Florida Bath in Namukur Village, which acts as a tour guide. Although the number of the population is unknown, this population

consists of various individuals who have a direct relationship with tourism activities in the Florida Baths, including tour guides, tourists, and local communities involved in the management of the location.

Sugiono (2019) sample is part of the number and characteristics owned by the population. If the population is large, and the researcher is unable to study everything in the population, for example due to limited funds, energy and time, the researcher uses samples taken from the population. In this study, the researcher uses the purposive sampling technique, Purposive sampling is a type of non-probability sampling where the researcher chooses a sample based on certain criteria that are relevant to the research objectives. In this method, the researcher actively chooses an individual or object that is considered to have the necessary information. The selected informant must meet several criteria. The number of 5 informants is selected based on the principle of data saturation, where data collection is stopped when no significant new information is obtained from additional informants, and the pattern that appears is consistent. The sample from this study is part of the overall object that is considered to represent the entire population.

Data Collection Technique

Interview

In this research, the technique used is a semi-structured interview. A semi-structured interview is an interview process that uses interview guidelines derived from topic development and asking questions with a more flexible use. The interview was conducted by asking the informant directly to dig and obtain information related to the required data, especially regarding the accessibility conditions, facilities, and attractiveness of the Florida Bath. To ensure the accuracy and credibility of the data, the member checking technique will be applied, where the interview findings will be confirmed again with the informant.

Field Observation

The observation process in this study took place without participation, where the researchers came directly to visit the research site and observe the condition of the Florida Baths, road infrastructure, supporting facilities, and the interaction of the community and tourists. This observation aims to get a real picture of the activities, events, objects, conditions, and atmosphere in the Florida Baths, as well as to find supporting findings that can strengthen the interview results.

Dokumentasi Documentation

The documentation in this research is carried out by recording (audio/video recording) of the interview process which is then transcribed into the research data record. The documentation also includes a collection of photos of activities and conditions in the Florida Baths. These photos and documents will be used as observation materials to understand the research object more deeply, as well as references to obtain data about the general geographical location of Namukur Village, population, and community activities around tourist attractions.

The data analysis technique carried out in this study is to investigate the first problem, using a descriptive approach with the aim of explaining the development of internal and external infrastructure towards the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats faced by the Florida Bath. Descriptive research is a type of research that uses situations, phenomena, and problems in an area, which is then used as a basis for analysis to reach a conclusion. In this study, a descriptive method is used to reduce individual factors and decision making. Furthermore, infrastructure development strategies are formulated using SWOT analysis to produce several tactical alternatives.

Results and Discussion

The discussion of the results of this research presents accessibility to increase the tourist attraction carried out in Namukur Village, Sei Bingai District, Langkat Regency. Data obtained through interviews with informants including visiting tourists and tour guides at the Florida Baths. This research involved five respondents with diverse backgrounds, which provided valuable insights into accessibility to increase tourist attractions in the Florida Baths in Namukur Village, Sei Bingai District, Langkat Regency. Here are the five respondents which are:

Mardika Andre Sembiring is a person who plays a role as a tour guide in the Florida Baths at the age of 30, she explained about the accessibility of the Florida Baths focusing on the importance of increasing tourist attraction through infrastructure improvements. This includes the aspect of making access easier for visitors with various backgrounds, so that it can improve the tourist experience.

Lia Sembiring is a 35-year-old business actor in the Florida Bath, giving suggestions and ideas for improvements that can be done to make the Florida Bath more attractive and comfortable for all visitors.

Rezita Naimunisa who plays the role of a tourist in the Florida bath at the age of 32. He said about the infrastructure such as the road to the Florida bath and the parking area need to be improved to make it more convenient for visitors.

Nadine who plays the role of a tourist at the Florida Bath at the age of 18. He suggested the addition of clear information center facilities, as well as supporting activities such as interesting photo spots.

Randu who plays the role of a tourist in the Florida Bath at the age of 19. He conveyed about the quality of the road with asphalt repair and the addition of a larger lane to facilitate vehicle access.

Table 1. SWOT Analysis of Tourist Attractions in Namukur Village, Sei Bingai Subdistrict, Langkat Regency

No	Analisis SWOT	Aspek	Keterangan
1.	Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Local community support · Natural beauty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Local communities that support tourism development and are willing to participate in the promotion · A bathing place surrounded by attractive scenery and a quiet atmosphere, which can attract visitors.
2.	Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Limited facilities · Lack of promotion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Limitations in the play area, or other services that can reduce the comfort of visitors. · The lack of marketing efforts that make bathing less known among tourists outside Namukur Village.
3.	Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Cooperation with the government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Opportunity to establish closer cooperation with tourism with private parties to improve infrastructure.
4.	Threats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Competition from other destinations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · The emergence of new tourist attractions that are more interesting around that can divert visitors.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The content of the conclusions is the formulation of answers to the objectives of the study, not the summary of the results of the study. Conclusions made in concise, clear and robust based on the results and discussion (maximum 1 page), made in the form of paragraphs (not numerical), contains the findings of the study as a synthesis of the results of data analysis and the results of discussions. More highlight the things that are new contributions to the development of health sciences. The thing to note is the consistency triangle (problem-goal-conclusion must be consistent).

Suggestion for further research to cover the lack of research. Not load beyond implications for further research. Recommendations are made concise, clear and concise, and made in the form of paragraphs (not numeric).

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