

## The Socio-Cultural Role of the Batak Community in the Development of Lake Toba Tourism

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### Abstract

*This study aims to explore and analyze the social and cultural role of the Batak community in building and developing Lake Toba tourism in Samosir Regency. As a beautiful island inhabited by the Toba Batak ethnicity, Lake Toba not only has beautiful natural scenery, but also has culture and local wisdom that can attract tourists to learn about it. This research is qualitative research that describes the socio-cultural descriptive of the Toba Batak people. Data was collected through observation, interviews, as well as document searches and previous research results. The analysis was done descriptively. The results of the study are that social and cultural have a very important role in the process of developing Lake Toba tourism. We can see the interaction of the Toba Batak Tribe based on the social motives that make people successful, namely the achievement motive, the motive for power and the motive for friendship. In the daily life of the Batak people, they provide services for local and foreign tourists. Toba Batak culture which has life guide values such as hagabeon, hamoraon and hasangapan can be used as a daily habit in providing tourism services to tourists. The role of the local government also has a very important role to provide direction and socialization for the local community or tourism business actors to promote the cultural values of the Toba Batak to tourists so that tourists are interested in coming back to Parapat City to display good and interesting cultural tourism attractions.*

### Keywords

social; culture; lake toba; Batak tribe



### I. Introduction

The current tourism problem is not only the lack of potential development of tourism objects but also the lack of the ability of local communities to participate in tourism development in their area. Even today, it is undeniable that tourism is an important opportunity for economic development and improving the living standards of people in developing countries. (Marsdenia, 2022) argues that tourism has a role in improving and developing the community's economy. In addition to the economic aspect, tourism development also needs to pay attention to the preservation of nature and the local community. (Harianja et al., 2021). Based on the principles of sustainable tourism development, the government has proposed a tourism development planning strategy for the region that is oriented towards community empowerment, by prioritizing the role and participation of the local community, known as tourism development. community based (CBT) (Amerta, 2019; Komunikasi et al., 2022; Triristina & Pujiyanti, n.d.).

(Dewi, 2013; Suryono et al., 2015) argues that the principle of the concept of community-based tourism is one of the important ideas for developing modern tourism based on the uniqueness of the local community. This means that the main driver of tourism activities is the resources and uniqueness of the local community, both physical and immaterial (traditional or cultural). Therefore, tourism should be viewed as a local community-based activity, otherwise known as community-based local wisdom.

Today, due to the wear and tear of popular culture brought about by global capitalism, the attractiveness of a place becomes important in attracting tourists to tourist spots. Globalization is responsible for the revival of indigenous cultures around the world (Sahnan et al., 2020; Suryaningsih, 2018). Many tourist attractions packed with local resources and local wisdom have become famous and encourage visitors to return to these places, such as Yogyakarta, Tanah Toraja, Bali, etc. in Indonesia. Indonesia is an archipelagic country with cultural potential that stretches throughout the Indonesian archipelago. Given its cultural diversity, Indonesia should be able to take advantage of these opportunities to develop socio-cultural-based tourism.

The development of Balinese tourism based on culture and local wisdom has proven to be successful in attracting tourists to Bali (Hilman & Aziz, 2019; Rosalia, 2022). The increasing number of tourists every year is proof of that. According to BPS data, the number of tourists to Bali reached 4,927,937 arrivals in 2016, an increase of 23.14% compared to the same period last year. The ability and ability of the Balinese people to combine local wisdom and culture is reflected in the life of the Balinese people which is the main attraction for tourists. The role of culture in Balinese society is indeed very strong. The power of religion and culture is equally strong integrated into every aspect of people's lives, becoming an inspiration for tourist attractions. Balinese culture is very decisive and has a very important influence on the success of the tourism industry. This finding support Tourism is an industrial sector which is currently got a lot of attention from many countries in the world (Nasution, 2021). The tourism sector has become one of the leading sectors in various countries in the world, including Indonesia as one of the prima donna for foreign exchange earners (Hakim, 2021). Tourism is an industrial sector which is currently got a lot of attention from many countries in the world (Sinulingga, 2021). All visitors can experience firsthand the daily Balinese cultural practices/customs from the Balinese family, community, and government. Implementing a consistent and sustainable culture is a shared responsibility (Siregar et al., 2018; Sulistyadi et al., 2019; Sumiarsa et al., 2022).

Culture is a learning model, a group relationship in which language, nonverbal behavior, values, belief systems, and behaviors are perceived (Setiawan & Kurniawan, 2021). Culture is indeed diverse, but this study discusses the Toba Batak culture. Batak Toba is a small part of the urban Parapat tribe with traditions passed down from generation to generation, turning traditions into a philosophy of life, a unique cultural identity (how to say it) and carrying many cultural values such as hamoraon, hagabeon and ha Sangabon

Toba Batak cultural values as philosophy and life force, such as Hamoraon, Hagabeon and Hasangapon, mean that Toba Bataks must work hard to succeed, and that all clans lead prosperous and noble lives. Until now, the three cultural values practiced by the Toba Batak have a positive impact on the existence of the Toba Batak (Rajagukguk & Sofianto, 2019). So how to implement the cultural values of the Toba Batak tribe in tourism? The application of Batak Toba cultural values will have a positive impact on the tourism industry, namely hamoraon (Batak Toba people will try to develop the tourism business to become rich and live), hagabeon (Batak Toba people). help grow the business) (Lokal et al., 2018). Tourism has been operating for many years) and hasangapon (Batak Toba will make tourism the best place to serve visitors).

This attracted the attention of the author to examine the extent of the socio-cultural role of the Batak community in the development and development of tourism in Lake Toba, Samosir Regency. As a beautiful island inhabited by the Toba Batak tribe, Lake Toba not only has beautiful natural scenery but also culture and local wisdom that can attract tourists. Therefore, this paper aims to understand and analyze the socio-cultural role of the Batak community in the formation and development of tourism in Lake Toba, Samosir.

## **II. Research Method**

This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach to describe the local wisdom of the Toba Batak community that can be used to support tourism development in Samosir Regency. The scope of this research is limited to intangible local wisdom (values, advice, kidung) that grows and develops in the Toba Batak community, but has begun to fade with the times. The study was conducted on the Toba Batak community in Samosir Regency. Data collection was carried out by tracing documents including books on Doba Batak, history of Doba Batak, results of previous research and journals, interviews with traditional leaders, community teachers and arts and culture or Batak A literature school, and observations or observations on people's lives. Batak people in Toba, Samosir Regency. The data obtained will be carried out with a qualitative descriptive analysis, describing intangible local wisdom that develops in the community and can support tourism.

## **III. Discussion**

### **3.1 Toba Batak Community Social Factors**

Collecting secondary data obtained through observational analysis of social interactions in the Toba Batak community. The Toba Batak tribe is the most famous Batak tribe among other tribes. We can see that the interaction of the Toba Batak tribe is based on the social motives that make people successful, namely the achievement motive, the power motive and the friendship motive. In the daily life of the Batak people, they serve local and foreign tourists. However, if tourists stay for a long time, they tend to see tourists as brothers who can do anything on their own and show their true colors. However, as tour operators, they forget to treat tourists with a friendly attitude, treat tourists as celebrities, often pay less attention to these tourists, and tend to think tourists can take the goods they want to buy or consume. Not providing the best merchandise/products for tourists (if local tourists protest then business actors tend to increase the number of tourists who have the potential to disturb) and lack of expectations of business actors in preventing tourists from being disappointed, such as maintaining cleanliness, maintaining the mood and being willing to listen to tourists' wishes. The Toba Batak philosophy of life is called Hasangapon, and the Batak people practice it only for relatives, not tourists.

In everyday life, the Toba Batak people are known for their hardworking nature, and will do anything to earn money and eat. In the author's observations, the water in Lake Toba has changed color (not clear anymore), the water in Lake Toba previously could be drunk by the local community, and animal feed and many sacks containing fish carcasses were sunk into Lake Toba. Due to the decline in tourism income, local residents have started entrepreneurship namely fish farming in Lake Toba, even the locals have partnered with large companies to engage in a large number of animal feed businesses for profit. The locals can make a decent profit, but they forget to protect Lake Toba (one of the reasons for the lack of tourists). The attitude and behavior of the local community is not good. From this it can be seen that the role of the local community as business actors in protecting the natural environment of Lake Toba is very small. The role of the local community in this situation is

very important, the local community must keep the waters of Lake Toba clean and beautiful and cooperate with the local government, if the community knows there is a problem that can damage Lake Toba, the local community can report it to the local community. government protest. Furthermore, the local community does not question the government's work in Lake Toba tourism (the government places great emphasis on listing Lake Toba as 10 tourist destinations in the 2020-2024 RPJMN document) and has no hope. Tobatak's attitude towards increasing Lake Toba tourism.

### **3.2 Cultural Factors of the Toba Batak Society**

Culture is the result of life experiences, habits, and the selection process (acceptance or rejection) of existing norms in the way he interacts with society or places himself in a certain environment. Culture plays an important role in increasing tourism in an area. The intensity of the culture of an area will be a feature that distinguishes an area from other regions. Toba Batak culture is so strong that it is used as a guide in everyday life. The values of the Toba Batak Code of Life are hagabeon, hamoraon and hasangapon.

Hagabeon means many children and many grandchildren. It is known that the Batak people see descendants as the most important asset to inherit their family name. In the past, the Batak people believed that the more children, the more dynamic and stronger the family, which would surely bring wealth. Today, Batak people believe that children are very important descendants, and parents work hard for the success of their children, because the success of offspring will bring a good name to the family. Hamoraon is an honor and an honor, this shows that the purpose of life for the Batak people is to achieve a prosperous life. In order to realize the welfare of the community, it is necessary to improve the quality of tourism by increasing the number of local and foreign tourists.

To do this, the public and tour operators must meet the needs of tourists without harming them. Hasangapon means glory and honor (with high social status). In Batak culture, this is used as a basis for respecting and appreciating other people and upholding cultural values, especially in brotherly relationships. Of course, this does not mean that the Batak people can do whatever they want, or that they can be called "crazy people". Everyone wants to be respected and appreciated. The value of hasangapon comes from the king who is always respected. This has an impact on how they are served in the tourism sector. The Batak still believe that tourists are targeted simply by buying goods or using their services to fulfill their needs. Batak people do not see tourists as "kings" and tourists must be able to meet their needs appropriately and politely.

One of the unique things that makes Lake Toba different from everyday people's lives is its culture. The culture of the Batak people has its own characteristics that are passed down from generation to generation and become an inseparable unit of religion, tradition, culture and social norms. The travel agency is less than optimal in providing tourism services, this can be seen from the results of interviews that not all tourists have applied the 3S attitude culture (smiles, greetings and greetings) to tourists, and operator behavior has not been maximized. change. To meet the needs of tourists, the appearance of tourism business actors is still good, because they always dress neatly, clean and smell good, tourists improve the ability to communicate friendly with tourists, improve English soft skills, and motivate employees to provide good service. service but have English communication skills need to be improved, but there are still some software applications that don't exist. Commercial actors have done a good job of paying attention to tourists, paying attention to tourists, listening to tourists' suggestions and criticisms, and understanding tourists' needs. However, there are still irresponsible travel agencies that make tourists lose money.



### **3.3 The Socio-Cultural Role of the Batak Community in Tourism Development**

Toba Batak culture which has life-guided values, such as hagabeon, hamoraon and hasangapon, can be used as a daily habit to provide tourist services for tourists. However, in providing satisfactory services to tourists, it is necessary to uphold the value of living standards and pay attention to the attitudes, concerns, actions and expectations of the tour operators in order to provide quality services in the development of Parapadaba Lake tourism. The value of the Hagabeoan guide is to treat tourists well, hope tourists are satisfied, and be able to recommend services to other friends. The value of a hamoraon guide is to make tourists a valuable asset who must serve and prosper tourists. The guiding values of hasangapon are respecting and appreciating tourists, treating tourists as brothers, and maintaining cultural values.

The role of the local government has a very important role in providing guidance and socialization to the surrounding community or tourism business actors to educate tourists about the cultural values of the Toba Batak and make tourists interested in returning to display good and interesting cultural tourism attractions. In addition, the Toba Batak culture can increase customer satisfaction in areas where tourists are located. In addition, the 3H culture (hamoraon, hasangapon and hagabeon) is considered a very good philosophy of life for the Toba Batak people to become a successful Toba Batak community, but this culture is considered a philosophy of life for the Toba Batak people is not considered suitable to provide excellent services. good. Tourism as a culture has undergone modernization, causing the Toba Batak people to be oriented towards material values and forget the concept of tourism that guests (tourists) are kings and must be served to satisfy them. Communities that attract tourists back must emphasize maintaining the original Toba Batak culture, such as maintaining the culture of parhobas (culture of service), maintaining the natural beauty of Lake Toba (not destroying Lake Toba with fish, livestock and deforestation), the hope of tourists to interact directly with the Batak community. Toba (it turns out that many Toba Batak people today tend to be individualistic, while the Toba Batak people are less friendly as business people and the local community).

The beauty of Lake Toba comes from geological conditions, inherent indigenous culture and biodiversity. This 3H culture has the opportunity to bring tourists back to Lake Toba if it is accompanied by the Toba Batak parhobas culture known as Dalihan Na Tolu (where tourists can see how easy it is to mingle with the uniqueness of Toba Batak culture) tourism, chat, friendly, and away from the essence of culture Toba Batak). individualism, still highlight the original culture of the Toba Batak). Modernization can be created in the world of tourism while maintaining the original Toba Batak culture. If the Toba Batak people who become entrepreneurs tend to be materialistic and do not prioritize the culture of serving tourists, then this 3H culture will hinder the development of tourism in Lake Toba Parapat.

## **IV. Conclusion**

In conclusion, it can be concluded that society and culture play a very important role in the development of Lake Toba tourism. We can see that the interaction of the Toba Batak tribe is based on the social motives that make people successful, namely the achievement motive, the power motive and the friendship motive. In the daily life of the Batak people, they serve local and foreign tourists. Toba Batak culture which has life-guided values, such as hagabeon, hamoraon and hasangapan, can be used as a daily habit to provide tourist services for tourists. The role of the local government is also very important to provide direction and socialization to the surrounding community or tourism businesses, educate tourists about the cultural values of the Toba Batak and attract tourists back to Palapat City to show off its beauty. Beauty and peace of mind Interesting cultural attraction.

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