



ANALYSIS OF THE DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL OF BABURAI WATERFALL TOURISM OBJECT IN PADANG PARIAMAN REGENCY

ANALISIS PENGEMBANGAN POTENSI OBJEK WISATA AIR TERJUN BABURAI DI KABUPATEN PADANG PARIAMAN

Aldi Aditio Pratama¹, Osronita², Hary Febrianto³, Nina Ismayani⁴, Yudas Sabaggalet⁵, Desi Eka Putri⁶, Andri Yanto⁷

¹Geography Study Program, Faculty of Science, Technology and Education, Tamansiswa University, Email: Aldiaditioprata@gmail.com

²Geography Study Program, Faculty of Science, Technology and Education, Tamansiswa University, Email: osronita53@gmail.com

³Geography Study Program, Faculty of Science, Technology and Education, Tamansiswa University, Email: haryfebrianto@unitas-pdg.ac.id

⁴Geography Study Program, Faculty of Science, Technology and Education, Tamansiswa University, Email: nina7ismayani@gmail.com,

⁵Geography Study Program, Faculty of Science, Technology and Education, Tamansiswa University, Email: yudmen2022@gmail.com

⁶Geography Education Study Program, Faculty of Science, Technology and Education, Pesisir Selatan Education College, Email : andriyanto@stkip-pessel.ac.id

⁷Geography Education Study Program, Faculty of Science, Technology and Education, Pesisir Selatan Education College, Email: putridesi44@gmail.com

*email Koresponden:

haryfebrianto@unitas-pdg.ac.id

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Abstract

Baburai Waterfall, located in Padang Pariaman Regency, is one of the tourist attractions with tourism potential; however, in reality, this tourist attraction has not maximized the existing potential. This study aims to (1) describe the tourism potential of Baburai Waterfall in Padang Pariaman Regency and (2) formulate strategies for the development of the tourism potential of Baburai Waterfall in Padang Pariaman Regency. This research uses a qualitative type with a descriptive approach to detail and interpret the data. The results of the research conducted through field observation, interviews, and questionnaires found that there is a lack of good coordination among



managers, local government, and tourism departments, leading to limited accessibility to the waterfall, a lack of human resource development, and insufficient promotion regarding the Baburai Waterfall tourist attraction. The analytical technique used is the SWOT method to determine the sustainable development strategy for Kulukubuk waterfall tourism. Based on the results of the SWOT analysis, it is concluded that the development strategy for the Baburai waterfall tourism potential includes building cooperation with the government and the tourism office, improving accessibility, and enhancing the human resources of the Baburai waterfall tourism managers.

Keywords: Strategy, Tourism Development, Waterfall Touris

Abstrak

Air Terjun Baburai yang berada di kabupaten Padang Pariaman merupakan salah satu objek wisata yang memiliki potensi objek wisata namun, yang terjadi dilapangan objek wisata ini masih belum memaksimalkan potensi yang ada. Penelitian ini bertujuan (1) mendeskripsikan potensi wisata air terjun Baburai di kabupaten Padang Pariaman (2) merumuskan strategi dalam pengembangan potensi objek wisata air terjun Baburai di Kabupaten Padang Pariaman. Pada penelitian ini menggunakan jenis penelitian kualitatif dengan pendekatan deskriptif untuk menggambarkan dan menginterpretasikan data secara rinci. Hasil penelitian yang dilakukan secara observasi lapangan, wawancara dan kuisioner ditemukan bahwa tidak ada koordinasi yang baik antara pengelola, pemerintah daerah dan dinas pariwisata, sehingga kurangnya aksesibilitas menuju air terjun, tidak adanya pengembangan sdm dan kurangnya promosi mengenai objek wisata air terjun Baburai ini. Teknis analisis sata yang di gunakan yaitu metode SWOT untuk menentukan strategi pengembangan berkelanjutan wisata air terjun kulukubuk. Berdasarkan hasil analisis SWOT disimpulkan strategi pengembangan potensi wisata air terjun Baburai mencakup membangun kerja sama dengan pemerintah dan dinas pariwisata, peningkatan aksesibilitas dan peningkatan sdm pengelola wisata air terjun Baburai.

Kata Kunci: Strategi, Pengembangan Wisata, Wisata air Terjun.

1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is endowed with abundant natural resources and scenic beauty that serve as major attractions for tourists. The tourism sector has become a strategic and promising field for boosting both regional and national economies, creating job opportunities, and increasing local revenue as well as foreign exchange. Both the government and the community play crucial roles in developing tourist objects and attractions (ODTW), which serve as the main capital in drawing visitors (Pradikta, 2013).

West Sumatra Province, particularly Padang Pariaman Regency, holds rich natural and cultural tourism potential, including mountains, lakes, beaches, historical buildings, and deeply rooted traditions. Covering an area of approximately 1,328 km², Padang Pariaman utilizes its natural resources not only as a source of livelihood for its people but also as a growing tourism sector to enhance income and create new employment opportunities (Devy, 2017).

One of the natural tourist destinations in this area is Baburai Waterfall, located in Nagari Sikukur. The waterfall is renowned for its natural beauty, with its name symbolizing the flowing cascade of water. Officially opened in 2013, Baburai Waterfall has great potential as a water tourism destination. However, in recent years, the number of visitors has drastically declined due to limited promotion, inadequate facilities, difficult transportation access, and



suboptimal management.

Table 1. Number of Visitors to Baburai Waterfall, 2021–2024

| No | Year | Number of Tourists |
|----|------|--------------------|
| 1 | 2021 | 2.567 People |
| 2 | 2022 | 1.863 People |
| 3 | 2023 | 1. 108 People |
| 4 | 2024 | 1. 000 People |

Source: Central Statistics Agency of West Sumatra Province, 2025

Based on the table above, the statistics of visitors to Baburai Waterfall show yearly fluctuations, with inconsistent increases and decreases in numbers.

This study focuses on the development of Baburai Waterfall as a tourist destination in Padang Pariaman Regency, with the aim of identifying its tourism potential and formulating development strategies using SWOT analysis. Issues such as limited facilities, poor cleanliness, lack of signage, and inadequate promotion are the main challenges to be addressed so that the natural potential of this site can be maximized and attract more visitors. The objectives of this research are (1) to identify the tourism potential of Baburai Waterfall in Padang Pariaman Regency, and (2) to formulate strategies for its development.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

A. Type of Research

This study employs a qualitative descriptive method, which is based on post-positivist philosophy and is used to examine natural conditions (as opposed to experiments), where the researcher acts as the key instrument. Data sources were selected using purposive and snowball sampling techniques, with data collected through triangulation. Data analysis emphasizes meaning rather than generalization (Rukin, 2019). This method aims to describe the existence and current conditions of Baburai Waterfall as a tourism destination in Padang Pariaman Regency. It highlights the meaning and social phenomena related to the research object through a naturalistic approach (Devy, 2017).

B. Research Location

The research was conducted at Baburai Waterfall, located in Nagari Sikucur, V Koto Kampuang Dalam Subdistrict, which is well-known as a natural tourism destination that attracts both local and international visitors in Padang Pariaman Regency.

Figure 1. Map of Baburai Waterfall, Padang Pariaman Regency, 2025



C. Research Population and Sample

The population refers to the area that has specific quantities and characteristics, consisting of objects or subjects with both qualitative and quantitative attributes, which are then determined by the researcher to be studied and from which conclusions are drawn (Sugiyono, 2016). The population in this study is the Baburai Waterfall tourist attraction in Padang Pariaman Regency.

The sample in this study consists of 15 respondents: visitors (4 people), local residents (4 people), the youth leader (1 person), the village head (1 person), and staff from the Tourism and Creative Economy Office (5 people). The sampling technique used was purposive sampling (Sumargo, 2020).

D. Types and Sources of Data

This study uses two types of data:

- **Primary Data:** Data obtained directly from the first source or research site. The researcher collected primary data through interviews and closed questionnaires given to respondents, particularly visitors of Baburai Waterfall in Padang Pariaman Regency (Sugiyono, 2016).
- **Secondary Data:** Data obtained indirectly through other sources, such as documents or literature. These include journals and supporting documents relevant to the research topic.

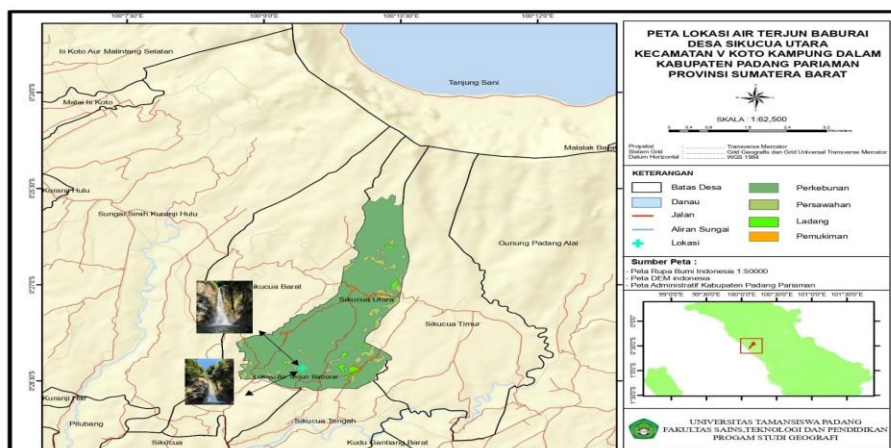
E. Data Collection Techniques

The data collection techniques used in this study include:

1. **Observation** – Direct field observations to understand the real conditions of tourists at Baburai Waterfall.
2. **Interviews** – Semi-structured interviews conducted with various stakeholders to obtain in-depth information (Ansori, 2020).
3. **Documentation** – The use of supporting materials such as records, photos, reports, and archives to provide additional evidence (Sugiyono, 2015).

F. Data Analysis Techniques

The data were analyzed using qualitative methods with the following steps: data reduction



(simplifying and focusing on relevant data), data presentation (narrative and systematic), and conclusion drawing. SWOT analysis was also applied to identify development strategies, focusing on internal (strengths and weaknesses) and external (opportunities and threats) factors.



- **Strengths:** natural beauty, friendly local community, proximity to the city center, availability of food stalls, and mystical legends.
- **Weaknesses:** inadequate facilities (toilets, parking, souvenir shops), ineffective promotion, weak government coordination, and limited community empowerment.
- **Opportunities:** potential for local/national recognition, job creation, and community income improvement.
- **Threats:** lack of support from the tourism office and unpreparedness of the community in tourism development.

G. Research Variables

The research variables include:

- **Potential:** conservation, education, economy, community empowerment.
- **Barriers:** accessibility, human resources, promotion, coordination.
- **Strategies:** accessibility, facilities, attractions, activities, accommodation.

H. Operational Definitions

- **Development:** strategic actions to enhance the attractiveness of Baburai Waterfall and increase the number of visitors.
- **Tourist Attraction:** regional characteristics in the form of natural or cultural beauty (Ridlwan, 2017).
- **Tourism:** travel undertaken for recreation to enjoy the beauty of Baburai Waterfall (Muawanah, 2013).
- **Waterfall:** the natural flow of water falling from rocky heights, creating unique lateral or vertical streams.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Identification of Baburai Waterfall Tourism Potential in Padang Pariaman Regency

The potential of Baburai Waterfall tourism can be identified using the 6A framework (Shinta, 2020):

1. Attraction

Baburai Waterfall is a natural tourism site, with its main attraction being its pristine beauty, clear flowing water, and refreshing atmosphere. The legend of the headless snake also adds mystical value, attracting tourists (Prihandoko, 2018). However, some visitors feel that its attractions are not significantly different from other waterfalls, which indicates the need for additional features. Development strategies may include installing ornaments such as swings for photo spots and creating adventure activities like hiking, cliff jumping, and rappelling, supported by safety facilities and lifeguards to ensure visitors feel secure, comfortable, and motivated to seek new experiences.



Figure 2. Visitors and the beauty of Baburai Waterfall, 2025

2. Accessible

Access to Baburai Waterfall is currently limited by unpaved roads and challenging terrain, making it difficult, especially for tourists without private vehicles, often discouraging them from visiting. The lack of public transportation is also a major obstacle. Development strategies suggest improving the road with asphalt or concrete, providing public transportation involving local residents as drivers, and building facilities such as motorcycle taxi stands or bus stops to improve accessibility. These improvements are expected to allow more tourists to enjoy the location more easily.



Figure 3. Road to the location, 2025

3. Facilities (Amenities)

Supporting facilities at Baburai Waterfall are very minimal, including the lack of toilets, changing rooms, prayer rooms, and clear signage—hence, visitors must rely on local residents for basic needs such as changing clothes or praying. The lack of trash cans also contributes to hygiene issues. The development strategy proposes providing essential facilities such as separate toilets for men and women, changing rooms, prayer rooms, and several trash can points with a waste sorting



system to maintain cleanliness and visitor comfort. Directional signs should also be made of sturdy materials and placed at several points for visitor convenience.



Figure 4. Simple directions to the location, 2025

4. Accommodation

There is no accommodation near the waterfall, so tourists from outside the area must return to the city center for overnight stays. The local village head emphasized the need for accommodation for out-of-town visitors. Development strategies include building simple lodgings by the management or opening a campsite and providing camping equipment so tourists can stay and enjoy the natural surroundings for longer.

5. Activity

Currently, tourism activities are limited to swimming, playing in the water, and taking photos with the natural scenery as a backdrop. These activities are considered to lack variety, causing visitors to quickly become bored and reluctant to return. Development strategies suggest the creation of new activities such as bicycle rentals with challenging routes, camping facilities around the river, and rappelling activities with photography facilities to capture the tourist experience, thus providing a unique experience and enriching the travel experience (Pradikta, 2018).

6. Management Institution (Ancillary)

The majority of Baburai Waterfall managers have a high school education and are still self-taught without specialized expertise in tourism management, resulting in suboptimal management of the tourist attraction. The village head stated the need for human resource development to enable professional management of the tourism potential. The development strategy encourages collaboration between managers, the local government, and the tourism office to provide training, workshops, seminars, and outreach to continuously improve management quality (Fahmi, 2014).



Detailed observations indicate that Baburai Waterfall's primary strengths lie in its pristine natural scenery, unique mystical stories surrounding the site, and the friendliness of the local community. However, significant weaknesses, such as difficult road access, limited management resources, inadequate facilities, and a lack of promotion, remain key obstacles. Opportunities stemming from the growing trend of nature tourism and the potential for abundant natural resources need to be exploited, while threats stem from competition with similar attractions, the risk of natural disasters, particularly landslides, and potential environmental pollution. These findings are formulated in a strategy focused on strengthening potential and meeting facility needs, as well as developing human resources and coordinating with stakeholders, to enhance tourism appeal and enhance management sustainability.

B. Development Strategy for Baburai Waterfall Tourism Potential in Padang Pariaman Regency Based on SWOT

Based on the 6A analysis (Attraction, Accessibility, Amenities, Accommodation, Activity, Ancillary) (Setiawan, 2023), Baburai Waterfall has several key strengths, including its beautiful natural scenery, refreshing atmosphere, and the hospitality of the local community, which provides good services to visitors. The mystical legend adds a unique attraction, and the location is relatively close to the city center. However, significant challenges include poor road access, lack of facilities and accommodation, limited management human resources, weak promotion, and limited activity variations, all of which reduce the site's appeal to potential tourists.

Opportunities lie in the growing trend of nature-based tourism and the increasing interest of tourists in visiting natural attractions and destinations with unique stories. Abundant local natural resources can also be utilized to further develop tourism and improve the welfare of local communities. On the other hand, threats come from competition with similar attractions in the region, natural disaster risks such as landslides during the rainy season, and potential environmental pollution caused by visitor negligence.

The development strategies formulated based on SWOT analysis include (Pradikta, 2018; Fahmi, 2014):

1. **SO Strategy (Strengths–Opportunities):** Maximize natural beauty and mystical stories to attract tourists, take advantage of the strategic location and free entry, and leverage the hospitality of the community to increase visitor interest.
2. **WO Strategy (Weaknesses–Opportunities):** Address main weaknesses by improving road infrastructure and facilities, providing public transportation, enhancing more effective promotion, developing professional human resources through training, and strengthening cooperation among stakeholders for sustainable tourism management.
3. **ST Strategy (Strengths–Threats):** Utilize natural beauty and community hospitality to face competition and environmental risks, increase tourist awareness of environmental conservation, and prevent pollution.



4. **WT Strategy (Weaknesses–Threats):** Reduce weaknesses in accessibility and facilities through improved promotion, enhance the quality of human resources to compete professionally, and ensure environmental preservation to prevent disasters and pollution.

Overall, these strategies provide a direction for development that is based on natural and cultural potential, addressing accessibility and facility constraints, improving management, and optimizing community and government participation to make Baburai Waterfall a sustainable flagship destination in Padang Pariaman Regency.

4. CONCLUSION

Baburai Waterfall has great potential as a nature-based tourism destination, supported by the growing trend of ecotourism, pristine natural resources in tropical forest environments, and policies allowing free entry, making it accessible to a wide range of visitors. However, its development is hindered by major obstacles, such as limited accessibility with steep and poorly maintained roads, insufficient human resources requiring training to improve professionalism and services, lack of promotion especially through digital media and partnerships, and ineffective coordination between managers, local governments, and the tourism office. These barriers limit the optimization of tourism potential and its economic impact on the local community.

SWOT-Based Tourism Development Strategies

1. Enhancing Promotion, Accessibility, and Facility Development

Expand promotion through social media, tourism websites, and collaboration with travel agencies to reach more visitors; continuously improve road access with paving and adequate transportation facilities to ensure safe and comfortable access; and develop supporting facilities such as parking areas, safe trekking paths, rest areas, and sanitation facilities to enhance the visitor experience.

2. Improving Professional Human Resources

Provide training and capacity development for managers and local communities to deliver friendly and professional services while maintaining cleanliness and environmental sustainability. Educating both the community and visitors about environmental awareness is also essential to prevent pollution and natural disasters.

3. Building Strategic Partnerships

Strengthen coordination and cooperation between managers, local government, the tourism office, and local communities for integrated destination development. Build networks with other attractions in the area to create complementary tourism packages, and seek policy and funding support from the government and private sector to strengthen facilities and promotion.

The implementation of these strategies is expected to overcome existing obstacles, maximize the natural potential of Baburai, and position the site as a leading sustainable destination that provides broad economic benefits for the people of Padang Pariaman.

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