



Analysis of the readiness and potential of Nias Island tourist destination

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ABSTRACT

Background: Nias Island has tourism potential that can be enjoyed by visiting tourists. This island is famous for hosting the World Surfing League (WSL). However, Nias Island is struggling with accessibility problems and facilities that are not up to standard, these problems need to be fixed to encourage tourist destinations on Nias Island. Therefore, this study aims to determine the potentials of Nias Island as a tourist destination and to provide solutions for Nias Island, especially in the areas of accessibility and facilities. **Methods:** This study uses a qualitative method. This study uses the observation method because it is in accordance with the events in the field. **Findings:** The results of this study are that Nias Island has a lot of tourism potential in the fields of nature, cultural heritage, and natural tourism products. **Conclusion:** There are several suggestions that can be made to improve the quality of tourist attractions on Nias Island in terms of accessibility (providing road signs) and facilities (improving cleanliness and maximizing existing facilities around tourist attractions). **Novelty/Originality of this Study:** The study on Nias Island's tourism potential is novel in its comprehensive approach to addressing both the island's untapped natural and cultural attractions and the critical issues of accessibility and facility deficiencies. By providing targeted solutions to improve road signs, cleanliness, and the overall quality of tourist facilities, this research offers practical steps to transform Nias Island into a competitive and sustainable tourist destination.

KEYWORDS: tourist development; intention to visit; destination image; cultural heritage; natural tourism product.

1. Introduction

Most people agree that tourism is a system of interconnected, interacting, and dependent components that have been conceptualized from various angles, including geographical, market, and stakeholder views (Glyptou, 2022). Tourism destinations are one of the largest and strongest sectors in the world economy. The tourism sector is one of the main drivers of the world economy because several advantages can provide substantial foreign exchange, expand employment opportunities and introduce the country's culture (Sabon et al., 2018). Based on Scott et al. (2019), tourism is a major global economic sector that has experienced incredible growth over the last 50 years. With

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strong projected growth in international tourist arrivals in developing countries, the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index (TTCI), and international development organizations position tourism as an important contributor to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) region is one of the regions in Asia because it has abundant wealth in tourism. The countries often the leading destinations for ASEAN tourism include Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, and the Philippines. Seeing this opportunity, one of the efforts made to encourage the growth of the tourism sector in ASEAN is the holding of the ASEAN Tourism Forum (ATF), which aims to make ASEAN the leading tourist destination (Sabon et al., 2018). Currently, in 2022, Indonesia has the highest tourism ranking in the ASEAN region. Following (Portal Informasi Indonesia, 2022) Indonesia is ranked first and surpasses the achievements of neighboring countries, including Thailand and Malaysia.

Indonesia is one of the largest archipelagic countries. Based on the Central Bureau of Statistics, the total area of Indonesia is 1,916,906 km², with a total of 16,766 islands spread from Sabang to Merauke. The Indonesian government's efforts to continue improving the Indonesian tourism sector show an increase in the number of local and foreign tourists visiting Indonesia (Table 1).

Table 1. The number of foreign and domestic tourist visits in Indonesia 2017-2020

Years	Foreign tourism	Local tourism
2017	14,039,799	270,822,003
2018	15,810,305	303,403,888
2019	16,106,954	722,158,733
2020	4,052,923	518,588,962
2021	1,557,530	Not published yet

(Badan Pusat Statistik, 2017-2020)

At the end of December 2019, China confirmed the existence of a new Coronavirus hit. To prevent the spread of this virus, the only step a country can take is to stop travel between and within countries. As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, many countries have imposed travel bans, closed borders, or introduced quarantines, and international and domestic tourism has decreased dramatically during this pandemic. The Indonesian statistical center agency noted that tourist visits in 2020 experienced a drastic decline, especially for foreign tourists, table 1.1. According to Sugihamretha (2020), the pressure on the tourism industry is obvious in the significant decline in foreign tourist arrivals, with massive cancellations and decreased bookings. According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), after the Covid-19 pandemic, in January 2022, international tourism resumed its recovery and was proven to be much better than in early 2021 (UNWTO, 2022). In addition, it was explained that international tourist arrivals more than doubled (+130%) compared to January 2021.

The Indonesian government, especially the ministry of tourism and the creative economy, Sandiaga Uno, is intensively carrying out tourism development oriented towards regional development and includes several aspects, such as human resources, marketing, destinations, science, and technology, etc. (Badan Pemeriksa Keuangan, 2021). Through that, the government needs to consider improving facilities, infrastructure, and innovations in tourism (Kusuma, 2019). In addition, the Indonesian government has made efforts to introduce tourism to the world, namely the Wonderful Indonesia brand. The Wonderful Indonesia brand was first launched in 2011. In its first launch, Indonesia focused on promoting overseas and targeting 16 countries and regions (Satrio, 2021). Nowadays, destination branding has become the hallmark of the Indonesian state in attracting foreign and local tourists. As evidenced by the success of the Wonderful Indonesia brand, Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy Sandiaga Uno stated that Indonesia is currently ranked 32nd, up 12 from 117 countries in the Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index (TTCI) 2021. This is based on data released by the World Economy Forum in May 2022 (PWC Indonesia, 2022). Wonderful Indonesia will continue to be

promoted through online and electronic media, which will spread to domestic and international markets.

With its abundant landscape, Indonesia provides opportunities for the Indonesian government to utilize natural resources and improve the economy of Indonesian citizens. Various provinces in Indonesia present tourist attractions that attract local and foreign tourists. North Sumatra is one of the tourist areas with an increasing trend of foreign tourist visits. When compared to last year, during the January-July 2022 period, the number of foreign tourists visiting North Sumatra reached 17,049 visits, the number of tourists increased by 26,750% compared to the number of foreign tourists in 2021 (IDXChannel, 2022). North Sumatra is one of the provinces in Indonesia that presents the charm of natural resources that has succeeded in attracting local and foreign tourists. Based on the (BPS, 2022) for the July 2022 period, the number of foreign tourists visiting North Sumatra has increased by 26,750.00 percent compared to the same period in 2021, from 28 visits in July 2021 to 7,518 visits in July 2022 (Figure 1).

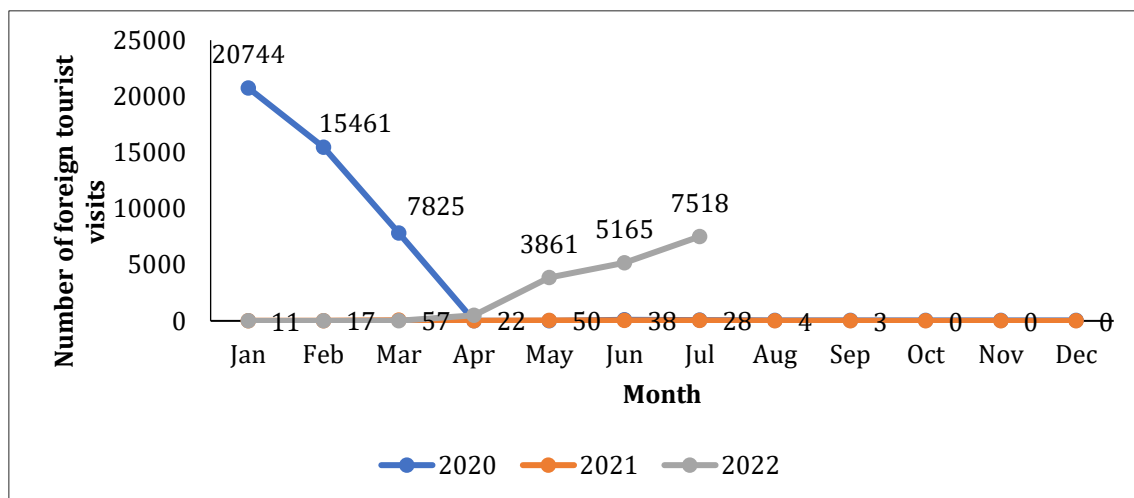


Fig.1. The development of the number of foreign tourist visits to North Sumatra 2020 - 2022 (Badan Pusat Statistika, 2020-2022)

Cited by Sekretariat Kabinet Republik Indonesia (2022), several tourist villages in North Sumatra Province have successfully entered the category of the best tourist villages in Indonesia, which were organized by the Minister of Creative Economy Tourism in the 2022 Tourism Village Award (ADWI). In the Cleanliness, Health, Safety, and Environment Sustainability (CHSE) category, namely the Tourism Village of Kampung Warna Warni Tigarihit, Simalungun Regency, North Sumatra. The creative digital category is Buluh Duri Tourism Village, Serdang Bedagai Regency, North Sumatra. The homestay category is Hilisimaetano Tourism Village, South Nias Regency, North Sumatra. Finally, the most favorite tourist village is Buluh Duri Tourism Village, Serdang Bedagai Regency, North Sumatra.

Nias Island is one of the islands in North Sumatra Province, which has a natural charm that is no less beautiful than other areas—located in the western part of Indonesia with Gunungsitoli as a municipality. Surrounded by the ocean, it has natural tourist destinations such as beautiful beaches and high waves, which can be used for surfing attractions. Nias Island, with an area of 5,121 km², has a length of about 120 kilometers and a width of 45 kilometers. Besides being surrounded by beaches, Nias Island has mountains that reach 885 meters high. Nias Island seems to be covered by forest when viewed from the air. Some dominant plants include cocoa and rubber trees, while coconut palm trees dominate along the coast. With the existing natural resources, most of the people of Nias have a livelihood in agriculture, especially harvesting rubber, coconut, and rice farming. Communities along the coast mostly make a living from fishing. In addition to geographical conditions, the social condition of the people on Nias Island is very high, as

evidenced by the preservation of customs and culture, so that various historical relics such as megalithic stones, traditional houses, dances, and so on are still visible. The custom is unique, namely stone jumping (Hombo Batu). It is very famous from Nias Island, formerly this stone jumping was done as a ceremony for youth to be accepted as adults and become a soldier.

Nias Island has many natural resources, which can be a potential for the community or the government to continue developing existing tourism to attract local and foreign tourists. Nias Island is one of Indonesia's best beaches with challenging waves and has been recognized worldwide. Quoted from (CNN Indonesia, 2022), Sorake Beach is one of the beaches in South Nias with high waves, it's no wonder that Sorake Beach is hosting the World Surf League (WSL) Nias Pro 2022. In this event, the best surfers from all over the world participated to show what they have.

Besides that the government's efforts to continue to develop Nias Island so it can compete with other tourist islands can be seen from the efforts made, such as holding the annual event "Pesta Yaahowu." This event is held in various tourist spots on Nias Island and lasts one month. This event aims to introduce Nias Island to Indonesia and abroad, usually attended by local and foreign tourists. Later, tourists will be treated to various cultural attractions of Nias Island.

Areas used as tourist attractions and cultural heritage tourism have an attraction and influence the intention of visiting tourists, both local and foreign tourists. Cultural heritage tourism refers to places that reflect traditions, art forms, celebrations, and people. According to Chung et al. (2018), cultural heritage tourism is one of the most popular tourist destinations worldwide. Tourists who visit cultural heritage sites have a desire to learn about other people's cultures. Cultural heritage tourism provides various lessons and values that are useful for the current generation based on stories that happened in the past (Fang and Ariffin, 2021).

Every tourist who wants to visit a place will certainly consider the cultural heritage and destination image that the area has. Some tourists will visit tourist islands to carry out their responsibilities and do not feel comfortable there. Therefore, it is important to know the potential of Nias Island as a tourist destination. So to achieve more tourist visits on Nias Island, research is needed so that existing tourist objects can be improved through these indicators. The purpose of this research is to determine the possibilities that Nias Island has in regards to establishing a tourism destination. Meanwhile, the following are tourist objects that can be enjoyed by tourists when visiting Nias Island, based on natural resources and tourism products.

1.1 Natural resource-based tourist attractions and tourism products on Nias Island

Nias Island has many tourist objects that come from nature. Because it is located and surrounded by the ocean, most tourism objects owned by Nias Island are related to the sea. One of the beaches on Nias Island, the beach with the best waves for surfing, is Sorake Beach. The world has recognized the height of the waves on this beach, making Nias Island the host of an international surfing competition or the World Surf League (WSL). In this prestigious competition, many reliable surfers from abroad come to Nias Island to participate.

Still about the sea, Nias Island also has a dead sea. This sea is in the northern part of Nias Island. Tourists can enjoy the sensation of floating on the water. This sea is also often dubbed the Dead Sea of Indonesia. In addition to the beauty of the ocean that stretches to attract tourists, Nias Island also has megalithic sites. Tourists who want to visit this island can simultaneously see and learn the history of Nias Island.

Nias Island has a variety of beautiful beaches characterized by transparent azure seas and pure white sandy coastlines. These beaches are ideal for engaging in activities like swimming, sunbathing, and a variety of water sports. Sorake Beach is renowned for its exceptional surfing conditions, which draw surfers from all over the world (Figure 2). The

inherent attractiveness and serenity of Nias beaches make them perfect locations for leisure and recreation.



Fig. 2. Beach on Nias Island
(Kementrian Pariwisata dan Ekonomi Kreatif, 2021)

Cultural heritage is managed as a dynamic resource that affects communities and society both now and in the future (Li et al., 2020). According to Panzera et al. (2021), the relationship between cultural heritage and tourism has been extensively analyzed in academic literature. Panzera et al. (2021) stated that, it has also been examined from a variety of perspectives and with a variety of analytical objectives. Heritage tourism has also been of growing interest to prominent global organizations. According to (Park et al., 2019), there are several factors have been identified as contributing to the demand for heritage-based tourism, including (i) an increase in cultural awareness, (ii) the ability to express individuality through an appreciation of historical environments or staged heritage, (iii) increased wealth, mobility, and access to the arts, (iv) the need to go beyond contemporary experiences in order to meet demands and insufficiencies, and (v) the need to satisfy psychological needs for continuity through an appreciation of personal family history.

Cultural heritage is divided into two aspects, namely, tangible heritage and intangible heritage. Quoted from Sdino et al. (2020), tangible heritage is a tangible collection of tangible heritage with a high materialistic level, such as monuments, galleries, landscapes, etc. In contrast, Intangible forms of heritage can instead be seen as either specific projects (e.g., festivals or events) or already alive type of heritage (e.g., values and traditions). Intangible heritage and the cultural environment can also be seen as "facilitators" of how tangible heritage affects tourism and regional economic development (Panzera et al., 2021).

The Stone Jump, also known as Hombo Batu (Figure 3), is an exclusive traditional sport practiced alone on Nias Island. This cultural tradition includes the participation of adolescent males who engage in the act of jumping over elevated stone formations, sometimes reaching heights of up to two meters. The Stone Jump is a multifaceted challenge that assesses not only one's physical prowess and nimbleness, but also serves as a ceremonial milestone and a showcase of courage. This is a notable cultural site that provides insight into the customary practices and legacy of the Nias people.

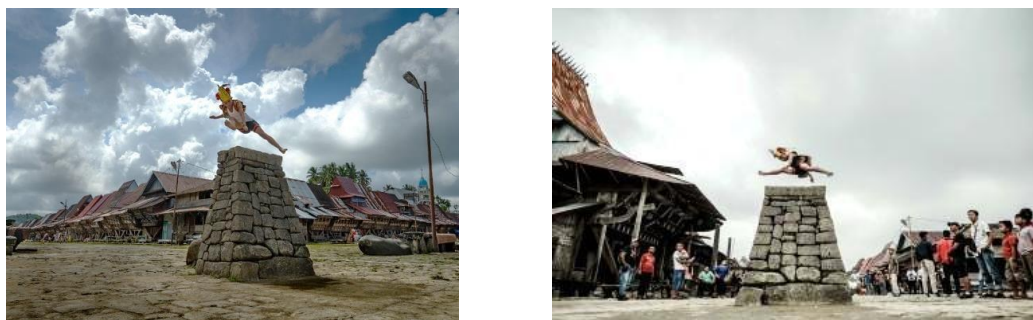


Fig. 3. Stone jump (Hombo Batu/ Fahombo)
(Kementrian Pariwisata dan Ekonomi Kreatif, 2021)

As for the tourist objects, which are cultural heritage found on Nias Island which can be visited by tourists, like the traditional house (Omo Hada), there are many cultural values contained in the traditional house, starting from the philosophy of the traditional house to the uses of all sides in the traditional house. Some people also still use buildings that are similar to traditional houses. Besides the traditional house, the traditional dance is usually called the Maena Dance, which is the main attraction of this island. This dance is usually used when you want to carry out traditional activities, weddings, etc.

Omo Hada, also known as traditional houses, are a prominent tourist attraction on Nias Island. The residences are constructed on stilts and showcase unique architectural styles decorated with elaborate carvings and patterns. These objects represent the rich cultural heritage and skillful artistry of the Nias people. By visiting these traditional houses, travelers may get insights into the local way of life, cultural customs, and architectural techniques that have been handed between centuries.

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Fig. 4. Traditional house (Omo Hada)
(Museum Pusaka Nias)

Muara Indah, which means "Beautiful Estuary," is a beautiful spot where rivers converge with the sea (Figure 5). This region provides wonderful scenery and is an excellent destination for enthusiasts of the natural world and photographers. Visitors have the opportunity to participate in boat trips, engage in fishing activities, and see the wide range of species that resides in the estuary. The quiet ambiance of Muara Indah offers an ideal escape for those in search of calm and the allure of nature.



Fig. 5. Muara Indah

The soccer fields on Nias Island function not only as venues for sports, but also as social hubs where both residents and tourists may interact and establish connections (Figure 6). Observing or engaging in a soccer match may be a vibrant and pleasurable experience, showcasing the island's community ethos and passion for the sport. These

fields often serve as venues for local competitions and matches, providing visitors with an opportunity to fully engage in local leisure activities.



Fig. 6. Soccer Field

Nias Island is known for its intricate wood carvings, which often depict local deities, ancestral figures, and scenes from traditional life (Figure 7). These carvings make for beautiful and meaningful keepsakes. Also, unique cultural experiences and souvenirs, such as handmade bags. These bags, crafted by local artisans, reflect the rich heritage and traditional craftsmanship of the island. The intricate designs and quality of the handmade bags not only offer tourists a tangible connection to Nias Island but also support the local economy by promoting traditional crafts.



Fig. 7. Creative Industries/ Souvenir Product
(Nias Satu)

1.2 Problem statement

The Nias Islands have abundances of tourism potential, especially nature and culture, but this island still has major problems that the local government needs to pay attention. Quoted (Kompas.com, 2018), the most important thing is accessibility. For example, Binaka airport is an airport on Nias Island. Only small planes can land at this airport, with only one runway from the nearest airport, Kualanamu airport Medan. This condition affects the access of tourists who want to visit Nias Island. In addition, the tourist attraction is less supportive. This happens because the tourist attraction has not been well organized and lacks supporting facilities. Despite the many efforts made by the Indonesian government to attract tourists to Nias Island, tourist's intentions to visit Nias Island are not as many as other tourist destination islands, such as Lake Toba, Bali, Labuan Bajo, Lombok, etc.

To achieve this, it is necessary to analyze the public's interest in visiting Nias Island by knowing the potential that exists on this island. This aims to find a solution so that Nias Island can attract tourists to visit as a tourist destination in the country and abroad. Therefore, researchers conducted this study. Below are several challenges that Nias Island faced in order to develop the tourist destination:

To get to Nias Island, tourists can take routes, including when tourists come from outside the island, they can use planes or ships. On Nias Island, tourists can use motorized vehicles to visit the desired tourist object. From the picture, several main road points on Nias Island still have potholes. Apart from the bad roads, the roads leading to tourist attractions also experience the same thing (Figure 8). This condition makes tourists visiting Nias Island not enjoy the trip and feel a bad experience when visiting tourist objects on Nias Island. This can also influence tourists to consider visiting Nias Island again.



Fig. 8. Accessibilities

Several facilities available at Nias Island tourist attractions still need improvement. One of the common problems that occur is the amount of garbage that is still strewn about tourist objects. This still occurs in several tourist objects that need to be supervised by the local government so that the environmental conditions in tourist objects are messy. This condition makes tourists who visit tourist attractions uncomfortable visiting tourist objects on Nias Island. Another thing that can reduce the intention of tourists to be able to return to tourist attractions on Nias Island is the inadequate quality of toilets; there are no water dippers and broken toilet doors. Apart from that, in several tourist objects on Nias Island, tourists can also find damaged facilities, such as beach gazebos. This can reduce the interest of tourists in visiting Nias Island again (Figure 9).



Fig. 9. Facilities

1.3 Tourist development and intention to visit a destination

Tourism development is an effort to develop or promote tourist objects, aiming to attract tourists to visit them (Warf, 2018). Furthermore, according to (Warf, 2018), the main reason for developing tourism in an area is to advance the economy of a region or country, especially for the people who live around tourist objects. According to (Suta and Mahagangga, 2018), tourism development that is managed sustainably can contribute to original regional income and can create jobs. In addition, tourism development also aims to protect and preserve culture and the environment and directly touch the local community.

In Indonesia, the government is more focused on encouraging sustainable tourism development. According to (Kementrian Pariwisata dan Ekonomi Kreatif, 2021), sustainable tourism is the development of the concept of tourism that has a long-term impact. Sustainable tourism can have environmental, social, cultural, and economic impacts on the present and the future for all local communities and visiting tourists.

Based on Hasan et al. (2018), intention is described as the opinion of another individual who is very important to someone and influences one's decision making. The researcher also explained that the impact of thinking about the decision to visit a place could be seen from the amount of individual enthusiasm to visit that place. In addition, according to Su et al. (2020), behavioral intention is the probability that a person will take a particular action or make a particular decision based on their attitude toward objects. The availability of resources significantly affects international tourists' decision to travel to a country (Seow et al., 2017).

In the context of tourism, the more strongly one intends to visit a location, and the more likely someone will be to visit it. Therefore understanding visit intention and how it affects tourists' behavior is important (Su et al., 2020). Tourism product is an important factor influencing the intention to visit a place. Tourism products are all facilities or services in the form of real or intangible that can be felt and can provide a good experience for tourists visiting an area (Safitri et al., 2020). Still, according to (Safitri et al., 2020), the function of tourism products is used by tourists as a reference in visiting a tourist object.

1.4 Destination image

Destination image emphasizes that image study aims to evaluate perceptions generated in visitors' perceptions and find particular image attributes that significantly impact how they perceive a destination (Lai et al., 2020). Since what sets one destination apart from another is important for sustainable development, the image is a significant component in the promotion of tourism destinations (Huete Alcocer and López Ruiz, 2020). Kanwel et al. (2019) stated that an individual's mental representation of their knowledge (beliefs), emotions, and general view of a particular destination is known as their destination image. Destination image has two important effects on behavior: it influences the decision-making process for choosing a destination and influences actions taken in the following, such as engagement (on-site experiences), evaluation (satisfaction), and intentions for future conduct (intention to revisit).

The destination image model, according to Molinillo et al. (2018), is built on two dimensions, namely the cognitive image and the affective image, which combined form the overall image. The thoughts and knowledge a person has about a destination and its characteristics are referred to as the cognitive aspect of the image, and these factors implement to help a person influence a mental image of the location (Afshardoost and Eshaghi, 2020). While according to Huete Alcocer & López Ruiz, (2020) the affective aspect of the image reveals how people are responding emotionally to a destination. There are several aspects of the destination image that will be discussed in this study:

Nias Island has natural attractions that are spread all over the island. To reach tourist objects on this island, tourists can use motorized vehicles. By using a vehicle alone, tourists can easily visit attractions of interest. Tourists who travel by motorized vehicle

will be presented with beautiful views, such as expanses of sea, etc. In addition, tourists from outside the region can use sea and air routes to visit Nias Island.

Tourists who want to visit a place need a temporary place to stay. Tourists who want to visit Nias Island to enjoy this island can rent a hotel. Various temporary residences can be used by tourists visiting Nias Island while resting tourists can also enjoy the panorama around the inn.

The people of Nias Island always introduce several tourist attractions to maintain and develop the existing culture. This is also very useful for tourists visiting Nias Island to know about and participate in preserving the culture so that it is maintained. One of the tourist attractions that has become the icon of Nias Island is stone jumping (Hombo Batu). Men only do this stone jump, and this shows a symbol of maturity, agility, and courage. Someone who succeeds in jumping over a 2 meter high rock will usually be held a simple thanksgiving event by slaughtering a chicken or other animal.

2. Methods

2.1 Research design and data collection method

This study uses a qualitative research method to explain the picture that occurs. According to (Sugiyono, 2016), the qualitative method is also often interpreted as a naturalistic research method because it is carried out in natural conditions; also interpreted as an ethnographic method; qualitative method because the data collected and the analysis is more qualitative. Data collection techniques are commonly used in collecting data using qualitative methods, namely, observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation.

Researchers used observation and documentation techniques in this study to collect the necessary data. Observation techniques are carried out by visiting the places that are the targets or targets that are targeted in this study. After observing the object, the researcher also uses documentation techniques, and this is a medium to strengthen this research. In qualitative research, data collection methods such as observation and documentation play crucial roles in understanding the depth and context of a given phenomenon. The writer takes detailed notes on the behaviors, actions, interactions, and events they observe. They may also use audio or video recordings to capture data more accurately. In addition, The writer takes or collects photos and videos, then analyzes them for relevant themes and details.

2.2.1 Observation and docutmentation

Observation is a data collection method in which researchers record or record information on what was witnessed in the field during the research process. During the data collection process, researchers visited several locations that were the targets of accessibility problems on Nias Island. In addition to observing accessibility, researchers also made observations of potential tourist objects on Nias Island which could attract tourists to visit this island.

Documentation is a record of events that have passed. In this study, researchers also used the documentation method. The use of this documentation method serves to strengthen and support the information obtained from the observation method. This study documents tourist objects and problems occurring on Nias Island.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 To determine potentials

Indonesia is an archipelagic country. According to Saksono (2013), Indonesia has a sea area reaching 3,257,357 km². Therefore, there is a lot of potential in Indonesia's

marine resources that can be utilized. These marine resources include marine life, flora, and fauna, ranging from microscopic organisms to macro-organisms, including fisheries, coastal wealth, mangroves, seaweed, tourism, energy, and mining. Most of the islands in Indonesia have undoubted marine wealth. Several areas make marine wealth a source of regional income by utilizing their marine products. Nias Island is one of the islands with potential marine resources that can be utilized.

There are many things to enjoy about Nias Island, especially the coast's natural resources. Because the sea surrounds it, many beach-themed tourist objects can attract tourists to this island. Tourists can enjoy the beautiful sunrise and sunset on the beach from this island. In addition, tourists who have hobbies such as surfing or diving can enjoy the good waves and the beautiful underwater world.

Nias Island has several times hosted an international surfing competitions. This can be one of the potentials that the government of Nias Island can utilize to attract local and foreign tourists to visit Nias Island. In addition to good waves for surfing locations, the beaches on Nias Island also have a beautiful underwater world that tourists can enjoy.

There is no need to doubt the charm of the beaches on Nias Island, but the local government and the community have yet to manage many beaches properly. In several beach spots that have the potential to be developed, many aspects still need to be improved, such as adequate facilities, including clean toilets, proper beach gazebos, and good road access, such as clear directions, etc.

Culture is one of the potentials that a region can utilize to improve its tourism sector. When talking about Indonesia, many cultural attractions visiting tourists can enjoy. Cultural attractions are a form of performance of works of art, customs, and procedures for unique religious ceremonies and also aim to convey value to visiting tourists. Several cultural attractions have been recognized by the world, originating from Indonesia. Just like other regions, Nias Island also has a cultural heritage that the community holds until now. This is one of the potentials the local government utilizes to attract tourists to visit Nias.

On Nias Island, there is one cultural attraction that is very prominent and has become an icon of Nias Island, namely stone jumping (Hombo Batu/Fahombo). This cultural attraction has become a heritage continuously developed and maintained by the people of Nias Island. Located in the southern part of Nias Island, tourists can witness Nias youths jumping over rocks as high as 2 meters.

This stone-jumping tradition was originally carried out to show that the young man in question was considered mature and physically mature. In the past, when doing this attraction, people needed to hold a simple ceremony of slaughtering chickens or other animals. Stone jumping is a cultural heritage that continues to be developed by the community, especially those in South Nias.

A traditional house is an icon of an area. Usually, traditional houses are made with selected materials and have a unique architectural shape. In addition to unique architecture, traditional houses have a history or philosophy, and each side of a traditional house has meaning. The traditional house, commonly called Omo Hada, uses the form of a stilt house. Apart from Omo Hada for the general public, there is also another type of Nias traditional house, namely Omo Sebua, which was the residence of the nobility at that time.

Still, in South Nias, Nias Island has traditional houses (Omo Sebua) open to the public. According to history, this traditional house was made to protect itself during the war. This traditional house is also made without nails and is more earthquake resistant. Tourists who want to know about the history of making traditional houses can visit this traditional house directly. Generally, in the courtyard of the traditional house, there are stone statues and stone seats for traditional parties. In addition, a large rock (Hombo Batu) is in front of Omo Sebua house, often used in stone jumping ceremonies. Many tourists visit Omo Sebua to learn about the traditional house's history and shape.

To know Nias's history in-depth, tourists must visit the only museum on Nias Island (Figure 10). The museum is still in Gunungsitoli, so tourists who want to visit can easily visit this museum. This is the only museum on Nias Island. This museum has 6000 unique

artifacts such as war relics, musical instruments used, and many more. This museum is located by the sea, adding to the beautiful scenery that can be enjoyed by visiting tourists. Apart from storing the historical value of Nias Island, the museum area also has a mini zoo, restaurant, exhibition of antique historical heritage objects, a library, meeting rooms, recreational parks, and lodging that can be used by tourists who wish to visit.



Fig. 10. Museum
(Museum Pusaka Nias)

When visiting Nias Island, tourists often find many rivers that empty into the sea. This is the main attraction for some tourists visiting Nias Island. One of the tourism potentials the Nias government can utilize is opening mangrove tours, such as in Muara Indah. Muara Indah is a tourist object being re-developed by the local government. Muara Indah is a mangrove tourism object that many tourists ogle. When visiting Muara Indah, tourists can enjoy the calm water from the bridge.

Apart from being used as a tourist attraction in Muara Indah, local people who work as fishermen also use Muara Indah as a place to anchor their boats. Tourists who visit Muara Indah can do fishing activities. Travel will be spoiled with a gentle breeze and calm conditions for just refreshing. To visit this place, tourists can travel easily because this tourist attraction is still in the middle of the city.

Green open space is a tourist object that can improve the tourism sector on Nias Island. This public open space is in the middle of Gunungsitoli City. Throughout this park, tourists will be spoiled with panoramic views of the ocean on this side of the park. There are also several activities that tourists can do while visiting this park, such as jogging or sports in the open by enjoying the ocean. Tourists can enjoy snacks in the afternoon.

In addition to the above, tourists who want to visit this park can also enjoy other tourist objects that have become icons of the city of Gunungsitoli. When tourists visit this city, tourists will find many monuments at several points. Tourists can capture precious moments when visiting the monument in Gunungsitoli.

Furthermore, tourism potential that can improve the tourism sector in Nias is a soccer field. One of the soccer fields on Nias Island is located by the beach. Most people who have a hobby of playing ball can use this field. The local government made this field a means to advance the area. By taking advantage of existing opportunities, such as the beauty of the beach and football events being held, the local community's economy can be helped. Apart from the economy, a soccer field on the beach can also be a potential for the government to increase tourists who want to visit this island.

However, this soccer field still needs proper facilities, such as toilets that meet hygiene standards and wide road access so that four-wheeled vehicles can enter. From the photos the researchers have collected, the state of the ball field is clear. A lot of trash is scattered around the field due to the lack of trash cans. In addition to garbage, it can be seen that the facilities are still inadequate, such as the audience seats, access roads, and many more. This is important to provide comfort to tourists who want to visit here.

There is also potential that the government and the surrounding community can utilize to improve the quality of the Nias Island tourism sector, namely by utilizing the

creative industry. One of the events held by the Nias Island government is by holding the Yaahowu Cultural Festival. This festival is held once a year; by raising the culture of Nias, this festival becomes an attraction to attract tourists. At this festival, tourists can enjoy various arts typical of Nias Island, including traditional games, typical dances of Nias Island, stone jumping attractions, etc.

In addition to displaying various cultures from Nias Island, this festival also allows the community to take part in selling handicrafts. Several handicrafts are made by the community, such as Nias Island specialties to Nias Island souvenirs. As a community living on Nias Island, many people depend on their livelihood as entrepreneurs. Around the tourist object, many small and medium enterprises (MSME) make and sell food and souvenirs typical of Nias Island.

From the festival, people can use the opportunity to promote the products they produce to visiting tourists. Nias Island has unique MSME products and a typical snack from Nias Island. Several examples of MSME products are produced on this island, such as banana and other tuber chips, dodol durian, Nias Island handicrafts, and Nias palm wine (Tuo Nifaro). This can improve the economy of the people on Nias Island.

3.2 Solutions to attract tourists to visit Nias Island

3.2.1 Accessibility

Several aspects need attention in developing and constructing the tourism sector. Based on Law of the Republic of Indonesia No. 10 of 2009, aspects of the development of the tourism sector include tourist attractions, public facilities, tourism facilities, accessibility, and the community. Apart from these factors, Rahmiati et al. (2020) stated that 3A there are attractions, accessibility, and amenities are attributes of creating successful tourism destinations.

In this study, researchers found that the factor that most influenced the development of the tourism sector on Nias Island was increasing accessibility. According to Siregar et al. (2018) accessibility consists of the entire transportation infrastructure that connects tourist residences with the intended tourist objects and attractions and those that connect tourist objects in tourist destinations. Besides that Rumalatu (2020), states that accessibility requirements consist of three accesses, namely, access to information where facilities are easy to find and easy to reach, access to road conditions to tourist objects and related to public infrastructure, and access to the end of the trip (parking lot).

The results of this study reveal that accessibility in the tourism sector exists on Nias Island. The lack of access quality on Nias Island can be seen in several photos, which result from previous observations by researchers. Researchers also get that many accesses to tourist objects still need attention from both the government and the community. Quoted from (RRI, 2023) the project to increase the construction of provincial roads in Nias has yet to be realized. There are still many potholes, and some are rocky, making it difficult for two-wheeled and four-wheeled vehicles to pass.

The first thing that can be solution to improve the quality of tourism potential on Nias Island is to repair damaged access roads. This road access is very important for tourists visiting tourist objects because tourists who want to visit tourist objects want good and safe road access. Then access as a signpost to tourist sites that still need attention. This is very helpful for tourists visiting Nias Island for the first time to find the desired location.

3.2.2 Facility

One of the most important parts of the tourism sector's development is amenities. According to Wicaksono (2020), to achieve a sense of security, it is necessary to pay attention to the proposed tourist area's four main components: attractions, amenities, access, and ancillary services. Still, according to Wicaksono (2020), amenities are all

supporting facilities that can meet the needs and desires of tourists while in the destination.

Based on Camilleri (2018), destination amenities include electricity and water, sanitation facilities, safe drinking water, roads, police and emergency services, postal and communication facilities, media, etc. Tourists visiting tourist attractions need access to basic facilities to feel comfortable and safe. Also Camilleri (2018), quality and standard amenities can provide security and a feeling of well-being during their stay at the destination.

When talking about amenities, from the results of observations made by researchers, researchers found that the facilities at tourist objects on Nias Island were still very limited. In several tourist objects on Nias Island, the facilities that still need attention are toilets. Many destinations still need toilets according to hygiene standards; the absence of water results in dirty and smelly toilets. This makes visiting tourists feel uncomfortable and want to avoid visiting that destination again.

Other things need attention, namely places tourists can use to take shelter. When tourists visit several tourist destinations objects, it isn't easy to find gazebo facilities. Many tourist objects need a safe gazebo that can be used by tourists visiting the place. This is based on the need for more monitoring from the government or the community who are responsible for managing tourist objects.

Of several problems regarding facilities, tourists who visit tourist attractions will need help finding comfort. So that tourists have a bad impression of the tourist objects visited. To develop tourism potential on Nias Island, the government needs to improve the standard of facilities that still need to be improved to satisfy visiting tourists. Maintaining facilities at tourist attractions is crucial for ensuring visitor satisfaction and comfort. Research indicates that tourists prioritize cleanliness and well-maintained amenities when choosing and evaluating their travel destinations. Studies highlight the necessity for continuous improvements in facility standards to meet and exceed tourist expectations, particularly regarding cleanliness and overall facility management (Singh and Singh, 2020; *Tourism Management Journal*, 2019).

4. Conclusions

This research has results regarding the development of tourism that occurred on Nias Island. Based on research conducted, Nias Island has a lot of tourism potential that can be developed so that it can be enjoyed by visiting tourists. The existing tourism needs attention from the local government and the people around it to create a tourist island that can be widely recognized domestically and abroad. To create a tourist island that is safe and comfortable for visiting tourists, it is necessary to improve all existing facilities and infrastructure for tourism objects.

Nias Island holds significant potential for tourism development, with its natural beauty, cultural richness, and excellent surf conditions serving as key attractions. To maximize this potential, concerted efforts by the local community, supported by the government, are essential. By focusing on these areas and involving the local community in the development process, Nias Island can maximize its tourism potential. The combined efforts of the community and government can transform the island into a premier destination that offers diverse and enriching experiences while preserving its unique cultural and natural heritage.

Creating tourist destinations that attract tourists to visit Nias Island is one of the real suggestions for developing tourism there. In addition, tourist destinations on Nias Island can provide comfortable and safe services to tourists visiting Nias Island so that tourists can return to visit Nias Island. Several potential destinations can become tourist destinations on Nias Island, such as maximizing existing tourism potential by increasing access and facilities needed by visiting tourists such as improve transportation options to and within the island, such as better roads, reliable public transport, and ferry services.

Train local residents to become professional tourist guides. This can include language training, customer service skills, and knowledge of local attractions and history. Develop a strong online presence through websites, social media, and travel platforms to market Nias Island's attractions. Partner with travel agencies, influencers, and tourism boards to promote the island globally.

This is intended so tourists can buy souvenirs typical of Nias Island as a memento. Tourism managers can also provide banquets for visiting tourists, for example, by selling Nias Island special food menus, fabrics with ethnic Nias Island motifs, etc. With this, tourists will get a memorable experience when buying products from Nias Island. Encourage community involvement in tourism initiatives. This includes forming cooperatives or associations to manage tourism activities and souvenir products to ensure that benefits are equitably distributed.

Also, seek government support for funding, policy-making, and infrastructure projects. Government initiatives could include tax incentives for businesses investing in tourism and grants for local entrepreneurs. Implement and promote eco-friendly practices to preserve the natural environment. This can include waste management programs, wildlife conservation projects, and sustainable resource use. Educate both locals and tourists about the importance of environmental conservation to ensure the long-term sustainability of tourism.

Concurrently with the main objective of this research, which is to analyze the existing tourism potential on Nias Island as a tourist area by providing solutions to the obstacles that hinder the development of tourism, such as accessibility and facility issues, it is hoped that further research can explore other factors that can overcome these obstacles in tourism development on Nias Island. Another thing that can be developed from this research is only focusing on some of the existing tourism potential and accessibility and facility issues, inhibiting factors for developing tourist areas. Further research can develop other desired factors.

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Author Contribution

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