



Volume 7 Issue 2, December 2024, pages: 41-50

## **CAMPING GROUND POTENTIAL TO IMPROVE MANGROVE BEACH TOURISM MARKETING**

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Received: 28/11/2024

Revised: 17/12/2024

Accepted: 23/12/2024

### **Abstract**

Mangrove Beach has many tourist attractions and is one of the choices for marine tourism. With various attractions offered, Mangrove Beach has a camping ground as one of the supporting accommodations for the attractions offered. The purpose of this study was to analyze the potential of the camping ground owned by Mangrove Beach to increase tourism marketing. This study is a descriptive study with a qualitative approach with Miles and Huberman data analysis techniques. Based on the results of the study, it was concluded that the potential for camping ground at Mangrove Beach, Serdang Bedagai Regency is the only beachside camping ground in Serdang Bedagai and its surroundings, has a very large area for setting up tents, there are sunset attractions, there are 2 homestay units as supporting accommodation, free camping ground fees if you bring personal equipment, has educational tours related to mangroves where this is one of the attractions for visitors, and there are fishermen who offer various catches that can be a choice of culinary visitors.

**Keywords:** Camping Ground, Tourism Potential, Mangrove Beach

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Tourism development in Indonesia is one of the important sectors that receives special attention from the government and various related parties. Tourism is considered as one of the main pillars of the Indonesian economy because of its great potential and the wealth of nature and culture owned by the country. Tourism is part of national development that is carried out systematically, planned, integrated and sustainable, by providing protection for religious values, culture that lives in society, environmental sustainability and quality and national interests. Tourism in Indonesia is also seen as a tool for empowering the local community economy. Tourism in the current digitalization era must be supported by the role of quality and professional human resources. This is due to the increasingly tight competition in the world of tourism. This situation is what encourages tourism managers to provide various complete and adequate facilities and infrastructure, so that they can attract tourists to visit a tourist destination. Tourists will be more comfortable enjoying the beauty of a tourist destination if supported by complete facilities and infrastructure. (Mistriani, 2019). If many tourists come to regional tourist attractions, it can indirectly increase the original income of the region itself, the community around the tourist attraction can also benefit from the existence of

employment opportunities that will increase the income and welfare of the surrounding community (Ritzkal et al., 2018).

According to Suwanto (2019), the strategy for developing tourism consists of: 1) Marketing/Promotion is something that is done to introduce, inform the public about tourist attractions in an area; 2) Accessibility is the condition of the road that will be passed by visitors when going to tourist attractions. The availability of good and smooth road access will make many tourists interested in visiting; 3) Tourism areas are tourist attractions that must be developed by the local government and the community, such as providing the facilities and infrastructure needed. This is useful as a support for the tourist attraction; 4) Types of tourist attractions are the types of tourism in the area, for example: mountains, beaches, culture, and religion; 5) Tourism products are everything offered by the tour. Both in terms of the facilities provided and other supporting facilities and infrastructure; 6) Human resources are a very important subject in developing tourism. Human resources that form groups with the aim of developing tourism are called tourism awareness groups; 7) The national tourism awareness campaign is something that is done and implemented with the aim of providing disciplinary affirmation related to tourism activities, and each regional government has usually formed a tourism awareness group whose group members are the community around the tourist spot.

Tourism development can be done to increase tourist visits which will have an impact on increasing tourism marketing. Camping activities are the most popular among the activities carried out in nature, especially in forest areas. People are increasingly interested in camping activities to get away from urban life and spend time in nature, improving physical, social and cognitive health (Lin & Chuang, 2021). The maintenance and repairs carried out in the Camping Ground area aim to provide a sense of comfort for tourists who come there while camping (Darayani et al., 2023). Accommodation facilities are one of the factors that determine tourist satisfaction. Camping ground is one of the accommodations that is popular with young people. Camping ground can be designed on plantation or agricultural land. Camping ground on the beach is one of the tourism concepts that combines the camping experience with exploration of local sports and nature. This concept allows tourists to enjoy the beauty of nature while being directly involved with the lives of the local community.

Mangrove Beach is one of the marine tourism located in Serdang Bedagai Regency, North Sumatra. Mangrove Beach has great potential to attract tourists (Nainggolan & Rahayu, 2023). Mangrove Beach has many tourist attractions and is one of the marine tourism options in the Serdang Bedagai area. With various attractions offered, Mangrove Beach has a camping ground as one of the supporting accommodations for the attractions offered. This is in line with the trend of tourist destinations in the North Sumatra area, where camping grounds are becoming the choice of people to stay. Camping grounds provide a different experience of staying compared to staying in other types of accommodation. With the attractions owned by Mangrove Beach, camping grounds are a facility that has the potential to be developed. Therefore, this study intends to determine the potential of camping grounds to increase tourism marketing for Mangrove Beach, Serdang Bedagai Regency. Through this study, it is hoped that deeper insights can be obtained into the role of camping ground in propelling the tourism sector. The purpose of this study was to investigate how camping ground influences the promotion of tourist destinations, with a focus on specific strategies implemented. The study's findings should give managers of tourism destinations deeper understanding for

creating more successful marketing plans. Objectives of this study are camping ground as marketing for tourism development.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Tourism potential is everything and events that are regulated and provided so that they can be utilized for tourism development, either in the form of atmosphere, events, objects, or services. Tourism potential can also be in the form of diverse natural resources from physical and biological aspects, as well as human cultural wealth that can be developed for tourism (Indrianeu et al., 2021). Human Potential is a part that must be placed as an object and subject of tourism. Humans can be a tourist attraction and attract tourist visits, it is not extraordinary (Heryati, 2019). Basically, tourism potential leads to tourism development which is a process of repairing and increasing something to be repaired. Tourism destination development is an activity of building, maintaining and protecting plantations, land and infrastructure and other facilities. Tanihatu et al. (2021) states that destination marketing is described as a continuous, sequential process by which a Destination Management Organization (DMO) plans, researches, implements, controls, and evaluates programs aimed at meeting the needs and desires of tourists as well as the vision, goals, and objectives.

According to the Big Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI), camping means making or setting up a tent. (Sulaeman, 1983) argues that by doing camping activities can improve the quality of individual pleasure that is difficult to find in other activities as a filler of free time (Sulaeman, 1983) Camping Ground is an outdoor or outdoor recreational activity for recreation or refreshing from all daily activities. Camping Ground is generally followed by groups or in groups, both school groups, students, communities, or a company.

Camping Ground has a function as one of the learning methods carried out outdoors or in the wild, although it can be applied in the classroom. Which can be interpreted that the learning method in the wild can be carried out in the classroom, adjusting to how the arrangement of the method to be carried out, which causes the classroom atmosphere to be more enjoyable (Susapti, 2010). The purpose of camping ground recreation is as follows.

- a. Fostering cooperation and unity and team brotherhood.
- b. Able to provide an experience of a sense of mutual connection with the natural environment.
- c. Able to develop an attitude of responsibility in the future in order to appreciate the balance of the universe.
- d. Increase the spirit of courage in overcoming obstacles ahead.
- e. Create a sense of joy.

Based on its goals and objectives, camping grounds are divided into several types, namely:

- a. Bakti Camp. Bakti Camp is a large camp-like meeting of Scouts. Bakti Camp is one of the forums for activities in realizing the goals of the bakti camp, namely building a spirit of nationalism.
- b. Scientific Camp. Scientific Camp is one of the forums for scientific development covering the fields of social sciences, culture, and science aimed at increasing students' interests and abilities in science and research.

- c. Recreational Camp. Recreational Camp is one of the forums for recreational activities that can be done in groups or individually, which aims to fill free time as well as refresh from the hustle and bustle of daily activities.
- d. Educational Camp. Educational Camp is one of the activity containers where the camp is educational, so it is expected that visitors will get a lesson after visiting the camp.
- e. Camp about other areas. Camps that aim to get to know and learn more about the culture and social conditions in other areas.

Camps that are sustainable can benefit the environment by enhancing environmental quality and reducing ecological footprints. For many camp organizations, reduction of food waste has been a primary area of emphasis (Chen et al., 2022). Sustainability initiatives that cater to environmental and social motivations, while simultaneously acknowledging economic benefits, are likely to be most effective. Because camp organizations impact millions of youth and adults each year, they have a unique potential to reshape the sustainable thinking and actions of future generations (Larson et al., 2023).

### **3. RESEARCH METHODS**

This research is a descriptive study with a qualitative approach. Qualitative research is used to determine the condition of a context by directing a detailed and natural description of the phenomena that occur in the field (Nugrahani, 2014). Descriptive research with a qualitative approach emphasizes details about the object being studied. This study aims to see a picture of the potential of camping ground for the Mangrove Beach community in Serdang Bedagai Regency.

The research was conducted at Mangrove Beach, Pantai Labu District, Serdang Bedagai Regency with the subjects studied being the Manager of the relevant tourist area, Village Head, and Head of Tourism Division at the Serdang Bedagai Regency Tourism Office. To obtain research data, data collection techniques in this study were interviews, literature studies, and documentation.

Interviews are mostly used in conducting qualitative research. Interviews are communicated directly with related parties in Pantai Mangrove Village. The data obtained are in the form of answers from 2 respondents to the questions asked. Literature studies are conducted by searching for and collecting data related to references such as journals and websites. The documentation carried out in this study is to review literature or documents and photographs of documentation that are relevant to the potential of camping grounds in Pantai Mangrove Village.

The data used in this study are primary data and secondary data. Primary data collection was obtained directly through interviews and observations. Secondary data collection was obtained through various sources of related publication data published by authorities such as the Central Statistics Agency, the local Tourism Office, journals, and books. The data analysis technique used in this study is Miles and Huberman data analysis.

- a. Data reduction, is the process of selecting, focusing on simplification, abstraction, and transformation of raw data that emerges from written notes in the field. This process is carried out continuously throughout the qualitative research-oriented project.
- b. Data presentation, is a collection of structured information that allows for drawing conclusions and taking action. Researchers can find out what is happening, and determine steps in drawing the right conclusions.

- c. Drawing conclusions is part of one activity from a complete configuration. Conclusions are also verified during the research.

#### 4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Serdang Bedagai Regency, North Sumatra, is known for its various stunning natural tourist destinations. One of the mainstay tourist attractions is Mangrove Beach in Serdang Bedagai. This beach not only offers unique natural beauty, but also prioritizes the preservation of the mangrove forest ecosystem that surrounds it. Mangrove Beach in Serdang Bedagai offers unique and distinctive natural scenery. Surrounded by lush mangrove forests, this beach provides a cool and natural atmosphere that is rarely found on other beaches. The wooden bridge that crosses the mangrove forest allows visitors to walk while enjoying the beauty of the flora and fauna that live in it.

In addition to its natural beauty, Mangrove Beach is also famous for its seafood cuisine. There are food stalls around the beach serving a variety of fresh seafood, such as grilled fish, crab with oyster sauce, fried squid, and boiled shrimp. All food ingredients are taken directly from local fishermen, so freshness is guaranteed. The price of food at Mangrove Beach is also very affordable, making it a perfect choice for culinary tourism. Visitors can enjoy seafood while enjoying the beautiful views of the beach and mangrove forest. Here are some accommodations, attractions, and amenities available at Serdang Bedagai Mangrove Beach.



**Figure 1.** Hall with Seating Facilities, Speakers and Microphones  
Source: Researcher (2024)



**Figure 2.** One of the Camping Ground Spots  
Source: Researcher (2024)



**Figure 3.** Coffee Shop at the End of the Beach  
Source: Researcher (2024)



**Figure 4.** Bridge Connecting the Mangrove Area and the Beach  
Source: Researcher (2024)



**Figure 5.** Canteen at the Beach Location  
Source: Researcher (2024)



**Figure 6. Joglo Under Construction**  
Source: Researcher (2024)



**Figure 7. Prayer Room**  
Source: Researcher (2024)



**Figure 8. Hut**  
Source: Researcher (2024)

In exploring the potential of camping ground located at Mangrove Beach, Serdang Bedagai Regency, researchers conducted interviews with the management and field observations. The following are the results of interviews with the management of Mangrove Beach, Serdang Bedagai Regency. Based on the results of the interview, it is known that camping ground is one of the potentials owned by Mangrove Beach, Serdang Bedagai Regency to increase tourism marketing. Based on the results of the observation, it was found that visitors who stayed using tents were predominantly bringing personal equipment. This is because the facilities owned by the management are still limited so that the promotion carried out also has an impact. Camping ground has quite a large potential considering the many tourist destinations that are currently offering camping ground, but for coastal areas or marine tourism, Mangrove Beach is still the only one that offers Camping Ground on the beach.

Camping ground at Mangrove Beach, Serdang Bedagai Regency can be developed through various marketing methods. The marketing method that has been carried out by the management is promotion on social media. Based on the interview results, it is known that the management has never invited a special party that can promote the camping ground, in this case such as social media influencers. This method has been widely used by various destinations to introduce their attractions. Another strategy that can be carried out by the management is to explore other advantages of the mangrove beach and promote it to the maximum.

#### **4.1 Discussion**

Based on the research results, it is known that the camping ground at Mangrove Beach, Serdang Bedagai Regency has a lot of potential that can be developed, including being the only beachside camping ground in Serdang Bedagai and its surroundings, having a very large area for setting up tents, there are sunset attractions, there are 2 homestay units as supporting accommodation, free camping ground fees if you bring personal equipment, which is not available at other camping ground locations.

In addition, Serdang Bedagai Regency Mangrove Beach also has educational tourism related to mangroves which is one of the attractions for visitors, both daily visitors and those who stay overnight. There are fishermen who offer various catches that can be a culinary choice for visitors. With the various potentials it has, the camping ground at Serdang Bedagai Regency Mangrove Beach can develop and attract more visitors so that it has a positive impact on increasing tourism marketing at Serdang Bedagai Regency Mangrove Beach. This is in line with the results of Setiawan's (2015) research which concluded that in order to maximize the utilization of abundant natural resources, tourism managers must have the necessary system to implement or assist efforts to implement marketing strategies in order to achieve the set targets.

The potential of camping grounds as a tourist destination can be maximized through effective marketing strategies. Several aspects that can be emphasized in marketing camping grounds as a tourist destination are outdoor experiences, attractive facilities, the right target market, and visual and digital content. Many tourists are looking for a different experience from their daily routine, especially those close to nature. Marketing can be focused on the beauty and tranquility of nature, as well as outdoor activities such as swimming or campfires. Camping grounds that offer facilities such as clean bathrooms, electricity access, Wi-Fi, or even glamping (glamorous camping) can attract tourists who want comfort in the outdoors. This is in line with the results of research by Huda et al. (2023) which concluded that one strategy for developing camping



grounds is planning and developing tourist attractions and attractions, including; the landscape of the camping area, climate, parking lot, zoning, and carrying capacity.

Marketing campaigns can highlight how easy it is to get to the campsite, either by accessible land routes or public transportation. A campground that is child-friendly and offers family activities will appeal to travelers who want to spend time with their families in a different way. Campgrounds can also be marketed to communities with specific interests, such as nature photographers, bird watchers, or mountain climbers. Photos and videos that show beautiful scenery, fun activities, and experiences offered can be an effective way to attract tourists. Research by Harahap et al. (2024) concluded the same thing, explaining that the marketing strategy of Camping Grounds to increase visitors is currently quite good in promoting camping services, as Camping Ground Owners often upload various kinds of camping visitor activities, collaborate with the Tourism Office and hold various Camping Ground events. With a marketing strategy that focuses on unique nature experiences, comfortable facilities, and the right promotion, a campground can be a very attractive tourist destination for various segments of tourists.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The potential of camping ground at Mangrove Beach, Serdang Bedagai Regency is the only beachside camping ground in Serdang Bedagai and its surroundings, has a very large area for setting up tents, there are sunset attractions, there are 2 homestay units as supporting accommodation, free camping ground fees if you bring personal equipment, which is not available at other camping ground locations, has educational tourism related to mangroves which is one of the attractions for visitors, and there are fishermen who offer various catches that can be culinary choices for visitors . Camping ground development strategy to increase marketing at Mangrove Beach, Serdang Bedagai Regency through outdoor experiences, modern facilities, the right target market, and visual and digital content. With a marketing strategy that focuses on unique natural experiences, comfortable facilities, and the right promotion, camping ground can be one of the most attractive tourist destinations for various tourist segments. Improving mangrove beach tourism marketing with a focus on a camping ground can create a unique and sustainable travel experience. Some recommendations are focus on the natural beauty of the mangroves, the beach, and the camping experience, emphasize eco-tourism and sustainability, work with local food vendors, tour operators, and artisans to create a complete cultural experience, and get certified as an eco-friendly destination to attract conscious travelers.

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