

## **The Development of Homestay Businesses as an Effort for Economic Recovery Post-Covid-19 Pandemic for Coastal Tourism Operators in the Community**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study aims to determine Homestay Business Development as an Effort for Economic Recovery After the Covid 19 Pandemic for Marine Tourism Management Communities in Bulukumba Regency. This type of research is qualitative research on the grounds that qualitative research is appropriate to be used in determining real conditions in the field by utilizing descriptive methods. Bulukumba Regency as one of the areas that has marine tourism destinations visited by many tourists throughout the year is also affected by the Covid 19 Pandemic, due to the decline in tourist visits causing the tourism sector in this area to experience paralysis which results in a decrease in the welfare income of the marine tourism management community there, because almost all existing tourism businesses cannot operate optimally due to declining tourist visits. For this reason, in the post-pandemic period like today, efforts are needed that can restore the economy of the community, especially those around marine tourism destinations in Bulukumba Regency. These efforts include utilizing the houses of residents who have the potential to be used as homestays as lodging facilities for tourists who need accommodation facilities. For this reason, through this study, researchers intend to study further about Homestay Business Development as an Effort for Economic Recovery After the Covid 19 Pandemic for Marine Tourism Management Communities, especially in Bulukumba Regency.

**Keywords:** Homestay; Economic Recovery; Post-Pandemic; Marine Tourism

### **INTRODUCTION**

Tourism development is a coordinated service industry activity aimed at attracting tourists, providing all the facilities and infrastructure to meet tourists' needs (Franjaya & Prastiwi, 2020; Haven-Tang & Jones, 2012; Kamdi et al., 2018). Tourism development activities

cover a wide range of aspects and involve various aspects of community life. As a country with tremendous potential in the field of tourism, the government must certainly make good use of these opportunities. The gift of natural beauty, diverse customs, cultures, and arts, as well as various other charms of Indonesia, attracts tourists throughout the year.

In the Republic of Indonesia Law No. 10 of 2009 on tourism, which contains the definition of tourism, it states, "Tourism is the entirety of activities related to tourism and is multidimensional and multidisciplinary in nature, arising as the need of every individual and country, and involves interactions between tourists, Regional Governments, and Entrepreneurs."

The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has led to an increase in unemployment in Indonesia. In August 2020, the number of unemployed people reached 1.82 million. In handling Covid-19, the Indonesian government has made various efforts for rapid and prudent responses to reduce the economic impacts nationally. Some experts and economists are concerned that the economic impact of Covid-19 could be greater than the health impact because economic growth will slow down. If there is an economic slowdown, then the absorption of labor will decrease, which will inevitably lead to increased unemployment and poverty.

The Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy is currently focusing on programs aimed at economic recovery, as stated by Mr. Sandiaga Uno, the Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy: "The government's post-pandemic policy is aimed at achieving performance targets in the tourism and creative economy sectors, thus impacting the improvement of the people's economy and the creation of as many jobs as possible".

In 2023, the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy has set targets in the tourism and creative economy sector, including foreign tourist visits of 3.4 to 7.4 million, domestic tourist movement of 1.2 billion to 1.4 billion, an improvement in the Travel and Tourism Development Index (TTDI) between 29-34, and a tourism workforce target of 21.93 million and a creative economy workforce target of 22.59 million. In addition, the tourism foreign exchange target is expected to reach \$2.07 - \$5.95 billion, with a tourism sector contribution to GDP of 4.10 percent, creative economy export value of \$26.46 billion, and a projected creative economy value added of IDR 1.279 trillion. The fulfillment of these targets is accompanied by the spirit of 3G (Gercep, Geber, Gaspol) as well as Innovation, Adaptation, and Collaboration advocated by the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy.

Bulukumba Regency, as one of the regions with many coastal tourism destinations visited by tourists throughout the year, has also been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. The decrease in tourist visits has caused the tourism sector in this area to experience paralysis, resulting in a decline in the income and well-being of the coastal tourism operators in the area. This is because almost all tourism businesses in the area cannot operate to their maximum capacity due to the decrease in tourist visits. Therefore, in the post-pandemic era like today, efforts are needed to restore the economy of the community, especially those around the coastal tourism destinations in Bulukumba Regency.

## METHOD

This research employs a qualitative research method, as it is deemed appropriate for assessing real-world conditions in the field, utilizing a descriptive approach. The author conducts this research using qualitative data. This choice is made to provide a general overview of the development of homestay businesses as an effort for economic recovery post-Covid-19 pandemic among coastal tourism operators in Bulukumba Regency. The data sources used in this research include both primary and secondary data. Primary data refers to information collected directly by the data collector. For instance, it includes observations made in the field and direct interviews with several informants (Creswell, 2010; Creswell & Clark, 2017; John W

Creswell, 2013). Secondary data refers to information that is not directly provided to the data collector. Instead, it is obtained through other means or from existing documents. Secondary data serves as complementary information to augment the primary data required (Creswell, 1999).

This research aims to combine primary and secondary data to provide a comprehensive understanding of the post-pandemic economic recovery efforts among coastal tourism operators in Bulukumba Regency through the development of homestay businesses. The qualitative research method will allow for a detailed exploration and description of the actual conditions on the ground.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Result**

The Covid-19 pandemic has left an indelible mark on the tourism sector, causing a profound and far-reaching impact that reverberates throughout the marine tourism management community in Bulukumba Regency. The repercussions have been keenly felt, with a substantial decrease in tourist arrivals that, in turn, has cast a shadow over the income and livelihoods of those responsible for managing the region's marine tourism resources. In this challenging landscape, resuscitating the local economy, particularly in the vicinity of Bulukumba Regency's pristine marine tourism destinations, has become an imperative undertaking. One promising avenue for achieving this vital objective is the expansion and enhancement of homestay businesses, which can serve as not only places of accommodation for tourists but also as catalysts for economic revival. By fostering the development of homestay facilities, the marine tourism management communities in Bulukumba Regency can create an additional stream of income, offering visitors a unique and immersive experience while forging fresh bonds and connections within the community. In doing so, they can rekindle the economic vibrancy of the region and emerge stronger from the challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Effective homestay management involves a multifaceted approach, addressing key elements such as product quality, service excellence, and streamlined operational management. These critical aspects are comprehensively outlined in the Homestay Management Guide for Tourist Destinations, a resource provided by the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy. Homestays provide tourists with a truly unique and immersive experience, granting them the opportunity to fully engage with the local culture. Beyond mere accommodation, homestays offer guests the chance to participate in activities like learning traditional cooking techniques and becoming an integral part of a new, hospitable family. This distinctive blend of cultural immersion and warm hospitality distinguishes homestays as a preferred choice for travelers seeking an authentic and enriching experience during their visit.

To be considered a homestay in a tourism village, certain criteria must be met. These include being situated within a designated tourism village, being managed by a local community or a tourism-awareness group, possessing a distinct local character or unique identity, and providing a maximum of five rentable rooms. The concept of a homestay in a tourism village revolves around transforming residential buildings, typically inhabited by the owner, into partially rentable accommodations. This approach allows tourists to engage in everyday life with the local residents, fostering a deeper cultural understanding and connection with the destination.

## Discussion

The Covid-19 pandemic has indeed had a profound impact on the global tourism sector, including its effects on tourist arrivals and the economic well-being of communities involved in managing tourism resources (UNWTO, 2020). This impact has been particularly significant in destinations like Bulukumba Regency, where marine tourism plays a pivotal role in the local economy.

The decrease in tourist arrivals, as observed in Bulukumba Regency, has led to economic hardships for the marine tourism management community. This aligns with the findings of research indicating that the Covid-19 pandemic caused severe disruptions in the tourism industry, leading to income losses for tourism-dependent communities (Nofre, 2018).

To address the economic challenges brought about by the pandemic, it is crucial to explore innovative strategies for economic recovery within the tourism sector (Daniel et al., 2017; Khan, 2020; Malihah & Setiyorini, 2014; Waligo et al., 2013). One such strategy is the development of homestay businesses, which have the potential to generate additional income for the local population and contribute to the revival of the tourism sector. This aligns with the recommendations made by researchers who emphasize the importance of diversifying tourism products and experiences to recover from the Covid-19 crisis (Hall et al., 2011).

Homestay management, as a key component of this strategy, encompasses various dimensions, including product quality, service excellence, and operational efficiency. The Homestay Management Guide for Tourist Destinations issued by the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy provides valuable insights and guidelines for achieving these objectives.

Moreover, the unique experiences offered by homestays, such as cultural immersion and participation in local activities, can enhance tourists' satisfaction and contribute to destination competitiveness (Blázquez-Salom, 2019; Malihah & Setiyorini, 2014; Weidenfeld, 2018). This aligns with the notion that authentic and enriching experiences are increasingly sought after by travelers (Uğur & Akbıyık, 2020).

In order to qualify as a homestay in a tourism village, specific criteria must be met, including location within a designated tourism village, management by a local community or tourism-awareness group, a distinctive local character, and a maximum of five rentable rooms. This aligns with the principles of community-based tourism, which emphasize local participation and the preservation of cultural authenticity (Sharpley & Telfer, 2014; Su, 2020; Topalović & Marinković, 2020).

## CONCLUSION

Bulukumba Regency, renowned for its year-round marine tourism destinations, has not been immune to the adverse impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic. The sharp decline in tourist visits has dealt a severe blow to the local tourism sector, resulting in a substantial reduction in the income and well-being of the marine tourism management community. Given the challenges posed by dwindling tourist arrivals, it has become imperative to devise strategies for community-focused economic recovery in the post-pandemic era. One promising avenue is the transformation of residents' homes into homestays, providing accommodation for tourists and generating supplementary income for the local populace. This study aims to delve deeper into the potential of Homestay Business Development as a means of revitalizing the economy, particularly for marine tourism management communities, in Bulukumba Regency.

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