

Preliminary study to consider the preparation of a business strategy for The Regional Public Service Agency (BLUD) in the water tourism area of Gita Nada and Gili Sulat Lawang Lombok, NTB Province

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ABSTRACT

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This study aims to obtain fundamental information that will be used as a reference in formulating business strategies for Regional Business Services Agencies (BLUD) in the Gita Nada and Gili Sulat Lawang marine tourism areas in NTB Province. This conservation area has huge tourism potential with an estimated economic value of tourism resources based on Willingness To Pay (WTP) reaches more than 17 billion rupiah per year. However, the use of this tourist destination is still not optimal. This study uses a survey method through interviews with the management, local communities, and related company partners. The survey results show that BLUD business development in this region faces several challenges, among which the most impactful are budget problems and limited human resources. Based on these findings, this study proposes an effective business strategy to optimize the potential of the tourist area. The proposed strategy is expected to increase the income and welfare of tourism industry players in the region, as well as make a positive contribution to the local economy. With the implementation of this strategy, it is hoped that this aquatic tourism area can develop sustainably and provide maximum benefits for all parties involved.

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INTRODUCTION

The sea provides various potential resources such as food sources, medicines, and industrial raw materials. Regarding marine resources in the Lombok region of West Nusa Tenggara province (NTB), there are two marine and fishery resource conservation areas that have considerable potential, namely Gita Nada (west Lombok) and Gili Sulat-Lawang (east Lombok). The conservation area is not only rich in marine and fishery resources but also has economic potential and aquatic tourism destinations that open up opportunities to be used as a source of regional income. Gita Nada water tourism was inaugurated through the determination of the area of Ministerial Decree No. 93/Kepmen-KP/2018, has an area of 21,132.82 hectares. This area is recorded to be able to provide tourism benefits of Rp 3,004,031,073 per hectare, with a total number of visitors reaching 51,228 people per 1000 residents (Witomo et al., 2020). Meanwhile, Gili Sulat-Lawang was inaugurated through the Decree of the Minister of Marine Affairs and Fisheries No. 92 of 2018, has an area of 10,000 hectares with an estimated economic value of this aquatic tourism resource can reach a maximum of Rp 17,385,944,389 based on willingness to pay (WTP) in one year (Nani, 2021). Even though it has tourism potential and economic value is quite high, a marine conservation area can become less productive if internal management is not optimal. Various challenges can arise from problems in managing budget allocation, human resource competence, technological support, to the synergy of collaboration between related parties. These four factors have the potential to hinder economic productivity if challenges cannot be overcome properly. Therefore, an effective business strategy is needed to anticipate the emergence of obstacles so that sustainable profitability can be maintained.

The development of ecotourism management must consider SWOT analysis (Mallick et al., 2020; Navarro-Martínez et al., 2020; Sobhani et al., 2023). Indeed, this analysis can have various forms and criteria of indicators depending on the context and purpose. SWOT can be implemented for various purposes such as

business management (Jamali et al., 2021), sustainable tourism development (Asadpourian et al., 2020), research on the food industry (Blanco-Gutiérrez et al., 2020), to the development of aquatic and marine tourism (Water Tourism Park) (Misra & Miller, 2022). TWP can be used as a viable tourist destination if it has gone through the evaluation stage of the multi-criteria indexing system. This stage can be an instrument to measure the feasibility of an area becoming an ecotourism destination (Chen et al., 2020). The system basically conceptualizes the perception of stakeholders and marine park ecotourism developers as the manager. As it is known that stakeholders play a vital role in business and financial management to improve economic sustainability in aquatic and marine tourism areas (Nham & Ha, 2023). This is because the right strategic steps in initiating the aquatic economy can improve the economy and encourage community progress in preserving the marine environment and natural resources (Morgan et al., 2022). Ewart developed a formulation of a policy instrument for marine protected area management agencies based on the results of interviews with three tourism management agencies in Cape Byron Marine Park, Australia (Ewart et al., 2024), it is known that policy instruments are highly dependent on licensing issues. On the other hand, there are ecotourism areas that face environmental and sociocultural problems (Mallick et al., 2020). Therefore, policy, socio-cultural and environmental aspects play a key role in determining the criteria and management strategies of an aquatic tourism park. A specific study must be carried out to find out the condition and status of the tourist park in more detail and depth so that strategic steps for development can be implemented.

This study made the Gita Nada and Gili Sulat-Lawang tourist parks in NTB province as the object of study. In business development in the tourism sector, NTB province is guided by the Regional Tourism Development Master Plan (Ripparda) for 2013 – 2028 (Pemerintah Nusa Tenggara Barat, 2013), where a number of conservation areas in NTB are part of the Regional Tourism Destinations (DPD) and Regional Tourism Strategic Areas (KSPD). As is known, the economic potential of marine protected areas, especially in West Lombok and East Lombok of NTB, is dominated, coming from the tourism industry. The total value of marine protected areas in Gili Sulat-Gili Lawang is Rp 8.99 billion per year (Huda & Sari, 2017). The tourism sector that is considered capable of providing added value can be in the form of tourism services, transportation, and trade of fish processing products. The development of business strategies to create added value in tourist areas can be done by first analyzing the potential for existing benefits. In general, there are two types of benefits, namely those that are tangible (measurable) including usability benefits, both consumed and not, and intangible (immeasurable) which includes non-usable benefits or more ecosystem maintenance in the long term (Dalimunthe, 2018). These two types of benefits should be considered and managed in a sustainable manner so that the results can continue to be felt.

In the context of the budget, in 2021, the priority program to increase inclusive economic growth based on agriculture, tourism and industrialization in the province of NTB is Rp. 12.68 billion (Dinas Kelautan dan Perikanan NTB, 2021) while in 2020 it was Rp. 12.48 billion (Dinas Kelautan dan Perikanan NTB, 2020). However, the allocation for the aquatic tourism industry in fisheries and marine conservation areas, especially in Gita Nada and Sulat-Lawang, is still relatively minimal. Based on the 2021 NTB tourism office report, the realization of the implementation of special non-physical allocation funds is currently still focused around Sengigi Village (Dinas Pariwisata NTB, 2021). Meanwhile, in the context of human resources, the level of knowledge about the management rules of the managers is still relatively low, namely 35.8 and 49.2% although indeed the community's support for the conservation area is quite positive, even in the Gita Nada area it reaches 61.32% (Lestari et al., 2017).

Based on some of these problems, in this study, the researchers have developed an effective business strategy concept that aims to support the independence of the management of service agencies in Gita Nada and Gili Sulat-Lawang. This strategy is expected to be an alternative solution to create and increase the source of income for service agencies and the welfare of industry players in the area.

METHOD

This study used qualitative methods to gain an in-depth understanding of various aspects related to business strategies in aquatic tourism areas. The steps include interviews, group discussions, observations, case studies, and document analysis. Group interviews and discussions were conducted to the organizers, the surrounding community, company partners, and visitors. Observations and case studies were carried out with direct review of the current BLUD conditions. The document analysis study was carried out by examining all documents related to the conditions and strategic plans to be implemented in the area.

Interviews were conducted with BLUD staff and operators, the community, and company partners, to find out the actual conditions and viewpoints of BLUD, the community, and company partners. The research was conducted at BLUD in the Gita Nada and Gili Sulat Lawang marine conservation areas. Based on the results of this interview, several important notes were obtained that can be used to prepare strategic steps that can be implemented.



Figure 1. Gita Nada and Gili Sulat-Lawang Marine Conservation Area in West Nusa Tenggara Province

This study has two types of data, namely primary obtained from direct interviews using questionnaires and observation of tourism activities and secondary obtained from literature and some documentation of previous research results. The primary data from the interview aims to find out the condition of BLUD from the perspective of internal parties, the community, and SWOT analysis. While secondary data is used to complete primary data information.

In this case, the researchers used the Likert Scale to represent the responses of STS, TS, N, S, and SS respectively expressing strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, and strongly agree. Meanwhile, the scores given in each category are 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. The type of questions asked is a tendency to positive things so that a low relative score indicates a negative thing.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Performance of BLUD BPSDKP Lombok Based on the Perspective of Internal Parties

Internally, the management of the Regional Public Service Agency (BLUD) in aquatic tourism areas faces several challenges, one of which is the position of the division of duties among internal circles which is still not solid. This is due to some staff who still do not fully understand the vision, mission, and goals of BLUD. This has an impact on the implementation of SWOT analysis that has been implemented as a standard step-taking strategy that has not shown a significant impact. In addition, the involvement of various related parties which is considered not comprehensive, the evaluation mechanism for implementation, and unclear performance indicators are also suspected to be one of the contributing factors. In addition to these factors, according to internal parties, the number of Human Resources (HR) is still a problem. The condition of infrastructure and management support facilities that are still lacking is also one of the factors hindering performance. Therefore, BLUD must make strategic-innovative steps that are expected to be able to facilitate the solution of some of these problems.

However, cooperation with partners as an external part in supporting the implementation of the strategy is basically good. Figure 2 presents the results of a survey to internal parties to measure the performance of BLUD implementers. The results indicate that 46.3% agree that internal parties are ready to implement business strategies for economic development in the region, even 20.37% expressed strong agreement even though 16.67% and 15.43% stated neutral and disagreed. A pessimistic percentage of almost 1/3 of the total indicates that BLUD needs a new strategy in terms of governance and all related matters. The current system is still in need of some improvements.

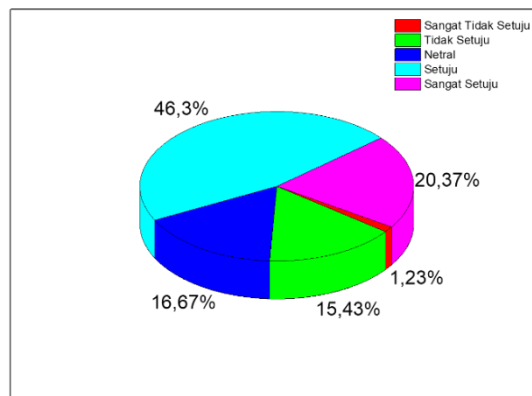


Figure 2. Analysis of the Performance of the BLUD Management Based on a Survey Given to the Staff

The Performance of BLUD BPSDKP Lombok Based on the Perspective of the Community

Until now, the community still plays an active role in supporting conservation areas through various efforts. One of their important roles is the formation of supervisory community groups (Pokmaswas) that participate in regional supervision. The real participation carried out is actively planting mangroves and caring for corals as part of efforts to rehabilitate coastal ecosystems. In addition, the community is also involved in patrols and supervision to prevent activities such as illegal fishing, as well as transplanting corals to restore and enrich marine ecosystems. Through active participation in supervision and maintenance, communities demonstrate their commitment to environmental conservation. Cooperation between the community, pokmaswas, and other related parties is very important for the success of this conservation effort. Thus, coastal and marine ecosystems can be protected and utilized sustainably for the welfare of current and future generations.

Figure 3 presents the results of interviews to the community to assess their views on the existence of regional public service agencies responsible for the management of conservation areas in Gita Nada and Gili Sulat Lawang. Based on the results of the interview, 40% are of the opinion that BLUD in conservation areas has a positive impact on the community, even 8.57% indicate high enthusiasm. However, 31.43% stated neutral or indicated ignorance. Community participation in regional conservation efforts, in essence, is essential for the success and sustainability of conservation programs. One form of this participation is to become a member of a supervisory community group (Pokmaswas) that is active in activities such as planting mangroves. In addition, the community participates in socializing, campaigning, maintaining, and protecting conservation areas. Other activities include participating in area patrols, conducting coral transplants, and cleaning beaches with coastal communities, all of which aim to maintain environmental cleanliness and health.

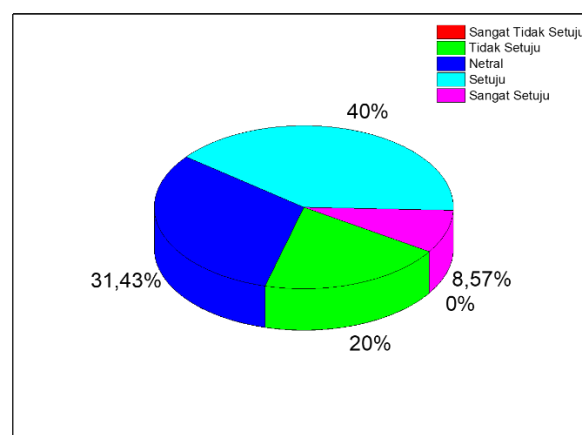


Figure 3. Analysis of the Performance of BLUD Managers Based on Surveys Given to the Community

This participation also involves efforts to protect the environment as a whole and exploit available natural resources wisely and appropriately, so that the sustainability of the ecosystem can be maintained. It is important to note that these activities have been carried out by the community before the entry of the Regional Public Service Agency (BLUD) into the conservation area. This shows the community's commitment and awareness of the importance of environmental conservation. The existence of BLUD in conservation areas is

expected to strengthen and support existing initiatives, by providing additional resources and a more organized structure. Collaboration between the community and BLUD is expected to result in more effective and sustainable conservation efforts, ensuring that ecosystems and natural resources are maintained for future generations.

The Performance of BLUD BPSDKP Lombok is Based on the Perspective of the Company's Partners

The management of the Regional Public Service Agency (BLUD) in the aquatic tourism area shows progress in various aspects, especially in terms of cooperation with company partners. This collaboration is basically able to have a beneficial impact on both parties. BLUD has shown high responsiveness in responding to feedback and meeting the needs of corporate partners, which is an important step in building mutually beneficial relationships. According to the company's partners, BLUD has a vital role and responsibility for conservation areas, so the implementation of business strategies should be carried out appropriately and effectively. The involvement of company partners in the management process and giving them strategic roles is one of BLUD's efforts to build synergistic collaboration. Although the expected results have not been achieved with the naked eye, at least good communication with the company's partners has been built solidly. This is a strong foundation for further development in the future. The company's partners appreciate BLUD's efforts in creating a conducive environment for cooperation and continue to support BLUD in achieving conservation goals and sustainable management of aquatic tourism areas. Overall, although there are still many challenges to be faced, such as improving the effectiveness of business strategies and strengthening internal coordination, progress in cooperation with corporate partners shows that BLUD is on track.

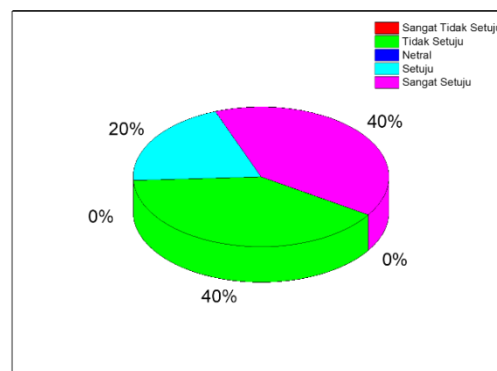


Figure 4. Analysis of BLUD Manager's Performance Based on a Survey Given to Company Partners

Figure 4 presents a diagram of the results of the survey conducted to company partners to determine the positive impact of BLUD benefits for company partners and the cooperation that has been built. The survey results inform that 20% agree and even another 40% strongly agree while there are 40% who also disagree. Those who disagree see that BLUD still has to make a lot of preparations so that the implementation of business strategies involving cooperation can run better. If viewed from the perspective of BLUD internal parties as in explanation 3.1, there are still some parts that require special attention in the management of service agencies so that they can be more optimal. This information also indicates more strongly that BLUD must carry out policy innovations and needs support in the context of efforts to improve business management in the area.

SWOT analysis based on the results of surveys of visitors, and business actors

Based on the visitor's point of view, the natural beauty in this tourist area is very stunning and has attracted many tourists. Environmental conditions that include biodiversity are very diverse and the level of damage is still relatively minimal, indicating that conservation is going well. However, even though the nature is beautiful, the condition of the infrastructure, facilities, and accommodation provided is still considered inadequate. This is the main challenge that needs to be overcome immediately by BLUD to improve tourist comfort and satisfaction.

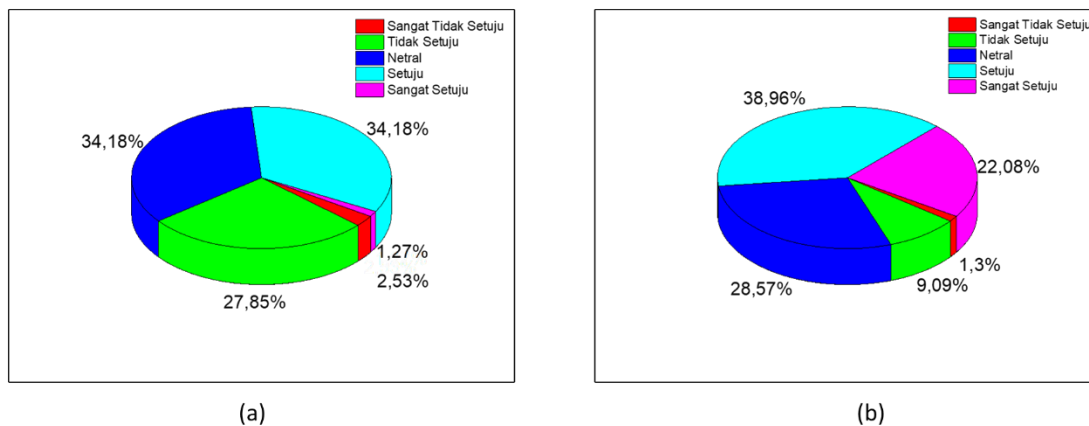


Figure 5. Analysis of the results of the interview survey given to visitors to assess the aquatic tourism area in Gita Nada and Gili Sulat Lawang. (a) is the result of a survey from visitors and (b) is a business actor

Figure 5 presents the results of interviews with (a) visitors and (b) tourism business actors to find out the level of potential to threats based on SWOT analysis from the visitor's point of view. Regarding the surrounding economic life, the variety of products offered to tourists is still not diverse. Nevertheless, tourism actors remain optimistic about the trend of increasing tourist visits. This belief gives hope that with improvements and innovations, the local economic sector can develop better. Meanwhile, in terms of the threat of outbreaks or infectious diseases, the public and business actors are not too worried, showing a fairly good level of preparedness in terms of public health. However, other security threats, such as criminal acts or natural disasters, are still a concern because preparations are still considered inadequate. This is due to the relatively limited carrying capacity.

Overall, the management of BLUD in aquatic tourism areas needs to focus on improving infrastructure and facilities, diversifying local products, and improving security to create a safer and more attractive environment for tourists. With a strong commitment from all parties involved, this aquatic tourism area has the potential to develop more rapidly and provide sustainable benefits for the local economy and environmental conservation.

Analysis of Inhibiting Factors and Proposed Solutions

Because the Regional Public Service Agency (BLUD) has just been formed, the understanding of the community, business actors, and other stakeholders needs to continue to be improved, for example through various forms of socialization. In addition, the number of Human Resources (HR) and operational budgets must also be adequate in accordance with the area of the work area. Currently, there is a shortage of experts to accommodate the management of service agencies that hinder the fulfillment of operational needs of activities. In addition, employees' understanding of the vision, mission, and management patterns as well as work motivation is still relatively low. This can be seen in the uneven division of tasks among staff. The transfer of information related to management is also uneven. Support and supporting infrastructure facilities in coastal waters of conservation areas are also inadequate. There is still a need for more intense support in the form of promotion and supervision in coastal waters, both inside and outside the conservation area.

An increase in the budget is needed to complete facilities and Human Resources (HR) so that service agencies can operate in accordance with the goals that have been set. Service agencies are expected to be able to finance funds for the management of Marine and Fisheries Resources independently, including operational supervision, conservation, community empowerment, and the provision of adequate facilities and infrastructure. With this support, the service agency is expected to run well and optimally, achieve its vision and mission and improve the management of conservation areas. In addition, it is important for service agencies to build good cooperation with related parties, especially the community so that it can become an institution with integrity. The management of the area from 0 to 12 nautical miles must be carried out optimally in accordance with the service agency's plan. Internal and external coordination regarding work plans also needs to be improved, by adopting a transparent, accountable, and responsive management pattern. Service agency revenues must be balanced with the maintenance of conservation area ecosystems through increased monitoring and surveillance patrols. Service agencies must be able to be independent in financial aspects, both in terms of income and fund management. The goal is to create a prosperous coastal water area, a maintained and protected sea, and sustainable utilization. Service agencies must ensure that their waters are free from

destructive activities and illegal fishing, to maintain the sustainability of the ecosystem and the welfare of local communities.

Adequate infrastructure and facilities are needed in conservation areas as well as mutually reinforcing support to achieve optimal performance with stakeholders. Promotion should be further improved and include several important aspects. First, additional Human Resources (HR) and initial operational budgets are needed for smooth performance. Second, the financial process should be flexible according to the purpose of the service body, but currently it is still complicated and requires a lot of processes. Third, professional human resources are urgently needed to pioneer and initiate the implementation of service agencies, both technical and non-technical personnel. Financial management must be flexible and the rhythm of its realization is in accordance with technical needs. Capital support is urgently needed in starting business operations of service agencies.

In addition, service agencies need to be facilitated with adequate and professional experts, as well as a clear and equitable delegation of duties and authorities. In addition, it is important to improve coordination with various parties involved in supporting the activities of service agencies. Improving services on the service agency website is also needed so that services can be integrated in one fast and efficient platform. Facilities and infrastructure such as speedboats must be supported by trained human resources, such as speedboat operators and drivers who have participated in training. Improving the skills of service agency managers through various trainings is also very important. The cohesiveness of the management of service agencies must be improved through an efficient, transparent, accountable, independent, and reasonable management pattern. Service agencies also need support and support in the form of supporting facilities and infrastructure as well as intense promotion and supervision in coastal waters and outside conservation areas.

CONCLUSION

The management of the Regional Public Service Agency (BLUD) in the aquatic tourism area faces several challenges, one of which is the position of the division of duties among internal circles, which is still not solid. BLUD has shown high responsiveness in responding to feedback and meeting the needs of corporate partners, which are an important step in building synergistic collaboration. The results of the interview survey show that 46.3% agree that internal parties are ready to implement business strategies for economic development in the region, even 20.37% expressed strong agreement even though 16.67% and 15.43% stated neutral and disagreed. This is one of the reasons for the high level of cooperation between the management team and the company partners. The development of the regional public service agency in aquatic tourism areas is expected to strengthen and support existing initiatives, by providing additional resources and a more organized structure. In addition, there is still a need for more intense support in the form of promotion and supervision in coastal waters, both inside and outside the conservation area.

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