

Evaluation of Community-Based Governance after the Revitalization of Huta Siallagan in Samosir Regency, Indonesia

Eko Budi Santoso^{1*}, Nurlisa Ginting², Ike Revita³, Tri Okta Argarini⁴,
Aida Fitri Larasati¹

¹ Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Institut Teknologi Sepuluh Nopember

² Department of Architecture, Universitas Sumatera Utara

³ Department of English, Universitas Andalas

⁴ Department of Architecture, Institut Teknologi Sepuluh Nopember

* Corresponding Author, Email: eko_budi@urplan.its.ac.id

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Abstract: The concept of sustainable tourism governance is needed to maintain economic, environmental, and socio-cultural balance. This tourism condition promotes capacity building and community leadership programs, manifests collaboration between stakeholders, safeguards cultural heritage, protects the environment, improves public welfare, and maintains social cohesion. According to previous research, the analysis of sustainable tourism is globally leading to a holistic approach, which recognizes broader sociocultural, economic, and political aspects. It also recognizes the critical success factors involved in developing sustainable destinations through effective governance. As a traditional settlement typical of the Batak Toba tribe, Huta Siallagan has been revitalized to maintain the physical aspects related to culture and beautification efforts. Therefore, this study aimed to review the governance process and the dynamics encountered by stakeholders during revitalization, using qualitative thematic analysis methods. Based on the results, the lack of equitable distribution and integration of tourism was the consequence of the revitalization process unequally carried out in Huta and its surroundings. This proved that the sustainable aspects of Huta Siallagan governance need to maintain the Huta autonomy and inclusiveness in a balanced pattern.

1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism management sustainability is a fundamental step in overcoming the environmental, social, and economic problems that are closely related to high inequality, poverty, and declining health (Ning and Hoon, 2011; Rasoolimanesh, Ramakrishna et al., 2020). Tourism is one of the industrial opportunities with an increase in economic growth, where local communities have the potential to achieve prosperity by using an attraction system (Burbano et al., 2022; Clarke, 2010; Frey & George, 2010; George et al., 2009). It is also one of the fastest-growing industries in the world, whose



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benefits enable the attraction of local communities to real opportunities ([Frey and George, 2010](#); [Mudrikah, Sartika et al., 2014](#)). However, the attractive condition often leads to environmental vulnerability and cultural erosion when unsupported by comprehensive sustainability programs ([Valdivieso, Eagles et al., 2015](#)). Stakeholders often experience the dilemma of risk environmental and social sustainability, to reap greater economic value to enhance tourism development ([George, Mair et al., 2009](#); [Grootaert, Narayan et al., 2004](#); [Nunkoo, 2017](#)). This indicates the need for a balance between economic, environmental, and social management, to develop a sustainable tourism climate. In this case, the concept of sustainable planning develops into various alternatives, such as ecotourism, community-based tourism ([Suansri, 2003](#)), and rural attraction ([Butarbutar and Soemarno, 2012](#); [George, Mair et al., 2009](#)).

To implement sustainable tourism, governance aspects should be significantly considered toward comprehensive actualization. The role of the government as a policymaker is related to the integration of community affairs, the environment, and regional needs into tourism programs ([Baggio, Scott et al., 2010](#); [Bichler, 2021](#)). Furthermore, tourism governance emphasizes the coordination of planning with organizational dimensions, which require public participation ([Bornhorst, Brent Ritchie et al., 2010](#); [Idrissou, van Paassen et al., 2013](#)), interrelated government relationship networks, economic actors, and tourism-based communities. Multisectoral governance conditions also tend to have weaknesses, regarding the vulnerability to conflicts of interest, observed as the incompatibility of ideas, beliefs, behaviors, roles, needs, desires, and values between stakeholders ([Idrissou, van Paassen et al., 2013](#)).

Regarding the revitalization and development of cultural heritage and tourism areas, the emergence of conflicts is common and natural due to the inability to satisfy all parties in the developmental stage ([Almeida, Costa et al., 2018](#); [Satriyo, Pambudi et al., 2020](#)). In this case, a discussion process is needed between the authorities, specifically the indigenous peoples. Besides facilitating the division of tasks, partnership development also forms a consensus, as well as provides resolutions and mutual developmental support ([McCool, 2009](#); [Zhang, Y., Lee et al., 2019](#)). This condition subsequently enables the harmonization of development planning with existing customs and culture, as well as helps to reduce the misunderstandings causing social conflicts ([Curcija, 2016](#)). A collaborative approach is also known to be a good strategy to manage disputes and disruptions ([Raitio, 2012](#)). Several important challenges are found to prevent effective implementation, such as the social factors and barriers related to the technical weakness of the task and responsibility division. These challenges subsequently emphasize inadequate law enforcement ([Castro and Nielsen, 2001](#); [Zhang, Y., Lee et al., 2019](#)), affecting the potential diversion and negligence of responsibilities. In addition, some external factors are also emphasized, such as the cultural variables related to customs, which determine habits and attitudes in decision-making processes ([Shi and Bian, 2016](#); [Yusuf, Bafadhal et al., 2022](#)).

This study focuses on one of the cultural tourism areas on Samosir Island, known as Huta Siallagan, which is in the middle of Lake Toba. Visitors of Huta Siallagan need to cross the lake from Parapat City to Tomok Harbor. It is also within the outer ring area of Pindan Siallagan Village, Simanindo District, Indonesia. Furthermore, Huta Siallagan is maintained as a cultural heritage, due to being exclusively inhabited by the descendants of the Siallagan clan ([Hanan, 2012](#); [Tobing and Sakti, 2020](#)). In this area, the

implementation of sustainable attractions is a key policy direction outlined in the Tourism Integration Master Plan for Lake Toba, compiled by the National Planning Agency (Bappenas). According to the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy (Kemenparekraf) in the 2020-2045 Masterplan for Priority Destinations of Lake Toba, the project included the development of commercial areas and supporting facilities, to revive the authenticity of the Huta Siallagan complex and enhance tourist attraction ([Sinaga, Wabia et al., 2022](#); [Tobing and Sakti, 2020](#)).

This study aims to review the implementation of revitalization and explore the dynamics of the Huta Siallagan government, by using the qualitative thematic analysis method. It also aims to explore the tourism dynamics that occurred before, during, and after revitalization from 2020-2022. Furthermore, the dynamics of tourism governance have been explored in various studies, including (1) the use of culture-based tourism principles or values ([Wang, S., Zhang et al., 2023](#)) (2) the spatial changes obtained from the revitalization of cultural areas ([Akil, Pradadimara et al., 2022](#); [George, Mair et al., 2009](#)), and (3) the social changes arising from regeneration in traditional settlement areas ([Yang, Ryan et al., 2013](#); [Zhang, Y., Lee et al., 2019](#)). Regarding some of the literature, the development of issues related to the dynamics of tourism governance is presently elaborated and emphasized. This includes benefits collection, power transfer, multistakeholder cooperation, participation values, indigenous people trust, and organizational processes. Since the implementation of the tourism governance dynamics is at risk of conflict, the results obtained should be adopted for attraction management, regarding the application of good theory to realize sustainability.

2. THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Tourism management governance

Effective governance is one of the most important factors in implementing sustainable tourism. Several research advancing governance have reportedly been growing, although no consensus is observed regarding its definition ([Duran, 2013](#); [Nunkoo, 2017](#); [Siakwah, Musavengane et al., 2019](#)). Governance was an attitude to lead, which emphasized the relationship and interaction patterns between stakeholders such as government, private sector, non-profit institutions, local communities, and community organizations ([Baggio, Scott et al., 2010](#); [Hall, 2003](#)). In tourism sector, governance defines as process of managing tourist destinations through synergistic and coordinated government efforts, community people, and related business fields ([Unwto, 2008](#)). Regarding this present study, governance is a tourism management process that involves collaboration between various stakeholders, based on their respective roles and responsibilities. To achieve sustainability, the UNWTO issued 3 destination governance standards, namely the management structure and framework, stakeholder engagement, as well as pressure and change maintenance ([Unwto, 2013](#)). In this case, the institutional structure emphasized the formal and informal frameworks developing the organization and strengthening its autonomy, authority, internal coherence, and discipline ([Beaumont and Dredge, 2010](#)). From this context, local governments are actively involved in

shaping this structure through financial support, knowledge transfer, and industrial capacity development.

Based on ([Provan and Kenis, 2008](#)), three forms of network or governance modes were observed, namely 1) Leading organization-governed networks, which mainly performed the coordination, facilitation, and establishment of collaboration opportunities. This type of governance is characterized by centralized power and top-down communication, as well as decision-making processes. 2) Participant-governed networks, where decentralized systems are formed from collaboration to achieve goals. This enables less formal operation and prioritizes the social capital exemplified by grassroots community networks. 3) Network administrative organizations, where governance is performed by an independent organization centralizing communication, coordination, and decision-making processes.

The relationship between stakeholders depends on trust levels, present and past interactions, power relations, commitments, and common interests ([Polonsky, Schuppisser et al., 2002](#)). Regarding the literature on community-based tourism, community involvement was promoted as a must-have aspect of sustainability ([Nair, Haniza Mohamad et al., 2013](#)). This showed that tourism was capable of facilitating the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), through the principles of fairness, transparency, accountability, social capital, participation, inclusiveness, and fair power relations ([Siakwah, Musavengane et al., 2019](#)). In this case, sustainable governance was determined and portrayed as one of the tools to achieve the benefits of tourism fairly and equitably. The interactions between stakeholders in tourism management are complex, dynamic, and often disruptive ([Baggio, Scott et al., 2010](#)). However, trust, power, as well as social capital and relations are useful in reducing conflict, facilitating collaboration and cooperation, as well as achieving good governance and sustainability ([Nunkoo, 2017](#)).

2.2 Huta Siallagan governance

The Huta or village is commonly led by a Huta Informal Leader, whose full power encompasses the entire environment. In the Huta, the community often manages natural resources and tourism potential, to meet their daily needs. Customary values are also very high compared to indigenous peoples, although the community already adheres to the beliefs related to specific religions. Based on ([Provan and Kenis, 2008](#)), the governance of Huta Siallagan was categorized in the network managed by participants or was equated with community authority. From this context, local community was observed as social capital, which was an asset manifested in network access, trust relationships, solidarity, norms, rules and sanctions, political participation, and cooperation ([Grootaert, Narayan et al., 2004](#)) (Grootaert et al., 2004). However, Bowles & Gintis (2002) argued that community was the key to good governance, due to their capability to overcome the problems difficult for private organizations, markets, or governments.

This understanding of community governance was not in line with the expression of UNWTO, which was more inclined to the hierarchical power serving the state and interests, as well as the power relations at various scales ([Siakwah, Musavengane et al., 2019](#)). Community-based governance requires integration with other broad-power actors, through collaboration and coordination ([Sattler, Schröter et al., 2015](#)). From this context, the collaboration between stakeholders increases their access to financial

assistance and develops management capacity through knowledge transfer. The limitations of the reports emphasizing the effectiveness of conflict in community governance also led to the provision of great explorable opportunities ([Bowles and Gintis, 2002](#); [Gispert and Clavé, 2020](#)). Therefore, this study aims to explore the dynamics of community governance in Huta Siallagan, using the governance conflict framework.

2.3 Conflict in tourism development

Similar to the two sides of a coin, the development of tourism is known to positively and negatively affect the surrounding community. Besides the provision of positive benefits such as cultural preservation and economic improvement, tourism development also causes conflict ([Greenwood, 1989](#)) (Greenwood, 1989). From this context, conflict is defined as an occurrence where different parties emphasize the disruption of a social process ([Thomas, 1992](#)). It is also “the struggle for claims to resources, power and status, beliefs, as well as other preferences and desires” ([Coser, 1957](#)).

Various literature mentioned the causes of conflict in tourism development ([McKercher, Ho et al., 2005](#)) where disruption was considered the opposite of co-management. Conflict was not always a negative aspect of collaboration ([Okazaki, 2008](#)). Other research also exhibited three types of tourism conflict, namely social, cultural, and economic ([Yang, Ryan et al., 2013](#)). In this case, conflict is stated to be negatively influenced when it becomes a challenge to effective implementation, which contains social factors, weak technical assignments and responsibilities, as well as law enforcement vulnerabilities. From this context, stakeholders were capable of transferring and neglecting responsibilities.

Conflict is formed regarding the interpretation of several events, which were often simplified with the intensification of disruptions ([Thomas, 1992](#)). This indicated that the process of conflict often began with a frustrating conceptualized event, whose outputs mostly represented disruptive actions. Other researcher also argued that the resolution of community conflict often involved the identification and clarification of common interests, as well as addressing the benefits occurring from associated tourism ([McCool, 2009](#)). This proved that the collaboration among stakeholders was a relevant solution to conflict management theory ([Rocca and Zielinski, 2022](#)). However, Other finding prioritized two perspectives of conflict management, namely collaboration ethics and contingency theory, with limitations observed in the selection of appropriate maintenance methods ([Thomas, 1992](#)). In this case, collaboration ethics were used as answers to the problems through the following characteristics, 1) adequate problem-solving skills, 2) high time consumption in the long term, and 3) adequate trust level.

For contingency theory, the opposite of collaboration ethics was stated, with interest or ego-sectoral factors observed as commonly encountered challenges. These were mostly caused by the attitude of a group only prioritizing the interests of a personal association ([Castro and Nielsen, 2001](#); [Wang, L. and Yotsumoto, 2019](#)). Some external factors were also observed, such as the cultural variables of the customs determining habits and attitudes in decision-making processes. These factors subsequently emphasized the religion adopted, the ancestral demands, which conflicted with a planning concept development, such as cultural tourism preparation.

2.4 Forms of conflict in governance

Various kinds of literature mentioned the causes of conflict in tourism development. These causal factors included attraction establishment ([Okazaki, 2008](#)), the power imbalance between stakeholders ([McKercher, Ho et al., 2005](#)), and the existence of dominant actors. In these reviews, some themes were mostly observed, such as benefits, project implementation, inadequate capacity and education, external interference, stakeholder values, communication, institutional and cultural contexts, power, trust, participation, and funding ([Almeida, Costa et al., 2018](#); [Curcija, Breakey et al., 2019](#)). In tourism, economic benefits are commonly the main subject causing conflicts. These conditions mostly occur when the revenues derived from ticket withdrawals are unequally distributed by the local governments and tourism companies that use community property for their benefit ([Wang, L. and Yotsumoto, 2019](#); [Yang, Ryan et al., 2013](#)). They also occur frequently between ethnic communities and foreign entrepreneurs, local societies and tourism government, as well as groups and subgroups ([Feng, 2008](#)). In addition, tourism development is accompanied by rapid transformations, where stressors influence the environmental and socio-economic conditions affecting the emergence of conflict.

Among stakeholders, collaboration is often hampered by ideological incompatibilities and different perceptions of risk. In this case, an inadequate sense of responsibility, ownership, and commitment, as well as low involvement levels are barriers to participation ([Ansell and Gash, 2008](#); [Wong, Mistilis et al., 2011](#)). To achieve collaboration, stakeholders need to have a constructive attitude, which leads to mutual trust and respect for their uniqueness ([Mintzberg, Jorgensen et al., 1996](#)). The goals of this factor should also be understood, to effectively handle key inter-organizational issues that are difficult for a private organization ([Vangen and Huxham, 1978](#)). Trust is one of the main conditions used to achieve high-level collaboration ([Nunkoo, 2017](#)). Regarding this factor, some explanations were commonly carried out in the psychological sector, although it is presently interpreted as a choice of individual behaviour, which is capably observed from decision-making processes. It also promotes cooperation, social interaction, and other goal-oriented elements. Moreover, trust enables social order, with public conflict emerging due to its inadequacy. The most common conflicts observed in tourism development are stakeholder mistrust ([Wong, Mistilis et al., 2011](#)), communication, selfishness, hidden interests, lack of transparency, interest abuse, and commitment breach ([Almeida, Costa et al., 2018](#)). The desire to maintain control and power has also led to a decreased collaboration willingness ([Wong, Mistilis et al., 2011](#)).

According to a report in Fenghuang, the parties with large political power obtained access to greater economic benefits ([Feng, 2008](#)). In this case, unequal distribution of power was observed between the thriving foreign companies and local communities less developed in tourism. From this context, four collaboration challenges related to power were observed, namely 1) dominant stakeholders dominantly influenced decision-making processes, 2) the business actors avoided collaboration due to their unwillingness to lose power, 3) unfair access to information, and 4) communication and negotiation skill gaps ([Almeida, Costa et al., 2018](#)). Meanwhile, the limited explanations for the conflict of tourism community governance have not been highly considered by many studies. In the Indonesian context, the report emphasizing community-based tourism is important because the country's attraction potential prioritizes natural

resources, cultural diversity, and the high quality of local communities ([Butarbutar and Soemarno, 2012](#)). Social capital in the form of local communities is also the most important factor in the development of community-based tourism (Anismar et al., 2018; Wikantiyoso et al., 2021). The potential conflicts of governance are summarized in *Figure 1*.

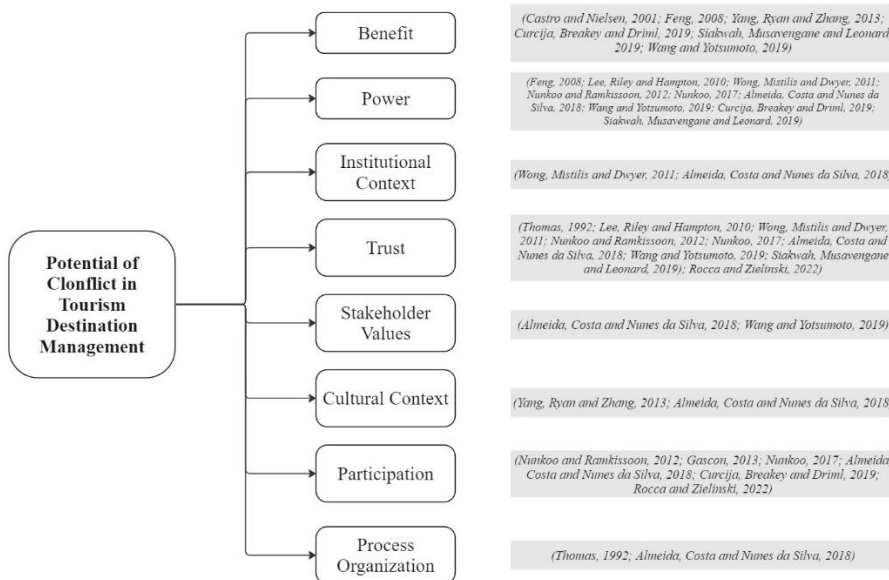


Figure 1. Potential conflicts in sustainable tourism governance
 Source: Prepared by Author Based on Literature Review, 2022

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that the concept of governance in tourism involves managing tourist destinations through coordinated efforts of various stakeholders, including government, private sector, non-profit institutions, local communities, and community organizations. The three destination governance standards issued by the UNWTO, emphasize the importance of management structure and framework, stakeholder engagement, and pressure and change maintenance for achieving sustainability. It also discusses different forms of governance modes, such as leading organization-governed networks, participant-governed networks, and network administrative organizations. Community involvement is highlighted as a crucial aspect of sustainability in tourism, with the principles of fairness, transparency, accountability, social capital, participation, inclusiveness, and fair power relations playing key roles. This research delves into the governance of Huta Siallagan, a village, and its unique community-based governance system. It mentions how community involvement, social capital, and collaboration among stakeholders are essential for effective governance in such settings. This research requires an exploration of conflict in tourism development, noting that tourism can have both positive and negative impacts on communities. Various factors contributing to conflict in tourism development are discussed, including issues related to economic benefits, power imbalances, trust, communication, and cultural contexts. In addition, the text highlights that effective conflict management often requires collaboration and trust among stakeholders. It discusses the importance of addressing common interests and benefits associated with tourism to resolve conflicts. Overall, many scientific article sources show insights into the complex relationship between

tourism, governance, and conflict, emphasizing the need for effective collaboration and community involvement to achieve sustainable tourism.

3. METHODS

This study examined the dynamics of Huta Siallagan, by using a qualitative approach with 2 stages. Firstly, identifying the physical changes of the area after revitalization, through indepth interview and thematic analysis. In this stage, data were obtained by conducting field observations and semi-structured interviews. This emphasized various conflict aspects, such as benefits, power, institutional context, trust, stakeholder values, cultural perception, participation, and process organization. Semi-structured interviews were also conducted in July 2022, involving the 11 stakeholders divided into the internal and external actors of Huta Siallagan (*Figure 2*). From this context, the internal actors within Huta, including the informal leader, manager, local residents, and souvenir sellers, effectively managed and derived benefits from the tourism activities. Meanwhile, external actors, such as the government, local residents, foreign businessmen, and the manager of Batu Panghampuran (a similar tour destination near Huta), were able to influence and be influenced by Huta tourism.

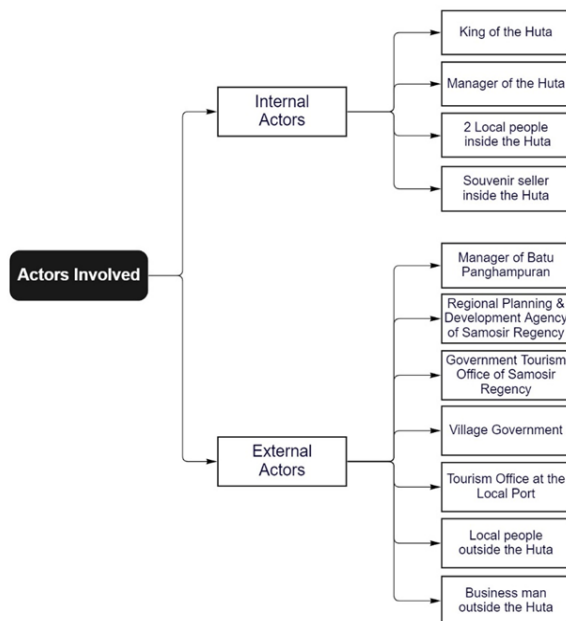


Figure 2. Mapping of actors involved in interviews

The inclusion of 11 respondents in this study holds paramount importance as it ensures a comprehensive and representative examination of the dynamics within Huta Siallagan after its revitalization. These 11 respondents, carefully selected to encompass both internal and external actors of Huta Siallagan, offer diverse perspectives and insights into the various dimensions of the research, highlighting the complexity of the situation. Their inclusion not only reflects the multifaceted nature of the issues surrounding benefits, power dynamics, institutional context, trust, stakeholder values, cultural perceptions, participation, and process organization, but also underscores the inclusivity of the study in capturing

the voices of those directly involved in or affected by the transformation of Huta Siallagan. Thus, the 11 respondents serve as credible and representative sources of information, enriching the research's validity and providing a holistic understanding of the changes and conflicts within the area. All of the local resident respondents are native residents of Huta Siallagan who have not migrated and have carried out cultural traditions throughout their lives. Some sources, such as tribal leaders, have a high influence on decision making. Meanwhile, for government-based sources, researchers have ensured that they work within the scope of the Huta Siallagan revitalization work, so that they fully understand the advocacy, reconstruction, and development stages.

Secondly, an exploration of the post-revitalization dynamics of Huta Siallagan governance, by using the thematic analysis from Miles et al., (1994) through NVIVO 12 Plus software. Thematic analysis was the process of identifying patterns or themes in qualitative data, to obtain a better understanding of specific elements. It was capable of analyzing both semantic and latent data, enabling its appropriateness for the present report. Two approaches were used to conduct thematic analysis, namely theoretical and inductive methods, which are driven by the study questions and data, respectively (Braun and Clarke, 2006). When the knowledge about governance conflicts was built based on literature reviews, the theoretical thematic analysis was used, as shown in *Figure 3*. The coding process was also carried out by using the descriptive elemental method. In this case, the coding emphasized the nouns from the interactions performed by the participants. Based on the results, theme/network tables and graphs were subsequently used. From this context, the graphs represented the emerging themes and the outputs of data condensation.

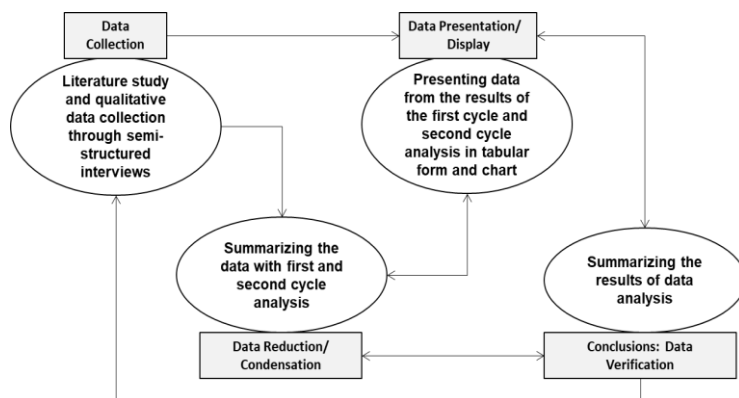


Figure 3. Stages of thematic analysis
Source: Adapted from (Miles et al., 1994)

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Physical improvement of Huta Siallagan

The revitalization of Huta Siallagan provided significant changes in the availability of physical infrastructure, to support tourism (*Figure 4*, *Figure 5*, and *Figure 6*). This focused on the following, (1) the presence of pavement, (2) the markers facilitating the flow of the Huta Siallagan tour, (3) the construction of a stage for the Sigale-Gale statue attraction (Hanan, 2012; Syahftri, Sinambela et al., 2021), (4) the provision of counters for visitor

ticketing, (5) the construction of cafeterias and souvenir stalls, and (6) the repairs to traditional houses. Before the revitalization process, some settlements such as modern houses were observed. These conditions were considered less in line with the policy direction of Huta Siallagan as a cultural heritage, although restoration was carried out for harmony and peace purposes with the typical Toba Batak settlement concept. From this identification, many physical significant changes were observed to realize Huta Siallagan as a cultural heritage area ([Tobing and Sakti, 2020](#)).



Figure 4. Comparison of the Stone Court Area before and after revitalization at Huta Siallagan



Figure 5. Comparison before and after revitalization of Sigale-Gale Attraction Stage at Huta Siallagan



Figure 6. Comparison before and after Batak House at Huta Siallagan

4.2 Tourism integration

In the Simanindo Area, Tourism Integration was listed within the Lake Toba Policy Directive compiled by the Ministry of Tourism of Indonesia. This was because Huta Siallagan had high cultural value, with the tourism route directing visitors from Ambarita to the area, before proceeding to Tomok. From this context, the compilation emphasized the historical values carried out by the Toba Batak people ([Hanan, 2012](#); [Tobing and Sakti, 2020](#)). The Stone Court execution site is the main attraction in Siallagan and is divided into 2 locations, namely Batu Panghampuran (initial trial) and

Huta Siallagan (final trial) ([Sinaga, Wabia et al., 2022](#); [Syahftri, Sinambela et al., 2021](#)). However, no restoration was conducted at the Batu Panghampuran site, as observed in Huta Siallagan ([Yeremia, Silitonga et al., 2019](#)). According to the results, significant assistance was provided by the central government in the revitalization management action plan, to realize sustainable tourism maintenance.

Regarding the policy review in the document, Huta Siallagan was designated in Cluster 1 of Simanindo's priority zone, for tourism development with a cultural theme (*Figure 7*). In Simanindo District, Siallagan Village is also one of the main cultural tourist attractions, whose integration directive aimed at Tomok, Sidabutar as an accommodation area. For the revitalization stage, the participation of the central government involved the local authority and customary leaders of Samosir Regency and Huta Siallagan, respectively. This was to establish the decision on the tourism development direction carried out before revitalization. It was also necessary for revitalizing the Siallagan traditional house, to increase consensus between the government and the local community. In addition, the public consultation process only emphasized the revitalization area for settlements, tourism facilities, and commercial sites.

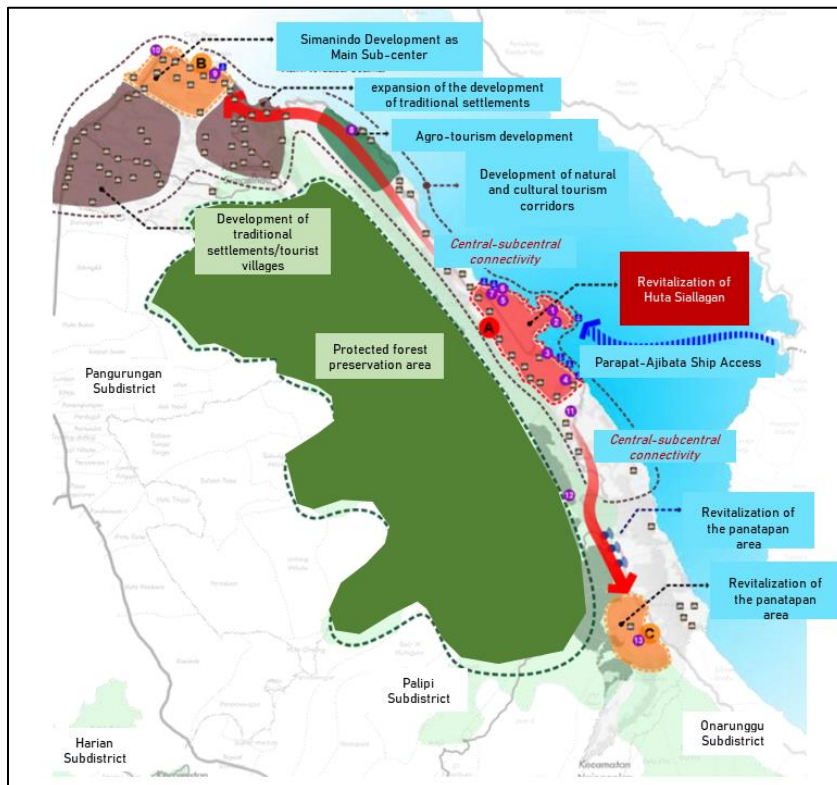


Figure 7. Simanindo cultural tourism development concept
 Source: *Tourism Integration Masterplan for Lake Toba (2020)*

4.3 Identification of Huta Siallagan travel path dynamics

Huta Siallagan did not have a transparent work plan and budget management. It is leading to problematic regulation and follow-up on fund processing patterns ([Castro and Nielsen, 2001](#); [Yusuf, Bafadhal et al., 2022](#)), evaluation, and monitoring ([Curcija, Breakey et al., 2019](#); [Idrissou,](#)

[van Paassen et al., 2013](#)). This condition indicated the necessity to increase visits and drive the tourism economy. Based on the manager's acknowledgement, opportunities were subsequently opened for those willing to cooperate in attraction management. This included the Tourism Local Group (POKDARWIS), which is still inactive in contributing to the developmental processes of the attraction sector. Meanwhile, the local government assumed that the group were less involved because the Siallagan family was closed and difficult to direct. The ongoing cooperation between the government and the family management was also limited to the distribution of levies only, for ticket sales at 10%. From this problematic context, no commitment was observed among stakeholders, concerning the management of sustainable economic systems before and after revitalization.

The management of Huta Siallagan cooperated with Lake Toba tours in increasing tourism visits. This was successfully performed by including Huta Siallagan in the travel package. In organizing a tourism system, the satisfaction of visitors is also one of the important indicators used to accurately evaluate their experience levels ([Okazaki, 2008](#)). Based on the in-depth interviews, the manager admitted that an official survey had not been conducted for the review of the tourism system from the perspectives of visitors. In this case, the promotion of visitation was obtained from the provision of tours, with awarenesses mostly distributed through numerous recommendations from previous visitors. This was in line with the relatively traditional theory of cultural tourism promotion, which is distributed among the closest people ([Alamanda, Wijoyo et al., 2019](#); [Park, Lee et al., 2022](#)).

Sustainable tourism also encompassed the level of adaptation to a specific condition (*Figure 8* and *Figure 9*). For example, the risks and crises in Huta Siallagan regarding the Covid-19 pandemic, which hit the whole world in 2020-2022 and generally affected the tourism sector in Indonesia ([Cahyadi and Newsome, 2021](#)). This pandemic changed the pattern of the community's economy and environmental degradation, namely the water pollution of Lake Toba. During the pandemic, the community returned to the agricultural sector by cultivating rice fields, which were previously their main job before interest in the tourism industry. This was relevant during a tourism crisis, with local communities capitalizing on the potential of other sectors, specifically nature or agriculture ([Idrissou, van Paassen et al., 2013](#); [Sattler, Schröter et al., 2015](#)). The implementation of a sustainable tourism strategy also needs to be prepared by the Samosir Regency Government and the local community of Pindan Siallagan Village. This condition is to develop a multiplier effect in tourism benefits, for the surrounding community.



Figure 8. Batu Panghampuran site condition

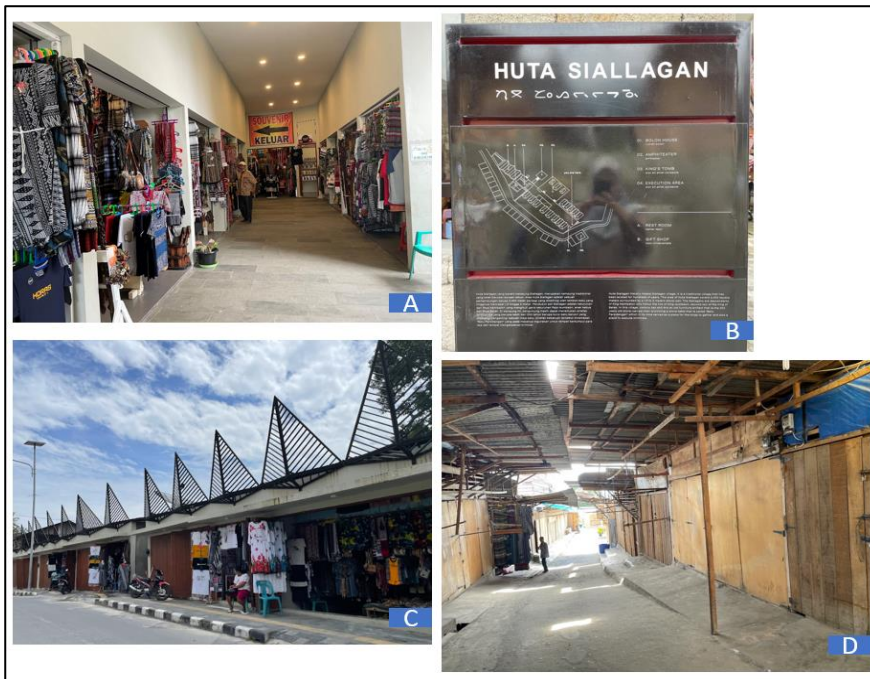


Figure 9. (A) and (B) the Gift Shop in the Huta Siallagan Area and their markers; (C) a trade area that has been revitalized; and (D) a trading area in Batu Panghampuran that has not been revitalized

Before and after the revitalization, a change was observed in the flow of tourism development. During pre-development, tourists often came with an alternative through 2 routes, namely the Lake Toba crossing through Ambarita Harbor or Siallagan Dock. Meanwhile, the land route was reached from East Siallagan, namely Tuk-tuk Siadong District, which had many lodging options and other accommodations. This travel flow transformation was a side effect of the partial revitalization only carried out by the government. In this case, the trading and the Batu Panghampuran areas approved by the Ministry of Tourism as historical and legendary sites became neglected and less highlighted by tourists ([Pasaribu, Ginting et al., 2022](#); [Syahftri, Sinambela et al., 2021](#)). From the perspective of the Samosir Regency Government, gradual revitalization processes are being considered to eliminate the social inequality experienced by the Siallagan Family. In addition, a strategy to increase community participation is needed to strengthen the synergy between stakeholders, drive the tourism system, and elevate the income of residents ([Bichler, 2021](#); [Tahiri, Kovaçi et al., 2022](#)).

To Identify the changes and shifts occurring due to revitalization, a mapping analysis was carried out before and after revitalization, as shown in *Figure 10*. Based on the qualitative descriptive outputs, changes were observed in the flow of visitors and their movement patterns. These were observed through various sources, such as the Huta Siallagan and Batu Panghampuran managers, as well as the Pinda Siallagan Village Secretary. In the pre-revitalization condition, the visitors came from the port and directly visited the Batu Panghampuran site. This was accompanied by wallord through the corridor selling souvenirs, before heading for the Huta Siallagan area. After revitalization, various physical improvements were found in the Huta Siallagan and the souvenir trade areas. However, the travel routes within Huta Siallagan became shorter due to no one visiting Batu Panghampuran.

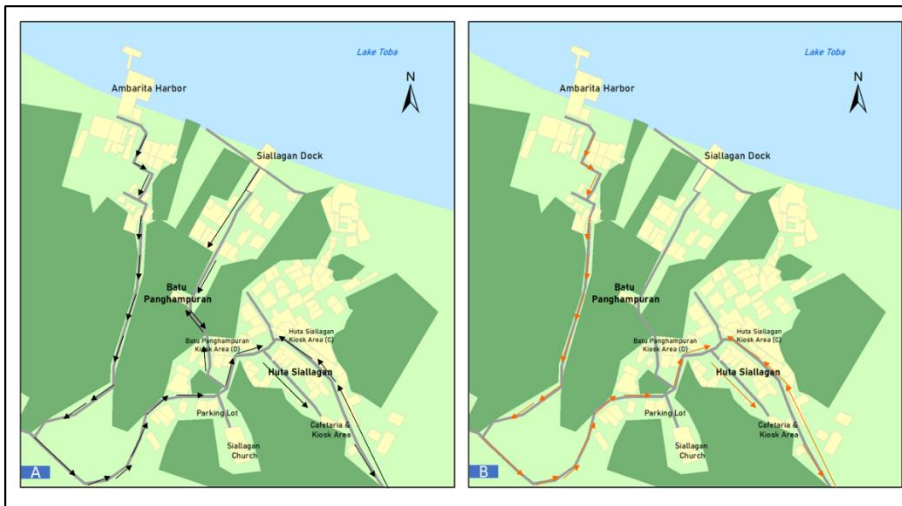


Figure 10. Comparison before revitalization (A) and after revitalization (B) of tour flow circulation at Huta Siallagan Area

4.4 Identification of governance dynamics

4.4.1 Institutional context

The autonomy of the area enabled the high dependence of the tourism management on the power of the Huta Informal Leader. Although the government, as an external stakeholder, provided support in the development of this sector, clarity on the status of post-revitalization submission was still not carried out immediately. Government support also provided potential opportunities for sustainable tourism development in Huta Siallagan. This proved that the seriousness of the central, local, and village governments as budget providers, facilitators, and socialites was capable of providing numerous benefits to the development of the sector (Beaumont and Dredge, 2010; Mulyani, Dewi et al., 2021). However, some challenges emerged due to the lack of institutional management, governance, and deliberation between various stakeholders, such as the local and Pindan Siallagan Village governments, as well as the manager of Huta Siallagan. In this study, a conflict was observed in the handover process from the local government to Huta Informal Leader, which did not experience clarity and was deprived of a legal umbrella. This led to the non-implementation of the Huta Siallagan tourist management handover. It also confused management responsibilities (Castro and Nielsen, 2001) and delayed the decision-making processes. Subsequently, the people with the Siallagan clan occupied Huta with a rental system to the Huta informal leader. These people were permitted to occupy Rumah Bolon (a traditional Batak house) and were obliged to maintain and repair the building according to their respective financial capabilities. In this case, the 2020 revitalization projects triggered conflicts in the homes personalized by residents. Meanwhile, external complaints emerged from Huta because of the poor tourism management system by the government, leading to the breakage of the Huta Siallagan and Batu Panghampuran integration. Based on these results, a forum is needed in the institutional context, to facilitate stakeholders in contributing to the resolution of management disputes (Almeida, Costa et al., 2018; Idrissou, van Paassen et al., 2013). From this context, the outputs of the resolutions are then ratified toward becoming publicly applicable regulations (Hall, 2011).

According to the results, the residents of Huta Siallagan need to independently manage the finances obtained from withdrawing entrance tickets. This shows that the revenue obtained should be used for the maintenance costs of the area and the income of the Huta people. However, the income obtained was limited to realizing the Huta development plan. The village authority having the power to allocate government funds was also constrained by the closed management system of Huta Siallagan. This subsequently hampered economic survivability and delayed investment processes, leading to the non-optimal operation of tourism sustainability development (Farmaki, 2015; Mulyani, Dewi et al., 2021; Nunkoo and Ramkissoon, 2012). The conflicts related to the institutional context were divided into community complaints and regulations, which are yet to be synchronized. This indicated the existence of community complaints (Yang, Ryan et al., 2013; Yusuf, Bafadhal et al., 2022) and rejection of the revitalization project, as presented in *Figure 11*. In this case, the internal complaint of Huta emphasized the failure of public consultations, in producing a pre-revitalization house design agreement, which maintained the physical, cultural, and philosophical values of the Batak Tribe ancestors. This complex problem, the lack of collaboration among indigenous stakeholders, the government, and the community negatively affected the progress of governance management (Sattler, Schröter et al., 2015; Zhang, C., Fyall et al., 2015).

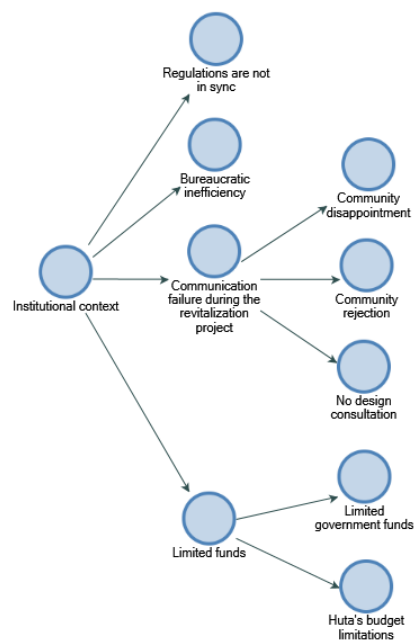


Figure 11. Emergence of themes in the aspect of institutional context

4.4.2 Participation

Public participation was carried out by involving the community in the ongoing revitalization process (*Figure 12*). This included the invitation of the community to express opinions, provide input, and jointly formulate the project plan (Spencer, 2010). The community was also involved as a subject, ensuring that ideas originated bottom-up and facilitated the implementation of the programs aligning with appropriate specific needs. Furthermore, public participation was hindered by the reluctance of Huta to collaborate

due to the lack of technical knowledge and the collaborative benefits (Almeida, Costa et al., 2018; Gascón, 2013). This indicated the reluctance to share benefits with other parties. Since the management system was highly exclusive and inaccessible, relevant contributions were at minimal levels. The formation of community institutions, such as Local Tourism Awareness Groups (POKDARWIS) and Village-Owned Enterprises (BUMDES), also became meaningless.

Based on these descriptions, the implementation of the Huta Siallagan revitalization project, which only involved internal stakeholders and the government, caused a decrease in the level of the public trust considered a participation capital (Nunkoo, 2017). This demonstrated that low trust level of people led to decreased participation, indicating weak social capital (Hwang and Stewart, 2017). Meanwhile, benefits was distributed more evenly among the community through social capital (Gascón, 2013). In this case, the government should build appropriate communication with the public, develop trust, and exhibit social openness.

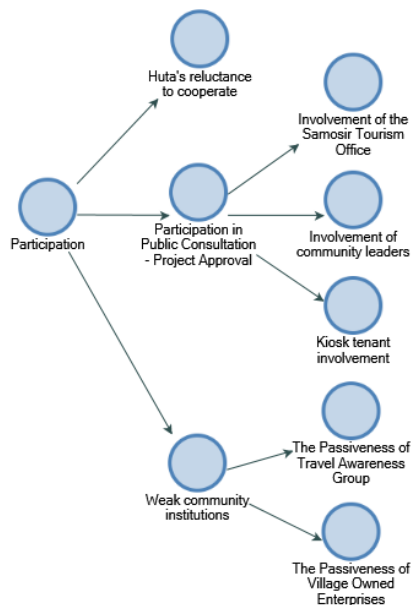


Figure 12. Emergence of themes in the aspect of participation

4.4.3 Power

The autonomous system implemented in Huta Siallagan was effective on leadership arrogance (Figure 13). In this context, the constraint of collaboration emphasized the party having the power to exert a great influence on decision-making processes. Meanwhile, the party with the weaker power commonly withdrew from the collaborative process. From this analysis, supreme power depended on Raja Huta according to their culture, which was transferred from generation to generation. This indicated that the desire to maintain control and power led to a decreased willingness to collaborate (Wong, Mistilis et al., 2011). Interest or ego-sectoral factors were also common challenges encountered during collaboration. These were frequently caused by the attitude of a group only prioritizing the interests of personal associations (Alamanda, Wijoyo et al., 2019; Idrissou, van Paassen et al., 2013). Since the power of Huta informal leader was absolute, the freedom to develop decisions were often provided, regarding numerous

factors, such as familiarity. The leader was also capable of commanding the village government, concerning the distribution of the economy from Huta to other stakeholders. This conflict of authority over power is a social phenomenon that often occurs in the cultural sphere, where the value of the power of traditional leaders has become integrated with social conditions (Zhang, R., Zhang et al., 2017).

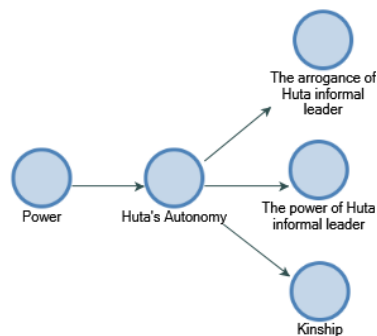


Figure 13. Emergence of themes in the aspect of power

4.4.4 Process organization

The conflicts mostly emerging were non inclusion and lack of human resources (Figure 14). The character of this community also prioritized low collaboration awareness, exclusivity, inadequate human resources, and lack of tourism skills. Based on these deficiencies, tourism managers were less sensitive in reading the needs of visitors, such as the demands of Muslim visitors in worship. The visit of domestic tourists also began to rise, with some of them being Muslims. Meanwhile, the skills needed to coordinate competitive tourism management were rarely achieved in isolated communities, without the support of external agents. From this context, the attitude of openness became one of the important factors influencing the success of community-based tourism governance. This proved that tourism management in Huta minimized the monitoring effort useful in organizational processes (Almeida, Costa et al., 2018).

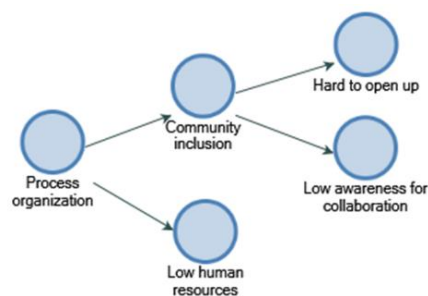


Figure 14. Emergence of themes in the aspect of process organization

4.4.5 Benefit

One of the impacts of community-based tourism development is an increase in economic growth, although the benefits are not often distributed equally among the community (Suansri, 2003; Wang, L. and Yotsumoto, 2019; Wikantiyoso, Cahyaningsih et al., 2021). In Huta Siallagan, exclusive

management was carried out by Huta Informal Leader, with a close kinship system forming a clear boundary. This subsequently affected the distribution patterns of benefits outside the Huta, as shown in *Figure 15*. Based on these results, the inclusiveness capable of improving tourism governance is important for development when the benefits are distributed equitably (Siakwah, Musavengane et al., 2019). In the souvenir center, shophouse rental opportunities were only available to the Siallagan clan, with the requirements for rent and close kinship to Huta Informal Leader. In addition, the revitalization process was only carried out in the Huta Siallagan complex, causing protests from the tenants or shop owners outside the area. In this case, the unequal distribution of benefits led to social jealousy and a decrease in the trust levels of those feeling disadvantaged (Zhang, Y., Lee et al., 2019).

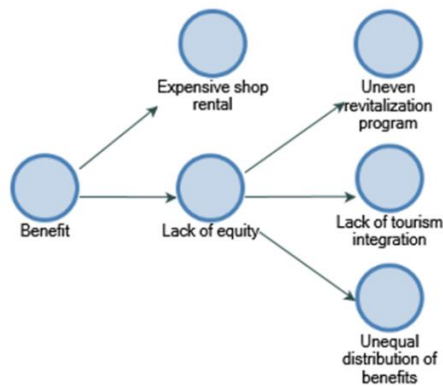


Figure 15. Emergence of themes in the aspect of benefit

4.4.6 Cultural context

The cultural context experienced a significant difference between the literature and the experimental aspect. This indicated that cultural contrast was a prominent conflict observed from the incompatibility of building design and its philosophical interpretation (Figure 16). The difference between the values held by the indigenous Batak community and the outputs of the revitalization project carried out by the Ministry of PUPR emphasized social distance. From this context, the barrier between the community and government was becoming stronger, with the natives positioned as the recipient of the project without considering existing cultural values. In this case, design errors were unavoidable, subsequently reducing the traditional quality of the people. The error in laying the *ojahan stone* was also related to a symbol of the strength and solid foundation of the Batak family. In addition, the post-revitalization building incorporated yellow in the composition of *Gorga* (the art of carving on traditional houses), where the Batak house in Huta Siallagan used earth colours to eliminate the sacred impression of the community. Besides from this result, design errors also occurred in traditional house ornaments. These mistakes specifically mitigated the trust in society, which was a social asset in sustainable tourism relations (Nunkoo, 2017). In this case, the maintenance of customs was an important factor for increasing the value of cultural tourism (Ning and Hoon, 2011).

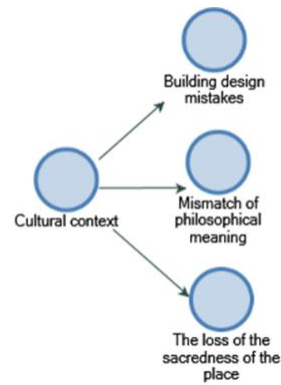


Figure 16. Emergence of themes in the aspect of cultural context

4.4.7 Trust

Trust is a dimension of social capital ([Anismar, Satria et al., 2018](#); [Grootaert, Narayan et al., 2004](#)), whose observation with a bottom-up approach was influenced by the related interpersonal factor rooted in community culture ([Nunkoo, 2017](#); [Nunkoo and Ramkissoon, 2012](#)). In community relations with other stakeholders, it is also a management key, which keeps the collaborative parties committed to their time and resources. In this case, decision-making became centred and profitable for the family within Huta Siallagan, with other parties acquiring minimal benefit value due to having a small contribution. The conflict that occurred in Huta Siallagan was also related to government transparency (*Figure 17*). This indicated that the permit application process involving a long bureaucracy was an important issue, which led to the questioning of the government's openness. Moreover, the Huta Siallagan family argued that they had opened wide opportunities for collaboration, with other parties stating the opposite opinion. In this case, the balance of power between stakeholders is very important, regarding the possession of a similar agreement to build the same goal. This ideal condition is possible with the presence of an intermediary capable of facilitating and mediating the interests between various stakeholders, for optimal operation of tourism governance collaboration ([Ansell and Gash, 2008](#); [Wong, Mistilis et al., 2011](#)).

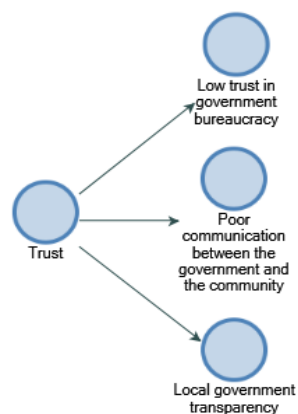


Figure 17. Emergence of themes in the aspect of trust

4.4.8 Stakeholder values

The constraints to participation were the lack of responsibility sense, ownership and commitment, as well as low levels of stakeholder involvement and dedication. In this condition, Huta Siallagan implemented a patriarchal-based customary system, where Huta Informal Leader had the highest position in the social platform ([Ansell and Gash, 2008](#); [Wong, Mistilis et al., 2011](#)). The community also had a strong defence to maintain their customs and culture, with the Huta informal leader hoarding the highest social position (*Figure 18*). Since the first leader, Raja Laga Siallagan, the customary system is still firmly possessed. From this context, the Huta Informal Leader maintained a stance regarding the village and applied fair laws to the crimes committed within the community ([Syahftri, Sinambela et al., 2021](#)). Since this period, Huta Siallagan was independently managed with an autonomous system, with the community highly respecting the traditional leaders based on the composition of the Siallagan family tree ([Sinaga, Wabia et al., 2022](#)). In the pre-revitalization process, a transfer of knowledge was observed, regarding the cultural values adopted by the Huta Siallagan community through the Huta Informal Leader representatives. After revitalization, the transformation of cultural values should not hinder the traditional activities strongly implemented. However, the ease with which the community carry out various activities need to be implemented ([Hanan, 2012](#)), including cultural activities ([Clarke, 2010](#); [George, Mair et al., 2009](#); [Greenwood, 1989](#)).

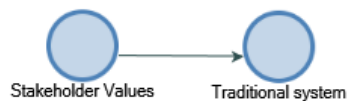


Figure 18. Emergence of themes in the aspect of stakeholder values

4.4.9 External dynamics

External dynamics is a significant new theme in the governance of Huta Siallagan. This is related to the clarity of post-revitalization submission status, legalization ambiguity, the surrounding economic center, and limited infrastructure (*Figure 19*). From this context, the clarity of governance determined management responsibilities ([Castro and Nielsen, 2001](#)), where post-revitalization authority was not handed over to the community. This subsequently led to the conflict between the community and the local government, with rejection and protest being implemented. In addition, the strength of Huta Siallagan's legality should be highly considered to avoid future land disputes ([Castro and Nielsen, 2001](#); [Siakwah, Musavengane et al., 2019](#)).

From a physical perspective, partial revitalization and changes in the trend of tourist transportation caused the separation of the Huta Siallagan benefits. This indicated that infrastructure limitations and a poor passenger ship management system led to low interest from visitors toward Siallagan Dock. The low quality of accommodation also caused decreased sales of tourism tickets and souvenirs, leading to the demise of the regional routes. This demonstrated that non-optimal revitalization and poor transportation system management threatened the sustainability of tourism, and was in line with Farmaki (2015) and UNWTO theories.

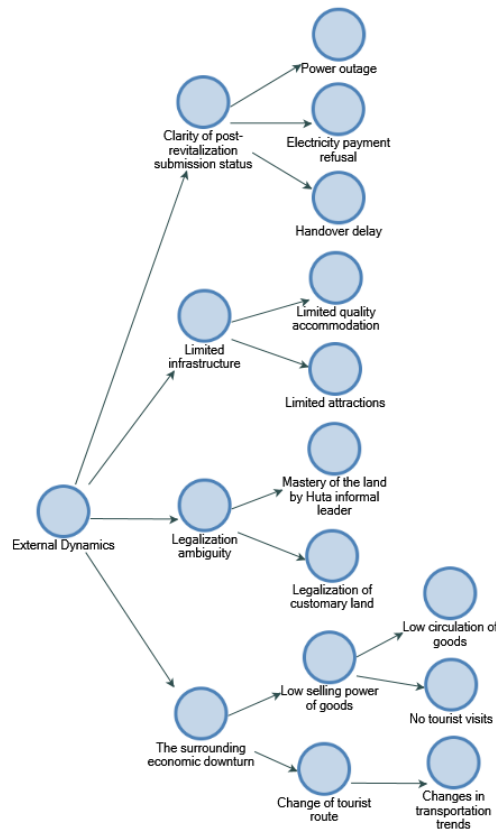


Figure 19. Emergence of themes in the aspect of external dynamics

Several solutions offered by researchers in improving tourism include the Government having to encourage the active participation of indigenous communities in decision making related to tourism management. This can be done by listening to their views, respecting traditional traditions and policies, and involving them in policy research. Tourism management education and training, promotion of sustainable tourism, and natural resource management. This will help increase their knowledge and give them more control in the management process. Education and training are also an important urgency in increasing community capacity in tourism management, promotion of sustainable tourism, and natural resource management (Pasaribu, Ginting et al., 2022). This will help increase their knowledge and give them more control in the management process. The government must carry out tourism management programs transparently (Hall, 2011). Information regarding the budget, income, and benefits from tourism must be disseminated openly to the community, reaching fair cooperation agreements with indigenous communities, ensuring that the benefits from tourism are distributed evenly and that local communities get their fair share of the profits (Baggio, Scott et al., 2010).

Apart from that, it is necessary to integrate the culture and traditions of indigenous communities in local tourism. This can lead to greater appreciation from tourists and encourage positive involvement of local communities. Through a regular consultation process with local indigenous communities, it is hoped that regulators can understand changes in their needs and concerns, as well as assess the impact of ongoing tourism programs.

5. CONCLUSION

Based on these results, conflict was a common impact of tourism development, with two types identified for community-based governance in Huta Siallagan after the revitalization project. Firstly, the conflict between the community and the government regarding the mismatch of design with customary values. In this case, the imbalance of power due to the autonomization of Huta led to the following, (1) arrogance and excessive authorization, (2) lack of community openness, (3) communication failure at institutional context, (4) non-representation of stakeholders in participation, (5) public trust issues in the government, and (6) unclarity of governance.

In an institutional context, Beaumont & Dredge (2010) explain that supporting tourism management provides opportunities to improve sustainable tourism. However, Huta Siallagan's main challenges lie in sustainable management factors, related to weak synchronization of tourism management, weak socialization in revitalization projects which causes various errors that impact the design of cultural buildings, community dissatisfaction with the revitalization process, and weak funding which results in development inequality around neglected forest areas. In addition, Spencer (2010) explains the importance of public participation in the decision-making process, especially bottom-up. However, exclusivity in the management system limited meaningful contributions, rendering community institutions such as Local Tourism Awareness Groups (POKDARWIS) and Village-Owned Enterprises (BUMDES) ineffective. As a result, the revitalization project primarily involved internal stakeholders and the government, leading to a decrease in public trust, considered a form of participation capital. This decrease in trust is correlated with reduced community participation, indicating weakened social capital. To improve this situation, the government should prioritize building effective communication with the public, fostering trust, and promoting social openness to ensure more equitable distribution of benefits throughout the community. This adds to the gap between ideal conditions in sustainable tourism management and implementation in the management of Huta Siallagan.

Secondly, tourism development projects through revitalization caused conflict between the community and the village government, due to the unequal distribution of benefits. This indicated that Huta Informal Leader had greater authority in governing the area due to the dominant power possessed. Besides, the external dynamics also affected the Huta Siallagan area. Based on these results, attribution provided an overview about the patterns by which the governance system changed according to environmental transformation. This demonstrated that the revitalization of Huta Siallagan significantly transformed the area reputation, tourism management, customary decision-making processes, division of authority between local and government entities, as well as social conditions. These results provided valuable insights for the managers seeking to implement CBT practices. However, successful implementation necessitated extensive collaboration with external parties, including the government and other tourist attraction groups, to establish sustainable tourism initiatives. Nunkoo (2017) stated that there is a significant influence between the culture and habits of local communities on the tourism management process. Indigenous peoples tend to obey and lack trust in outsiders. However, on the other hand, the problem started because the local community felt they were not involved enough in tourism management ([Provan and Kenis, 2008](#)).

This research is quite applicable in the study of traditional settlement areas because it underscores the important concept of sustainable tourism governance. Sustainable tourism not only plays a role in maintaining economic, environmental, and socio-cultural balance, but also in promoting community capacity building and leadership, facilitating collaboration between various stakeholders, protecting cultural heritage, protecting the environment, improving community welfare and maintaining social cohesion . . This research reveals that a holistic approach to sustainable tourism governance is essential in recognizing various broader socio-cultural, economic and political aspects. The research results also highlight that success in developing sustainable tourism destinations is closely related to effective governance. With the example of Huta Siallagan, this research provides valuable insight into how not ensuring fair distribution and integration of tourism can have a negative impact on local communities. Therefore, this research emphasizes the need for governance that maintains Huta autonomy and inclusiveness in a balanced pattern to achieve sustainable tourism goals.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Conceptualization, A.S., E.D.G. and G.F.; methodology, A.S., E.D.G. and G.F.; software, A.S. and G.F.; investigation, A.S.; resources, G.F.; data curation, A.S.; writing—original draft preparation, A.S., E.D.G. and G.F.; writing—review and editing, A.S., E.D.G., S.A. and G.F.; supervision, E.D.G. and G.F. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

ETHICS DECLARATION

The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of the paper.

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