

Residents' Perceptions of Bagot Tourism Village Development in Samosir Regency

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ABSTRACT

This study explores residents' perceptions of Bagot Tourism Village development in Samosir Regency through cognitive, affective, and conative dimensions. Bagot Tourism Village emerged from a community-based initiative and has developed around local palm-sap culinary products, rural scenery, and community-managed visitor activities, but coordination and shared management remain uneven. A descriptive qualitative design was used. Eight informants were selected through purposive and snowball sampling: one Samosir Regency Tourism Office representative, the Bagot Village head, the tourism awareness group leader, and five residents living near the tourism area. Fieldwork was conducted from 26 December 2022 to 15 January 2023 using semi-structured interviews, direct observation, and documentation. Data were reduced, displayed, coded into cognitive, affective, and conative categories, compared across informant groups, and triangulated across data sources. Cognitively, informants recognized the village's tourism potential, but knowledge of tourism-village governance, benefit distribution, and visitor management remained uneven. Affectively, most informants supported tourism development, although land-use and fairness concerns created points of tension. Conatively, residents participated in collective activities, but some actions remained oriented toward individual interests rather than shared programs. These findings represent the perspectives of the eight informants in the Bagot context and are not intended for statistical generalization. The study indicates that a resident forum, transparent benefit-sharing arrangements, clear land-use and participation rules, and continuous practical tourism education should be prioritized.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism development can create local economic opportunities and strengthen cultural and environmental stewardship when residents participate meaningfully in planning and management [1]. A community approach to tourism treats local people not only as service providers but also as holders of place-based knowledge, social relationships, traditions, and resource rights [2]. In developing destinations, however, participation may remain limited when decision-making is centralized or when local benefits and responsibilities are unclear [3]. For tourism villages, residents' perceptions therefore matter because acceptance without shared understanding or coordinated action may not translate into sustainable management.

Perception refers to the way individuals select, organize, and interpret information about an object or event [4]. This study applies a tripartite perspective in which perception-related responses are examined through cognition, affect, and conation. The distinction is theoretically useful because attitude research has demonstrated that what people know or believe, what they feel or evaluate, and how they intend or choose to act can represent related but distinct components [5]. Accordingly, the cognitive dimension concerns residents' knowledge and understanding of Bagot Tourism Village; the affective dimension

concerns acceptance, emotional evaluation, and perceived fairness; and the conative dimension concerns willingness to participate, cooperate, and take collective action.

Resident-perception research shows that support for tourism is shaped by how communities interpret expected benefits and costs [6]. Structural evidence also indicates that economic, social, and environmental evaluations influence residents' attitudes toward tourism development [7]. Community tourism impacts can therefore be experienced differently across groups within the same destination [8]. Identity and attachment further influence whether residents support tourism initiatives [9], while trust and perceived benefits are central to community support models [10]. Support for sustainable tourism is also strengthened when residents are involved in decisions and perceive development as compatible with community interests [11]. These studies suggest that a positive general attitude is not enough; sustainable village tourism requires alignment among knowledge, evaluation, and collective behavior.

Bagot Tourism Village is located in Parlondut Village, Pangururan District, Samosir Regency. Research on Bagot has identified moderate community capacity and highlighted the need to strengthen individual, organizational, and community empowerment [12]. The destination has developed around local palm-sap products known as bagot, related culinary experiences, rural scenery, and simple community-managed visitor facilities; published accounts indicate that the village tourism initiative was formally opened in September 2020 [13]. Subsequent community-development work has emphasized the role of village-owned enterprises in increasing local tourism benefits [14]. Sustainable-tourism education in Bagot has likewise been used to improve community awareness of economic, environmental, and socio-cultural responsibilities [15]. These studies establish Bagot as a relevant case for examining whether residents' understanding, attitudes, and actions have developed at the same pace.

Previous Indonesian studies have described community perceptions of tourism development in North Sumatra [16] and in the Padang coastal tourism area [17]. Visitor-perception studies have also examined tourism-village experiences [18] and attraction evaluations in rural nature-based settings [19]. Community-based tourism research argues that effective development requires institutional structures that move participation beyond consultation toward shared decision-making [20]. Empowerment is important because tourism can generate psychological, social, political, and economic consequences for local people [21]. The participation literature similarly distinguishes symbolic involvement from meaningful citizen influence [22], while stakeholder scholarship emphasizes inclusive processes and transparent engagement [23]. Participatory learning is especially relevant where communities must translate new knowledge into collective practice [24].

Recent studies published in the *Journal of Multidimensional Management* (JoMM) provide complementary evidence on factors that shape visitor experiences and tourism-related decisions. The development of attraction facilities can influence how visitors experience a destination [25], while perceived safety can affect tourists' decisions to visit [26]. Facilities may also contribute to visitors' emotional value [27], and social-media exposure can influence destination choice [28]. In hospitality settings, service-related attributes such as authenticity and employee helpfulness have also been associated with positive customer responses [29]. These studies primarily explain tourism development from visitor-facing and service-delivery perspectives. They provide less insight into the resident-side conditions that enable a tourism village to organize, support, and sustain tourism development collectively. The present study addresses this gap by examining the cognitive, affective, and conative responses of Bagot stakeholders during the early development of the tourism village.

2. METHOD

This study used a descriptive qualitative design to obtain an in-depth, context-sensitive understanding of residents' perceptions [30]. The qualitative approach was appropriate because the study sought to explain how local actors interpreted tourism-village development rather than estimate population parameters [31]. Fieldwork was conducted in Bagot Village, Samosir Regency, from 26 December 2022 to 15 January 2023. Eight primary informants were selected purposively and then expanded through snowball sampling. They comprised one Samosir Regency Tourism Office representative, the Bagot Village head, the tourism awareness group leader, and five residents living in or near the tourism area. The five residents were selected because they had direct day-to-day exposure to village tourism activities and could discuss local knowledge, attitudes, participation, land-use concerns, and perceived community impacts.

Table 1. Composition and analytical role of research informants

Informant category	Number	Role in the study
Samosir Regency Tourism Office representative	1	Policy and tourism-development perspective
Bagot Village head	1	Village governance and development coordination
Tourism awareness group leader	1	Tourism management and community mobilization
Residents living near the tourism area	5	Residents living in or near the tourism area with direct exposure to tourism activities; local knowledge, attitudes, and participation
Total	8	Primary qualitative informants representing policy, governance, tourism management, and resident perspectives

Data were collected through direct observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. The interview guide covered cognitive perceptions (knowledge, understanding, recognition of tourism potential, and management awareness), affective perceptions (acceptance, concern, perceived fairness, and responses to development), and conative perceptions (action, cooperation, enthusiasm, and evaluation). Interview responses and observations were documented in field notes, while documents and visible tourism-management practices were used as supporting evidence. The use of multiple sources enabled comparison between what informants reported and what was observed in the village.

Analysis followed the iterative process of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing [32]. In the first coding cycle, meaning units from interview and observation notes were grouped deductively into cognitive, affective, and conative domains; within each domain, recurring issues and contrasting viewpoints were then identified, consistent with systematic thematic categorization [33]. Statements were compared within and across informant categories to identify convergence, divergence, and context-specific tensions. Credibility was strengthened through source triangulation among interviews, observations, and documentation [34], as well as cross-checking interpretations against the different stakeholder roles represented in the sample [35]. Because the study involved eight purposively selected informants, the findings are analytically transferable to similar community-based tourism settings only with attention to contextual similarity, not statistically generalizable to all Bagot residents.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Cognitive Dimension

The cognitive dimension revealed uneven understanding of the meaning and purpose of a tourism village. Several residents initially interpreted Bagot mainly as a new visitor attraction rather than as a community-based management system. Their understanding increased after guidance from the Tourism Office, village government, and tourism awareness group. This pattern indicates that formal designation and the existence of attractions do not automatically produce shared knowledge about governance, visitor management, environmental responsibilities, or benefit distribution.

One resident explained, "At first, I thought the tourism village only meant that people would come to visit and see our village. I did not yet understand that residents also had to organize the activities and manage them together."

Informants generally recognized that Bagot has natural, cultural, and culinary potential. They identified scenic landscapes, local palm-sap products, and opportunities for village-based economic activity, but knowledge about service standards, visitor flow, environmental protection, benefit-sharing, and long-term planning remained uneven. Community-based destination development literature similarly emphasizes that knowledge and capacity influence whether residents can participate as decision-makers rather than merely follow instructions [36]. The cognitive finding therefore points to a practical need for repeated, task-oriented tourism education linked to actual management responsibilities.

3.2. Affective Dimension

Most informants expressed favorable attitudes toward the development of Bagot Tourism Village. Residents were generally willing to receive suggestions, participate in discussions, and support improvements intended to increase village income and visibility. Some community members also allowed privately controlled spaces to be used for simple tourism facilities and visitor-support activities. Positive attitudes, however, were conditional rather than uniform and were closely connected to expectations of fairness and shared benefit.

A resident stated, "We support the tourism village because it can make Bagot better known and can create additional income for local people, as long as the community is involved in its development."

Field observations also identified disagreement concerning the use or management of privately controlled land in one part of the village. The disagreement did not stop tourism activity, but it showed how favorable attitudes can weaken when rights, access, or benefit distribution are perceived as unclear. Rural-tourism scholarship stresses that sustainable development depends on social legitimacy and the integration of community priorities [37]. Community development research likewise warns that tourism can become fragmented when stakeholders do not share decision rules and benefit arrangements [38].

Another resident noted, "The problem appears when land or facilities are used for tourism but the rights and benefits are not discussed clearly. People will support the program more easily if the arrangements are fair for everyone."

3.3. Conative Dimension

The conative dimension showed that residents had begun to translate positive attitudes into action. Community members participated in collective work, supported the tourism awareness group, and contributed to maintaining tourism spaces. Cooperation was often voluntary and reflected an expectation that tourism could create opportunities for the village. These behaviors demonstrate that support was not limited to verbal approval.

Participation nevertheless remained inconsistent. A concrete example was the tendency of some actors to prioritize control of privately managed land or individual business interests over collective arrangements for tourism use. This does not imply that private interests are illegitimate; rather, it shows that individual and village-level objectives had not always been reconciled through an agreed governance mechanism. Tourism-village management requires clear product and market coordination [39], while broader tourism-management principles emphasize institutional roles, shared standards, and coordinated implementation [40]. The gap between positive attitudes and sustained collective action therefore represents the most important weakness in community readiness.

Table 2. Summary of residents' perceptions of Bagot Tourism Village development

Dimension	Main findings	Identified limitation	Development implication
Cognitive	Residents recognize the village's tourism potential and understand several local issues.	Knowledge of tourism-village management is uneven.	Provide continuous tourism education and practical management training.
Affective	Most residents show acceptance, positive responses, and concern for tourism development.	Differences remain regarding land use and perceived fairness.	Use inclusive consultation and clarify rights, responsibilities, and benefits.
Conative	Residents participate in collective work and support several tourism activities.	Some actions remain individualistic and participation is not consistently coordinated.	Strengthen community agreements, shared programs, and participatory evaluation.

3.4. Community-Based Development Implications

Taken together, the findings show that readiness among the eight informants is promising but incomplete. Cognitive and affective foundations are generally positive, yet the conative dimension requires stronger governance. The first managerial priority should be a regular resident forum led jointly by the village government and tourism awareness group. The forum should document decisions on land use, visitor access, roles, responsibilities, and the distribution of opportunities and benefits. Transparent rules should be agreed before expanding promotional or training activities, because unresolved fairness concerns can weaken participation even when residents support tourism in principle.

The second priority is participatory monitoring: community-based visitor rules, simple complaint and issue logs, and periodic evaluation of economic, social, cultural, and environmental effects. Conservation-oriented tourism planning requires development to remain compatible with local resource protection [41]. The third priority is practical capacity building in guiding, hospitality, sanitation, product development, promotion, environmental protection, and conflict-sensitive communication. Behavior-oriented education is most useful when knowledge is connected to attitudes and concrete action [42]. The Tourism Office should therefore act mainly as a facilitator and technical resource, while residents retain meaningful influence over the scale and direction of tourism development.

4. CONCLUSION

Among the eight informants included in this study, perceptions of Bagot Tourism Village development were generally positive but not fully aligned across cognitive, affective, and conative dimensions. Cognitively, informants recognized Bagot's natural, cultural, and culinary potential, although knowledge of governance, visitor management, benefit distribution, and long-term planning remained uneven. Affectively, most informants accepted tourism development, but land-use and fairness concerns created points of tension. Conatively, residents participated in collective activities, yet some actions remained oriented toward individual interests and were not consistently integrated into shared programs.

The immediate development priority is therefore not promotion alone but community governance: a functioning resident forum, transparent benefit-sharing arrangements, clear land-use and participation rules, participatory monitoring, and practical tourism education. These findings are specific to Bagot Tourism Village and reflect the perspectives of the eight purposively and snowball-selected informants rather than the entire resident population. The small, context-specific qualitative sample and absence of longitudinal follow-up limit broader generalization. Future research should include a wider range of residents, tourism entrepreneurs, visitors, women and youth groups, and government representatives, and should examine how cognitive, affective, and conative responses change after governance and tourism programs are implemented.

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