



Social Cultural Impact Of Tourist Interaction With Local Community In Lake Toba Area

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ABSTRACT

Lake Toba is a tourism area in North Sumatra, where interactions between tourists and local communities have an impact on the growth of tourism life. The form of interaction varies based on the motivation and actor of the interaction. The first is for business transactions, tourists as consumers and business actors as providers. The second occurs when tourists and the public meet at the same tourist attraction, namely a cafe restaurant with the motivation of friendship, finance, and romance. The next interaction occurs when both parties seek information, both about tourism, culture and personal data. Interactions for transacting tourism occur more often, followed by interactions when tourists and local people meet at cafes or restaurants on Lake Toba. Interactions can then be distinguished between tourists and working people, and with non-working people. Socio-cultural impacts due to these interactions include demonstrative effects, changes in social values, for example: norms change views on the relationship between men and women, materialistic nature and cultural values in performing arts, cultural learning and tourism culture.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The interaction between tourists and local communities in a tourist destination is an interesting topic to discuss. Lake Toba is a tourist area in North Sumatra where the interaction between these two parties is inevitable. Based on the frequency of occurrence, the interaction of foreign tourists with local communities ranks highest, not only the interaction of tourists with workers in tourism businesses but also non-workers, for example the people of North Sumatra who visit restaurants or cafes in the Lake Toba area.

These interactions result in changes in tourists as guests and local communities as hosts of a tourist area. As a result of the interaction between the two, tourism activities are also affected.

This happens because when an interaction occurs, both parties make contact first for tourism activities, such as for purchasing tour packages or using hotel rooms and selling souvenirs. Successful interactions support the smooth running of tourism activities, and vice versa.

Further development of tourism allows tourists and local communities to interact not only for a tourist transaction. This continues to fulfill the need to get to know each other's customs and culture, especially tourists in getting to know local culture as one of the tourist attractions. The interactions that then occur vary, from those related to tourism in North Sumatra, to the relationship between two individuals or groups with different cultural backgrounds.

This interaction takes various forms, ranging from conversations between tourists and pedicab drivers about the location of a hotel, between tourists and local guides or tourism bureau employees regarding tour packages, as well as between tourists and cafe visitors on Lake Toba who happen to meet. These different interactions have different impacts on tourists and local communities. The intensity and actors of interaction affect these different impacts, from those leading to changes in people's views of foreign cultures, changes in social values in local communities to learning of local cultures by tourists. This triggers both positive and negative impacts on both parties. The conflict between local and foreign values, as well as efforts to harmonize tourism with the lives of local people in Lake Toba as an impact of interaction are problems that need to be observed. Therefore, a study needs to be conducted to determine the forms of interaction that occur between tourists and local communities in Lake Toba, as well as their impact on the socio-cultural order that affects both parties.

2. RESEARCH METHODE

The form of interaction between tourists and local communities varies according to the motivation and actors of the interaction. According to de Kadt (1979), there are three forms of interaction between tourists and local communities. The most common form of interaction that occurs is when both parties carry out tourism transactions. Interaction actors are tourists who use tourism products and local communities who provide them. The second interaction occurs when tourists and local people meet each other at the same tourist attraction. In this case, at a restaurant or cafe on Lake Toba. The next form of interaction is the interaction that occurs when both parties exchange information, whether about tourism, culture or between individuals, in tourist areas.

In this study, the interaction of tourists and local communities means all contacts that occur between the two in the tourist area of Lake Toba. Tourists refer to foreign tourists who stay or who visit Lake Toba to try to engage directly with the local community and culture (Swarbrooke & Horner, 2007; Smith, 1978). Meanwhile, the local communities in question are indigenous people and migrants, apart from workers in tourism businesses or non-workers (Spillane, 1993 and Reisinger & Turner, 2003). As stated by Cohen (1984), Figuerola in Pearce (1989), and Ross (1998), several changes appear as impacts that affect the lives of tourists and the community, both socially and culturally. This can be in the form of changes in social and cultural values, as well as changes in habits and lifestyles that affect both. This impact develops due to variations in the intensity of the interaction and the actors who carry out the interaction. An example is the demonstrative effect where local people who are often involved with tourists try to imitate tourist habits. Whereas in short interactions, a tourism culture will be created to meet the needs of tourists or competition between local communities in seeking benefits from tourists. This continues in the next interaction that occurs on both sides, as well as tourism activities, especially in Lake Toba.

Qualitative method used in this research with ethnographic approach and cross sectional case study. This approach allows researchers to explore data on tourist and community

interactions and their impacts. The researcher acts as an observer by going directly to the research area within a certain period of time (Rahardjo, 2010; Prastowo, 2011).

The discussion is limited to the interaction between foreign tourists and local people who make contact with tourists, to the socio-cultural impacts that arise as a result of the interaction. The resource persons were selected using a purposive sampling system, namely people who are considered to know are expected to provide as much information as needed (Prastowo, 2011). Data obtained through interviews, observation and documentation. Furthermore, the data is processed using the Miles and Huberman analysis model in which the reduced data are suitable for research, presented in the form of tables or narratives, to be concluded (Sugiyono, 2011). Verification is carried out by triangulation of data on sources and data collection techniques.

3. RESULT AND ANALYSIS

Interaction of Tourists and Local Communities

There are three forms of interaction. The following is a further explanation of the interactions between tourists and local communities that occur in the Lake Toba area:

- a. Interaction for travel transactions. In this form of interaction, tourists and local communities interact to reach an agreement on tourism transactions. The interaction actors are tourists who want to buy tourism products while the local community consists of workers in tourism businesses who provide various elements to support tourism activities. Includes procurement of travel tickets, entrance tickets to tourist attractions, purchase of souvenirs, food and drinks and accommodation. This interaction is short-lived if the goal is only to achieve the transaction. However, contact may last longer if the two meet again for purposes other than travel transactions.
- b. Interaction at the same tourist attraction. In this interaction, contact occurs when tourists meet local people in restaurants or cafes or in other public areas where there are cultural arts performances. This activity can be in the form of routine music events held by cafe restaurants or special events such as puppet shows or music performed by the local community or art community. The actors of this interaction are tourists and non-working people who both come to certain locations with various purposes. The two met either intentionally or not and began to interact. There are several motivations behind this interaction, alternating in terms of tourists or the community. Among these are the desire to meet new people and make friends, the fulfillment of financial needs, the desire for a short romantic relationship or the search for a partner for a long term relationship. This motivation leads to two types of interaction intensity, namely low or high, with different impacts on each interaction.
- c. Interaction to exchange information. In this form of interaction, tourists and local communities make contact to get information, both about tourism and themselves. Conducted by tourists and local communities, both workers and non-workers, this interaction can occur anywhere on Lake Toba. Contact can take place on the street, in restaurants, gift shops or tourist bureau offices. Tourists can ask for directions to the pedicab driver on the side of the road, about local specialties to the people they meet as well as the schedule for traditional dance performances on Samosir Island. However, unlike the two forms of interaction mentioned earlier, this interaction tends to be short-lived if it is only for the purpose of obtaining information. It can be said that this interaction can last longer if it is preceded or followed by other forms of interaction, either for tourist transactions or during a meeting at a cafe restaurant. This contact can

eventually lead to various impacts according to the development of the interaction between the two parties.

Table 1. Tourist Interaction with Local Communities

Bentuk Interaksi	Pelaku Interaksi	Contoh Interaksi	Intensitas
Interaksi untuk mengadakan transaksi wisata	Wisatawan - masyarakat pekerja	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pembelian tiket atraksi wisata • Pembelian paket wisata • Pembelian suvenir, makanan minuman • Pemakaian akomodasi dan transportasi • Pemakaian jasa pemandu wisata 	Rendah dantinggi
Interaksi di atraksi wisata yang sama	Wisatawan - masyarakat nonpekerja	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pertukaran informasi pariwisata • Pertukaran pengalaman pribadi • Pembelajaran budaya 	Rendah dantinggi
Interaksi untuk mendapatkan informasi	Wisatawan - masyarakat pekerja	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pemberian informasi pariwisata, budaya, pengalaman pribadi 	Rendah dantinggi
	Wisatawan - masyarakat nonpekerja	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pertukaran informasi pariwisata 	Rendah

In interactions for tourist transactions and when they meet at a tourist attraction, both parties can make contact with either low or high intensity, while interactions to get information tend to be of low intensity. In Lake Toba, examples of the form of each interaction are listed in Table 1 with foreign tourist actors and local communities, both workers in tourism businesses and non-workers.

Socio-Cultural Impact of Interaction of Tourists and Local Communities

The three forms of interaction between tourists and local communities in Lake Toba have an impact on both parties. As has been stated in previous research in the field of tourism, the impact can be positive or negative. This happens because of the different perspectives on tourists or local people. Therefore, the following explanation shows the impact on both sides, both positive and negative.

- a. **Demonstrative effect.** As stated by de Kadt in Tashadi (1994), the demonstrative effect is a change in the values, attitudes and behavior of a community as a result of tourist visits to the area, especially because of interactions with tourists and efforts to imitate tourist culture. The impact of tourist interactions with local communities can be seen, among others, from changes in people's clothing styles that imitate tourists, language styles, attitudes and behaviors shown by local communities. Imitation of a foreign culture includes lifestyle changes such as talking late into the night, drinking alcohol, making out in public and liking foreign music such as reggae and blues. From the local community's point of view, the demonstrative effect is considered a

negative impact of the interaction of tourists and the community. By changing the attitudes, behavior, and perspectives of local people, the imitation process as part of this demonstrative effect per land is considered to be able to eliminate the authenticity of local culture. However, there are also local community groups who think that this change is a form of modernization that supports the growth of tourism in Lake Toba.

- b. **Changes in Values.** Interactions that lead to efforts to imitate the lifestyle of foreign tourists as a result of the demonstrative effect also lead to changes in the socio-cultural values of the local community. The changes that occurred include: 1). The existence of a consumptive and materialistic culture as a result of efforts to imitate tourist culture. This happens when people see tourist habits and want to imitate them, such as wanting to have the latest camera or cellphone, eating and drinking foreign menus, traveling and shopping like tourists and prioritizing material. 2). Changes in the perception of the relationship between men and women mainly as a result of the interaction between Caucasian foreign tourists called Caucasians and Caucasian hunters called Caucasian hunters. The interaction of foreign tourists (foreigners) with local people who want to establish relationships with foreign tourists (foreign tourists) varies from those who just want to be friends to living together during tourist visits, some even continue to the marriage stage. This changes the perspective of the local community which leads to the acceptance of a unique form of relationship with foreign communities that does not have to be formalized in marriage. 3). The reduced attitude of tolerance and respect among the working community who compete with each other in making profits from the sale of tourism products. This is marked by competition between local guides who want to sell as many tourist products as possible to tourists by providing false information or knocking each other down. This can be referred to as the negative impact of tourist interactions with local communities which further affects the lives of local people. In the competition for the sale and purchase of tourism products, both parties acknowledge exploitation for the sake of tourism activities.
- c. **Cultural Learning.** Both tourists and local communities benefit from cultural learning. Although both may not immediately apply the new culture in their activities during the interaction, at least they know how to avoid conflict between the two. When tourists meet people, both of them read each other's attitudes and behavior so that they can learn other customs and cultures and try to respect each other's differences. This is important not only in the relationship as guests and hosts of a tourist area but also as individuals who meet each other from different backgrounds. This cultural learning allows tourists not to automatically agree with local people's offers because they already know the existence of a culture of small talk in the lives of local people. Likewise, local communities have learned to understand that not all men and women traveling together are brothers or bound by marital status. This impact can then be called positive because it is able to bridge the differences that exist between the two cultures on tourists and local communities in a tourist destination area.
- d. **Tourism Culture.** Howe (2005) states that tourism culture is a culture that is based on the needs of tourists. The interaction of tourists with local communities brings up a list of basic needs and support for tourists in carrying out tourism activities. This

leads to the creation of additional facilities that must be provided by the local community as the host of tourist destinations.

There is still a debate whether cultural tourism has a positive or negative impact on tourists and local communities. In the end, the purpose of cultural tourism is to meet the needs of tourists for local cultural experiences. Although there are changes in a number of cultural elements, including the timing of the performances or the fragments presented, the basic values of local culture must still be maintained.

Pelaku Interaksi	Contoh Interaksi	Intensitas	Dampak (+, -, 0)	
			Wisatawan	Masyarakat
Wisatawan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pembelian paket 	Rendah	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timbul perasaan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terjadi persaingan antarpekerja (-)
Masyarakat Pekerja	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • wisata • Pembelian souvenir, makanan minuman • Pemakaian jasa akomodasi, transportasi • Pemakaian jasa guide 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tereksplorasi (-) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Berkurangnya sikap tenggang rasa(-)
		Tinggi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adaptasi seni budaya lokal (+) • Pembelajaran budaya (+) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perubahan seni budayalokal (-) • Pembelajaran budaya (+)
Wisatawan dan Masyarakat Non Pekerja	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pemberian informasi pariwisata • Pertukaran dan pembelajaran budaya • Pertukaran pengalaman dan data pribadi 	Rendah		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timbul perasaan eksploitasi (-)
		Tinggi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timbul budaya pariwisata(0) • Pembelajaran budaya lokal (+) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timbul budaya pariwisata(0) • Perubahan pandanganakan nilai sosial (0) • Adanya efek demonstratif(-) • Pembelajaran budaya (+)

In Table 2 it is shown that the interactions that occur in Lake Toba can be divided into two, namely the interaction between tourists and the working community and between tourists and non-working people. Different intensities of different actors of interaction bring different impacts on both parties. An impact can be viewed as positive or negative when viewed from a different point of view, from the side of tourists or local communities.

4. CONCLUSION

Through research, it is concluded that the interactions that occur for tourism purposes, namely tourist product transactions occupy the highest order in terms of intensity, followed by interactions when tourists meet local people at a tourist attraction, such as a cafe or restaurant on Lake Toba. Meanwhile, interactions to exchange information, both about tourism and personal experiences, rarely last long if they are not preceded or followed by other forms of interaction. Furthermore, it can be said that the interaction between tourists and local communities can be classified into two, namely between tourists and local workers and non-working local communities.

The socio-cultural impacts as a result of the interaction include the occurrence of demonstrative effects, the emergence of changes in social values such as changes in norms, views on the relationship between men and women, the nature of materialism and changes in cultural elements in performing arts, cultural learning and the creation of tourism culture. This impact is more influential on local communities than on tourists due to the short period of tourist visits. The interactions that have more impact on the lives of both of them come from contact with the achievement of tourist transactions and when the two meet at the same tourist attraction. All of them can be positive or negative considering that although there is a change in the socio-cultural values of the local community, this attracts the attention of tourists to visit Lake Toba.

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