The Influence of Green Paradise Ecotourism on the Community's Welfare Level in Bumi Agung Sub-District, Pagar Alam City

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Abstract	
Keywords: Ecotourism, Welfare, Green Paradise, Community, Pagar Alam	This study was conducted to determine the extent of the influence of Green Paradise ecotourism on the welfare of the community in Bumi Agung Sub-district, Pagaralam City. The research employed a quantitative approach using a survey method. Data were collected from 100 respondents who are residents living near the tourism area. The analysis revealed that Green Paradise ecotourism has a positive and significant effect on the level of community welfare. This is supported by the results of a simple linear regression analysis, which produced the regression equation $Y = 26.343 + 0.569X$, with a significance value of 0.000, which is less than 0.05. This indicates that the alternative hypothesis (Ha) is accepted and the null hypothesis (H0) is rejected. Moreover, the t-test showed a calculated t-value of 8.933, which is greater than the t-table value of 1.660. The coefficient of determination (R Square) was 0.449 or 44.9%, indicating that Green Paradise ecotourism can explain 44.9% of the variation in community welfare, while the remaining 55.1% is influenced by other factors not examined in this study. These findings clearly indicate that the existence of Green Paradise ecotourism has a positive impact on the welfare of the surrounding community.
Abstrak	
Kata kunci: *Ekowisata, Kesejahteraan, Green Paradise,Masyarakat, Pagar alam* Article history: Received: 27-04-2025 Revised: 30-06-2025 Accepted: 10-07-2025	*Penelitian ini dilakukan untuk mengetahui seberapa besar pengaruh ekowisata Green Paradise terhadap kesejahteraan masyarakat di Kelurahan Bumi Agung, Kota Pagaralam. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan metode survei. Data dikumpulkan dari 100 responden yang merupakan warga sekitar kawasan wisata. Dari hasil analisis yang dilakukan, tersebut didapati bahwa bahwa ekowisata Green Paradise berpengaruh secara positif dan signifikan terhadap tingkat kesejahteraan masyarakat sekitar. Hal ini dibuktikan melalui hasil analisis regresi linier sederhana dengan persamaan $Y = 26,343 + 0,569X$ dan nilai signifikansi 0,000 yang lebih kecil dari 0,05, artinya Ha diterima dan H0 ditolak, Selain itu, hasil uji t menunjukkan nilai t-hitung sebesar 8,933 yang lebih besar dari t-tabel sebesar 1,660, serta nilai koefisien determinasi (R Square) sebesar 0,449 atau 44,9%, yang berarti ekowisata Green Paradise mampu menjelaskan 44,9% perubahan tingkat kesejahteraan masyarakat, sedangkan sisanya 55,1% dipengaruhi oleh faktor lain yang tidak diteliti dalam penelitian ini. terlihat bahwa keberadaan ekowisata Green Paradise memang memberikan pengaruh yang positif terhadap kesejahteraan masyarakat.*

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INTRODUCTION

Ecotourism is a form of tourism that emphasizes environmental conservation and aims to foster appreciation for nature and local culture. Ecotourism activities are typically conducted in natural areas that remain

relatively untouched, guided by key principles such as environmental sustainability, providing economic benefits to local communities, and raising awareness. As part of a solution to harmonize environmental preservation with the economic needs of local communities, ecotourism is expected to continue growing in line with increasing tourist interest in nature-based and sustainable experiences. Optimal tourism development, both by the government and the private sector, can increase the number of tourist arrivals from one region to another and stimulate social interaction between tourists and local residents, depending on the community's adaptability in economic, social, and cultural aspects. Currently, there is a global shift in tourism trends towards nature-based travel. This shift is largely due to tourists' growing fatigue with artificial tourist attractions. This presents an opportunity for Indonesia to fully leverage its natural beauty to attract international tourists to destinations that emphasize nature and local culture. While developed countries offer tourism packages featuring advanced technologies, Indonesia holds great potential for tourism development based on natural resources (ecotourism), as seen in Pagar Alam City, South Sumatra Province. Nature tourism is a form of recreation and tourism that utilizes the potential of natural resources and ecosystems, either in their original form or combined with human creativity (Pramushinta Arum Pynanjung, 2018).

Green Paradise is one of the leading ecotourism destinations in Pagar Alam City, South Sumatra, located in Bumi Agung Village, North Dempo District. Initiated by Hamzari Hamka in 1992, the area was originally intended as a site for conservation and the development of environmentally friendly agriculture. It was not until 2016 that the area was officially opened to the public as a tourism destination based on the concept of ecotourism. Covering approximately 2.5 hectares, Green Paradise utilizes the natural wealth of Pagar Alam, including the scenic backdrop of Mount Dempo. The site is designed to offer a sustainable tourism experience, emphasizing environmental preservation while also supporting the welfare of the local community.

Green Paradise offers a variety of facilities that combine natural elements with educational aspects. Its presence has had a positive impact on the surrounding community. In addition to serving as a source of income through the tourism sector, it has also created job opportunities and opened business prospects for local residents, such as food services, handicrafts, and tour guiding. Overall, Green Paradise stands as a successful example of ecotourism development that not only relies on natural beauty but also incorporates educational value, sustainability, and community empowerment.

Title: The Influence of Green Paradise Ecotourism on the Community's Welfare Level in Bumi Agung Sub-District, Pagar Alam City

However, the existence of Green Paradise also raises several important questions. Does the ecotourism activity truly have a significant positive impact on the community's welfare? Are local residents actively involved in the management of the ecotourism site? Furthermore, what are the effects of ecotourism on the social, cultural, and environmental aspects of Bumi Agung Village? On the other hand, challenges in managing the ecotourism site—such as limited accessibility, suboptimal promotion, and a lack of competent human resources—also demand attention. To ensure that Green Paradise ecotourism provides long-term benefits, an in-depth analysis is needed regarding its impact on the well-being of the local community (Paskalis Yuri Alfred, 2019).

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a quantitative approach, as the researcher develops and uses various systematic methods, theories, and hypotheses related to natural phenomena currently occurring, using a survey method. In other words, the researcher collects data directly from the field through direct observation and interaction.

In terms of its nature, this research is descriptive-analytical. Descriptive-analytical research presents data obtained in the field and then analyzes it using theoretical foundations as a basis for interpretation. Therefore, the researcher analyzes and describes all the phenomena observed in the field.

The data analysis model used in this research is regression analysis, which examines the dependency of a dependent variable on one or more independent variables. The purpose of this analysis is to predict the population mean or the expected value of the dependent variable based on the known values of the independent variables. Before performing this analysis, to obtain accurate results, the researcher must conduct testing on the data collection instruments. The analytical testing methods used include validity and reliability tests.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The population used in this study consists of residents living around the Green Paradise ecotourism area in Pagar Alam City, totaling 1,961 males and 1,784 females, with a combined population of 3,745 individuals. The sample of this research consists of 100 residents whose homes are closest to the Green Paradise tourist attraction (Siti, 2022).

The data analysis model in this study uses regression analysis, which is the study of the dependency of one dependent variable on one or more independent variables. The goal is to predict the population mean or average value of the dependent variable based on known values of the independent variables. Before

conducting this analysis, in order to ensure accurate results, the researcher performs testing on the data collection instruments. The testing methods used in this study include validity and reliability tests.

1. Validity and Reliability Tests

To test validity, the researcher uses the SPSS software with the Pearson bivariate correlation (product-moment Pearson) technique. Once the necessary data and information are collected, the researcher organizes and processes the data systematically according to the research problems and analyzes the data using quantitative analysis methods.

The reliability test in this study is also conducted using the SPSS program. The reliability threshold used is 0.60. If the reliability value obtained is less than 0.60, the result is considered not reliable.

2. Normality Test

The normality test is used to determine whether the data is normally distributed. For this purpose, the existing data must meet the assumption of normality. The test used is the One-Sample Kolmogorov–Smirnov Test. The data is considered normally distributed if the significance value is greater than 0.05.

Simple Linear Regression Analysis In this study, simple linear regression analysis serves as the statistical technique used to examine whether there is an influence of Green Paradise Ecotourism on the Welfare Level of the Community in Bumi Agung Village, Pagar Alam City.

3. Hypothesis Testing

Partial Test (t-test)

The significance level used is 0.05, with the criterion that if tcount > ttable, then H1 is accepted and H0 is rejected.

If tcount > ttable at a confidence level of 95% (α = 0.05), then H0 is accepted and H1 is rejected.

4. Coefficient of Determination (R^2 Test)

The coefficient of determination is used to measure the percentage of variation in the dependent variable that can be explained by the independent variable(s) included in the model.

Respondents' Gender Data

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	49	49.0	49.0	49.0
	Female	51	51.0	51.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Title: The Influence of Green Paradise Ecotourism on the Community's Welfare Level in Bumi Agung Sub-District, Pagar Alam City

Source: Primary data, processed using SPSS version 22

Based on the table above, there are 49 male respondents and 51 female respondents, making a total of 100 respondents. The results of the study indicate that the number of female respondents is slightly higher than that of male respondents.

Data Analysis Technique

Validity Test

The validity test is a statistical procedure used to assess how accurately a measurement tool (such as a questionnaire) measures the concept it is intended to measure.

Validity Test Results for Variable X

No	Corrected Item-Total Correlation (r calculated)	Sig.	status
1.	0,520	0,000	Valid
2.	0,553	0,000	Valid
3.	0,469	0,000	Valid
4.	0,538	0,000	Valid
5.	0,380	0,000	Valid

Source: Primary data, processed using SPSS version 22

Based on the results of the validity test on variable X, which was processed using SPSS version 22, the corrected item-total correlation values for the five question items ranged from 0.380 to 0.553. The first item had a correlation value of 0.520, the second item 0.553, the third item 0.459, the fourth item 0.538, and the fifth item 0.380. All items showed a significance value (sig.) of 0.000, which is less than 0.05, indicating that all items are valid.

Validity Test Results for Variable Y

No	Calculated R (Corrected Item-Total Correlation)	Sig.	status
1.	0,240	0,016	Valid
2.	0,499	0,000	Valid
3.	0,447	0,000	Valid
4.	0,481	0,000	Valid
5.	0,616	0,000	Valid

Source: Primary data, processed using SPSS version 22

Based on the results of the validity test for Variable Y, which was analyzed using SPSS version 22, the corrected item-total correlation values for the five question items ranged from 0.240 to 0.616. The first item had a correlation value of 0.240 with a significance value of 0.016, while the second to fifth items had correlation values of 0.499, 0.447, 0.481, and 0.616, respectively, all with a significance value of 0.000. All items showed significance values below 0.05, indicating that each item meets the validity requirements.

Reliabilitas Test

Reliability testing is the process of determining the extent to which an instrument or measuring tool can provide consistent and dependable results when used to measure the same variable at different times or with the same group of subjects.

Reliability Test Results for Variable X

No	Cronbach's Alpha	Description
1.	0,883	Reliabel

Source: Primary data, processed using SPSS version 22

Reliability testing is conducted to determine the extent to which the research instrument used has internal consistency in measuring the intended construct. This test was performed using SPSS version 22, where all items under Variable X were analyzed using the Cronbach's Alpha model, resulting in a value of 0.883. Based on reliability criteria, if the Cronbach's Alpha value is greater than 0.6, the instrument is considered reliable.

Reliability Test Results for Variable Y

No	Cronbach's Alpha	Description
1.	0,798	Reliabel

Source: Primary data, processed using SPSS version 22

Based on the reliability test results for Variable Y, the Cronbach's Alpha value is 0.798. This reliability test was conducted using SPSS version 22 with the Cronbach's Alpha method to assess the internal consistency of the research instrument. The obtained Cronbach's Alpha value exceeds 0.60, which is in accordance with the standard set by Nunnally (1978), stating that an instrument is considered reliable if the Alpha value is greater than 0.60.

Normality Test

The normality test is a statistical procedure used to determine whether the observed data follow a distribution that approximates a normal distribution. The research results consist of descriptive statistics, assumption tests, and hypothesis

testing results (if quantitative), or interview and observation data or other qualitative data (if qualitative), or data from critical literature reviews, which are then analyzed critically.

Simple Linear Regression Analysis

Simple linear regression is a parametric test, meaning that this test makes certain assumptions about the data.

Simple Linear Analysis

No	Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	sig
		B	Std. error	Beta		
1.	(constant)	26. 343	3.972		6.632	.000
	Pengaruh ekowisata	.569	.064	.670	8.933	.000

Source: Primary data, processed using SPSS version 22

Based on the results of the simple linear regression analysis presented in Table 4.6, the regression equation obtained is: Y = 26.343 + 0.569X. The regression coefficient value for the ecotourism variable is 0.569 with a significance value (sig) of 0.000, which is less than 0.05. This indicates that the ecotourism variable has a positive and significant effect on community welfare. The t-count value for the ecotourism variable is 8.933, which is significantly greater than the t-table value, therefore H_0 is rejected and H_a is accepted.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing is a decision-making method based on data analysis.

Partial Test (t-test)

The partial test (t-test) is used to determine whether an independent variable has a significant effect on the dependent variable individually.

No	Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	sig
		B	Std. error	Beta		
1.	(constant)	26. 343	3.972		6.632	.000
	The Impact of Ecotourism	.569	.064	.670	8.933	.000

Source: Primary data, processed using SPSS version 22

Based on the results of the partial test (t-test) presented in Table 4.7, it is found that the ecotourism variable has a regression coefficient value of 0.569 with a standard error of 0.064. The t-count value for the ecotourism variable is 8.933, with a significance level of 0.000, which is smaller than 0.05. This indicates that the ecotourism variable has a statistically significant effect on community welfare. The beta coefficient value of 0.670 shows that the influence of the ecotourism variable is strong in this model. Thus, it can be concluded that partially, the ecotourism variable has a positive and significant impact on the welfare of the community in Bumi Agung Village.

Coefficient of Determination Test

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.670a	.449	.443	4.767

Source: Primary data, processed using SPSS version 22

Based on the table above, the coefficient of determination (R^2) is 0.44 or 44%. This indicates that the ecotourism variable explains 44% of the variation in community welfare, while the remaining 56% is explained by other factors outside the model that were not examined in this study.

DISCUSSION

Based on the results of the simple linear regression test, which showed a significance value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$), it can be concluded that the presence of Green Paradise Ecotourism significantly influences the welfare level of the community in Bumi Agung Subdistrict, Pagar Alam City. This finding aligns with the theory of sustainable tourism, which states that well-developed ecotourism can serve as a tool for empowering the local economy through job creation and the strengthening of micro-enterprises (Honey, 2008).

In addition to quantitative data, interviews, field observations, and documentation revealed that Green Paradise Ecotourism is managed by a private entity that involves local communities in various sectors, including labor, the provision of supporting facilities, and promotion based on local wisdom. This system reflects the principle of community participation, which in tourism literature is known as a key factor for successful and sustainable destination management (Scheyvens, 1999).

However, community participation in management is not yet fully optimal, particularly in terms of capacity building and joint decision-making.

This is in line with the findings of Tosun (2000), who identified three types of community participation in tourism: spontaneous, induced, and coercive participation. In this case, Green Paradise tends to fall under the induced category, which does not fully empower local communities to take control.

In terms of environmental sustainability, Green Paradise's management demonstrates efforts to conserve natural resources through routine cleaning, conservation activities, and ecosystem education for both visitors and residents. This reflects the implementation of conservation-based ecotourism principles as emphasized by TIES (The International Ecotourism Society, 2015), which highlights environmental responsibility as the foundation of nature-based tourism management.

Economically, the findings of this study support previous research by Suhel and Bashir (2018), which stated that ecotourism can increase community income through the growth of small businesses such as food stalls, parking services, local motorcycle taxis, and phone credit kiosks, as observed in Bumi Agung. The influx of tourists has stimulated a dynamic local economic cycle, expanding markets for micro-enterprises and strengthening the economic structure of the community based on the informal sector.

The community's awareness of cleanliness and environmental sustainability has also increased. This supports the argument by Wearing and Neil (2009), who noted that successful ecotourism can internalize environmental conservation values into the collective behavior of communities surrounding tourist destinations. To strengthen its long-term impact, Green Paradise management should adopt a collaborative governance model that involves cooperation between the management, the community, and the government. This aligns with the recommendation of Jamal and Stronza (2009), who emphasize the importance of stakeholder partnerships to ensure equitable benefit distribution and the sustainability of ecotourism.

Furthermore, strengthening is needed through training in tourism services, environmental management, and regulatory and promotional support from the government. This empowerment supports the concept of Community-Based Ecotourism (CBET), in which communities are not merely objects, but active subjects in managing nature-based tourism (Scheyvens, 1999). With sustainable and inclusive management, Green Paradise can function not only as a nature tourism destination but also as a catalyst for improving economic welfare, strengthening local identity, and increasing ecological awareness among the people of Bumi Agung.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research conducted in Bumi Agung Subdistrict, Pagar Alam City, it can be concluded that the Green Paradise ecotourism has a positive and significant effect on the welfare level of the surrounding community. This is supported by the results of the simple linear regression analysis, which produced the equation Y = 26.343 + 0.569X and a significance value of 0.000, which is less than 0.05. This means that Ha is accepted and H0 is rejected. Moreover, the t-test results show a t-count value of 8.933, which is greater than the t-table value of 1.660, and the coefficient of determination (R Square) is 0.449 or 44.9%. This indicates that Green Paradise ecotourism explains 44.9% of the variation in community welfare, while the remaining 55.1% is influenced by other factors not examined in this study.

These findings demonstrate that the presence of Green Paradise has a tangible impact, particularly in the economic sector, as local residents have experienced an increase in income from businesses such as food stalls, mobile phone credit kiosks, motorcycle taxis, repair shops, and agriculture. Additionally, the community has become more aware and engaged in environmental preservation.

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