
School Reunion Culture in Regional Tourism Development

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Abstract

This study aims to find out how the reunion culture is from the perspective of regional tourism development. The method used is a qualitative descriptive research method where data is obtained from interviews and observations of the author at reunions that have been attended, as well as by examining research related to reunions and tourism development. The study results show that school reunions, usually held by school alums at the school or somewhere in the area where the school is located, can be utilized to develop tourism in the area. Alums can be empowered to become actors who can promote tourism objects in the area to people in other areas, become motivators by providing innovative thoughts to develop regional tourism, also become facilitators who provide an understanding of tourism in the area, as well as being mediators by capturing relationships and interested investors even become investors for the development and development of regional tourism.

Keywords: Reunion Culture; Perspective; Tourism Development

INTRODUCTION

Currently, humans live in a very dynamic movement, where for the sake of work and the economy, humans can live in shifts according to the demands of their duties and work. Often because of the competence that someone has, they have to apply for the position and work outside the area where they live due to the limited job opportunities available there.

Big cities are the main destination for job seekers because that is where all the opportunities to get a job are available. Big cities can attract people from various regions to work and seek their fortune in the economic field, although there are other reasons for someone who wants to live in a big city.

This situation causes existing human resources in the regions to flow to urban areas, causing a higher level of progress in big cities because of competence and capital sources. Conversely, parts need more human resources to develop sites, especially if the available capital sources are insignificant. This makes the region must obtain other resources that will be able to drive the economy in the region. The main thing is the natural resources available in the area. However, even these natural resources require planning, development, and investment if they are to be used to drive the regional economy. One discourse the region can realize is tourism development by utilizing the beautiful natural resources in the area.

One source of regional income is the tourism sector. The increase in tourists visiting the area affects the income and welfare of the community because the high demand for

goods and services will open up job opportunities for the community. Interest is one of the tools to measure the success of regional development and maintain and foster social and economic stability. This condition can also minimize the occurrence of social inequality in society (1).

According to Siti Hajar et al. (2022), tourism development is a leading sector and significantly contributes to increasing foreign exchange earnings and regional income. Tourism can open spaces and opportunities for people to be better because tourism activities can open up job opportunities for locals who can be directly involved when viewed from a socio-economic aspect. Meanwhile, when viewed from the socio-cultural aspects of people's lives, direct interaction between the community and tourists in tourism activities can improve the quality of life of the local community. Therefore tourism development aims to create a prosperous society (2).

According to Yoeti in Sefira, et al, Indonesia has a very wide area supported by various natural resources, including the wealth of regional cultural arts, customs, and the beauty of its natural panorama which has the potential to be processed, developed and utilized to improve people's welfare and development national (3).

Tourism development has received serious attention from the government because all that remains is to take advantage of natural scenery as a recreation area that attracts tourists to visit that place. Of course, the government must plan tourism development by preparing the necessary facilities so tourists can use them. This kind of tourism development is more practical than processing mineral or mining resources and agriculture or plantations. Because of this, the tourism potential is quite promising to generate income for the region and stimulate the economy of the local people who take part in taking advantage of tourism spots to open up new jobs that also support the direction of tourism development in question.

In carrying out reunions that are usually carried out by alums of a particular school which is generally carried out in a specific school or area where the school is located. A reunion is a forum for gathering alums from within and outside the region, which is usually carried out in specific periods determined together. The gathering of alums simultaneously from various parts outside the area can be used for multiple purposes, including establishing a friendship and strengthening unity and unity among fellow alums. It can also be used to increase promotion and the number of tourists to tourist spots in that area. The benefits of having a reunion event in a room can be directed at motivating the region to develop existing tourism potential and if possible obtain new sources of investment from alums and colleagues. The alums can act as motivators, facilitators, mediators, and even investors for regional tourism development. If the reunion continues to be cultured, it will undoubtedly bring positive things to the region, significantly driving the regional economy, especially in the tourism sector and other related sectors.

The problem is how to make the reunion culture a way to develop regional tourism and how to make reunions an effort to raise investment for tourism development so that it can move the wheels of the regional economy and open new jobs for the local community. The solution that can be offered is to pay more attention to activities that attract tourists to come to the area, such as school reunions. We can imagine how many schools there are in a room and how many alums have succeeded in occupying strategic positions in the

government and private sectors that can be utilized to develop regional tourism potential, especially if the local government is serious about building tourist spots and developing regional art and culture as an attraction that can effectively attract tourists to visit the area.

METHOD

The research method is carried out by examining the results of previous research and collecting data directly through observation and by interviewing several people who have been directly involved in reunion activities, then the results are analyzed qualitatively by describing the results of the research in a conclusion that can describe the school reunion culture in the perspective of tourism development, especially from the positive side, namely its benefits for tourism development.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

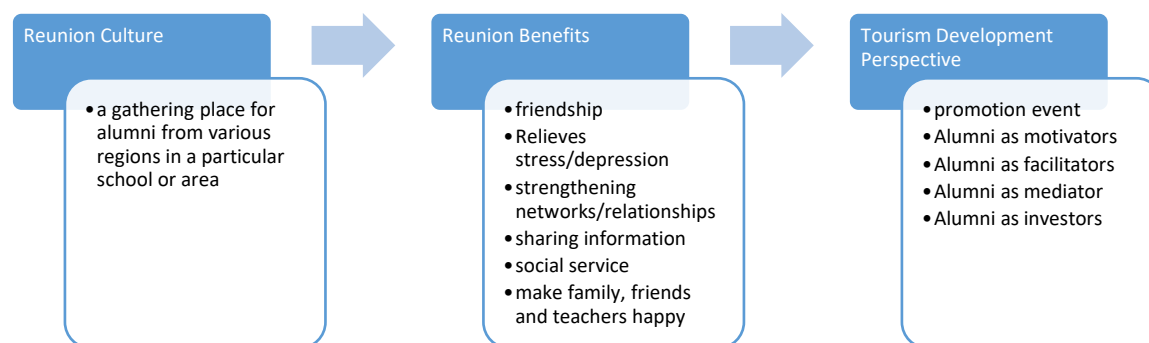


Figure 1. Reunion Culture and Its Benefits
Source: The results of the author's innovation

From figure 1 above, the discussion starts with a review of reunions, which are activities that serve as a gathering place for people who are alumni of a particular school. The alums came from various other areas outside the school or where the reunion event was held. Generally, reunion activities are held at the school of origin or in the place of origin of the school where the alums previously attended school or studied. The desire to get together again with old school friends is natural because it is human nature always to want to get together to share stories or find out about each other's circumstances. The alums consist of those who have been successful in their careers and those who are less fortunate in terms of their careers. Those who are lucky have a good social status in society in terms of work and income, and material wealth. At the same time, those who are less successful are generally those who do not have an excellent job in terms of their employment status, income, and social status in society.

Reunion can be interpreted positively or negatively depending on the perspective of the person looking at it. Perspective according to Martono (2010) is a way of looking at a problem that occurs or a particular point of view used in seeing a phenomenon. (4) If interpreted negatively, the reunion could be a place to "show off" success among alumni. Those who are narrow-minded take the reunion opportunity as a venue to show off their

work, wealth, and high social status in society. However, the reunion is an opportunity to reconnect with alums and teachers and take advantage of the benefits obtained from the reunion.

Experts say that many benefits can be drawn from a reunion activity. The purpose of the reunion is to be a place to re-attach relationships at school, strengthen strained friendships, and find friends who have disappeared. Reunions can also be a place to exchange stories with old friends. Meeting old friends can strengthen loose networks. Who knows, your friends have relationships with other people who can support your business, business, career, or friendship. A business deal could start with a reunion (5).

The benefits of the reunion can be concluded, among others: feeling back to school, believed to be able to make longevity, relieving stress and severe depression, strengthening the network of friendship connections, establishing friendly ties and exchanging information, restoring individual existence, become a place for social service, make family, friends, and teachers happy (6).

In reunion activities, besides meeting with friends and teachers, it is always followed by other activities such as social service events by assisting those who are less fortunate, especially alum families, and providing certain facilities assistance to schools. Alums can also help give schools suggestions and solutions to improve their performance, helping other alums in terms of jobs and careers.

Another activity that always takes part in reunion activities is visiting tourist attractions in the area where the reunion event is held. (Picture 2) While returning home, or visiting places where reunions are usually used for tourism in that area. In one of the reunion activities attended by researchers, one of the alums has the status of head of tourism in the area. In his remarks, he expressed his hope that the reunion will be held so that alums will play a role in developing tourism in the region because alums can make various efforts as a form of their love for the area of origin of the school.

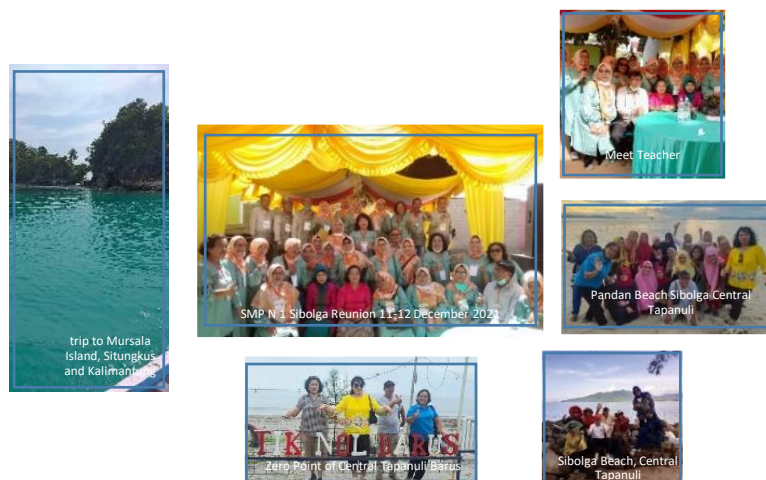


Figure 2. Reunion and Tourism
Source: Field Research Results

Tourism development is an effort to develop or advance tourist objects so that these attractions are better and more attractive in terms of places and objects in them to attract

tourists to visit them (7). The goal of tourism development is not just to increase foreign exchange earnings for the country, but furthermore, it is hoped that tourism can play a role as a catalyst for development (agent of development) (8).

There are many efforts that alums can make in terms of regional tourism development, including promoting, as a motivator, as a facilitator, as a mediator, and as an investor. The ability of alums to jointly promote regional tourism is possible, given the wide network owned by alums. Some alums can play a role in developing regional tourism, by contributing innovative thoughts to developing regional tourism and becoming motivators who actively create regional tourism. Alums can act as facilitators by always providing understanding about the importance of tourism development and common goals in regional tourism development at every opportunity to the community or in events that allow for that. Furthermore, alums can act as mediators between local governments and investors who are interested in regional tourism and want to participate in tourism development in that area. And finally, it is hoped that alums will immediately act as investors to fight for regional tourism development.

The arrival of alums in a group to an area to attend a school reunion is already a way for regional income, especially when accompanied by visits to tourist attractions. Therefore the existence of cultural reunions is not a negative thing that must be opposed. Instead, it must be supported so that the spread of development, especially tourism and regional income is more evenly distributed. The reunion will also strengthen the sense of brotherhood and unity among alums, regional unity, and unity as the Indonesian nation, regardless of social status, ethnic differences, and others. With the efforts made by the alums, many benefits will be obtained for the alumni themselves, teachers, schools, and the area concerned. Reunions can be used as a positive culture for the progress of the Indonesian nation and the improvement of the Indonesian region and state.

CONCLUSION

School reunion culture is an activity carried out repeatedly in specific periods where all alums from the same school gather in one place, often at the school of origin or the area where the school of origin is located. Alums come from various regions to reminisce about their time at school, stay in touch with friends and teachers who have not seen each other for a long time, and re-establish and strengthen friendship networks among fellow alums. Apart from gathering at reunions, it is usually followed by other activities such as social service activities such as assisting schools, teachers, and alums families who are less fortunate. Networks of friends or relations can be used to support and help each other among alums and their families, for example, in terms of work, exchanging information, and so on. Another activity that accompanies the reunion is visiting tourist spots in the area. The arrival of these alumni has added to regional income from the tourism sector. But alums can also be empowered to do several things for the benefit of regional tourism development, such as: promoting tourism objects to people in other regions, providing motivation in the form of innovative suggestions and thoughts related to tourism development in the area (motivators), becoming facilitators by giving explanations and understanding regarding tourism potential as well as inviting relations and investors from within and outside the region to play a role in the development of tourism in the area

(mediator), and if possible become investors and drivers for the growth and development of tourism in the region. Thus the reunion culture carried out by alums from various schools in the area is very beneficial for the development and development of tourism in the area.

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