

Proceedings International Conference on Marine Tourism and Hospitality Studies, Page 377-391, Volume 2 No.1 (2025)
ISSN (Online) : 3064-352X
https://doi.org/10.33649/iconmths.v2i1.847
Received: October 2025/ Revised: October 2025/ Accepted: October 2025

PROCEEDINGS INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON MARINE TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY STUDIES
https://journal.poltekparmakassar.ac.id/index.php/IConMTHS

DEVELOPING INCLUSIVE TOURISM: IMPLEMENTATION OF TOURISM PRINCIPLES AT BIRA BEACH, SOUTH SULAWESI

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Abstract

This study explores the implementation of inclusive tourism at Bira Beach, Bulukumba Regency, South Sulawesi, focusing on accessibility and local community empowerment as key components of sustainable coastal tourism. Although Bira Beach possesses exceptional natural potential, several challenges remain—particularly limited accessibility for people with disabilities and insufficient community involvement in destination management. Using a qualitative evaluative approach, this research applies the Universal Design Principles framework combined with community empowerment theory to assess the effectiveness of inclusive tourism development programs. Data were obtained through interviews, participatory observation, and documentation involving local residents, tourism stakeholders, and government representatives. The findings indicate that accessibility facilities, such as ramps, special toilets, and digital information systems, are still inadequate, resulting in unequal opportunities for all visitors. In addition, local communities are mostly involved in small-scale tourism activities and have limited participation in strategic decision-making processes. This condition constrains the realization of sustainable and inclusive tourism benefits. The study recommends improving physical and digital accessibility, enhancing training and capacity-building programs for local residents, and strengthening collaboration between government, private sectors, and non-governmental organizations. The integration of inclusive design and community empowerment can support Bira Beach's transformation into an accessible and sustainable marine tourism destination that benefits all stakeholders.

Keywords: *accessibility, Bira beach, community empowerment, inclusive tourism, sustainable tourism*

1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is an archipelagic country rich in natural resources and cultural heritage. With more than 17,000 islands, Indonesia boasts extraordinary natural beauty, making it one of the world's primary tourist destinations. One of the sectors with significant potential is marine tourism, which includes activities such as diving, snorkeling, surfing, and ecotourism. Among the marine tourism destinations in Indonesia, South Sulawesi stands out as a province renowned for its underwater beauty. Bira Beach in Bulukumba Regency is one of the premier destinations, featuring fine white sand, clear seawater, and a stunning sunset view. In addition, Bira Beach serves as a gateway to the Selayar Islands, which are known for their beautiful coral reefs. With its vast potential, Bira Beach has the opportunity to become a renowned marine tourism destination both nationally and internationally.

However, despite Bira Beach's extraordinary tourism potential, this destination faces several challenges in its management. One of the greatest challenges is the low level of accessibility,

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particularly for tourists with disabilities and other vulnerable groups, as well as the limited empowerment of local communities in managing the tourism sector. The restricted accessibility hinders tourists from fully utilizing the available facilities at Bira Beach, while the insufficient empowerment of the local community prevents them from being actively involved in the management and planning of the tourism destination. As a result, Bira Beach has not yet been able to fully provide economic benefits to the local community and impedes the development of sustainable tourism.

The importance of discussing this topic within the context of Indonesian tourism is evident, given that the tourism sector makes a significant contribution to the national economy. Data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) indicates that the tourism sector contributed approximately 4.2% to Indonesia's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2023, with South Sulawesi experiencing substantial growth in the number of tourist visits. However, to ensure the sustainability of this sector, inclusive and sustainable destination planning is crucial. Inclusive tourism, as highlighted by Dwyer (2010), is a concept that emphasizes providing facilities accessible to everyone, free from physical, social, or economic barriers. By adhering to this principle, the tourism sector can offer opportunities for all individuals to enjoy tourist destinations, including tourists with disabilities and marginalized communities that have been previously excluded.

Numerous studies have been conducted regarding the concept of inclusive tourism and the empowerment of local communities. For instance, a study by Kuncoro (2021) in *Tourism Management* asserts that "good accessibility not only enhances the tourist experience but also strengthens the competitive position of a tourist destination." This indicates that proper accessibility management will not only enhance the appeal of a destination but also improve its image. (Suryani, n.d.2022) The *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* also emphasizes that many tourist destinations in Indonesia have yet to adopt inclusive accessibility principles that meet the needs of all segments of society. A study by Murti et al. (2024) further asserts that inclusive tourism provides equal opportunities for everyone, including persons with disabilities, to enjoy tourism activities. In line with Indonesia's commitment to realizing the right to tourism for persons with disabilities, as outlined in Law No. 8 of 2016 on Persons with Disabilities, the principle of inclusive tourism is expected to be implemented more widely.

In addition, the empowerment of local communities is also a crucial component in creating inclusive and sustainable tourism. The study by (Dewi, 2020) in the *International Journal of Tourism Research* indicates that the economic empowerment of local communities through tourism can provide long-term benefits for improving their quality of life. (Setiawan, 2022) In *Sustainability*, it is also emphasized that the empowerment of local communities is a key indicator in achieving sustainable and inclusive tourism. Local community empowerment is not only about economic improvement but also about involving them in the management of tourist destinations, ensuring that they play an active role in preserving the sustainability and longevity of the tourism sector.

However, despite Bira Beach's great potential, accessibility and local community empowerment remain major issues. According to data from the Bulukumba Regency Tourism Office, accessibility to Bira Beach is still limited. Although the road leading to the beach has been improved, it is not yet fully adequate for three-wheeled vehicles or for tourists with special needs. In addition, the empowerment of local communities in the tourism sector is still limited to boat rentals and souvenir vendors, without involving them in the management of the tourism destination based on the principles of sustainability and inclusion. This indicates that, although the tourism sector has developed, it has not yet fully provided optimal benefits to the local community and has not met the expected standards of inclusive tourism.

The theoretical gap in this research is the limited studies that comprehensively address the relationship between accessibility, local community empowerment, and the development of inclusive tourism in emerging tourist destinations such as Bira Beach. Many studies still focus on the physical aspects of accessibility and government policies, without exploring how local community empowerment can play a role in supporting the sustainability of tourism (Junaid, 2014) states that the concept of sustainability must be applied in tourism planning to ensure that the development of

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this sector does not harm the environment or neglect local communities. However, local community empowerment is often overlooked in the implementation of inclusive tourism policies, as noted by (Smith, 2021) n *Tourism Geography*. A study by (A. Rauf et al., 2020) further emphasizes this issue It shows that inclusive infrastructure design can enhance community participation in tourism activities and support the sustainability of the local economy.

This study aims to address the theoretical gap by examining accessibility and local community empowerment at Bira Beach through an inclusive tourism approach. The research is expected to provide theoretical contributions to the development of the concept of inclusive tourism integrated with local community empowerment, particularly in the context of tourist destinations in Indonesia. By identifying the factors that influence accessibility and empowerment, this study aims to offer practical recommendations for more inclusive and sustainable management of Bira Beach. Thus, this research will make a significant contribution to the development of the inclusive tourism concept in Indonesia, especially in regions with great potential but still limited in terms of accessibility and local community empowerment.

This study is expected to provide deeper insights into how tourism can be conducted inclusively, taking into account the needs of all groups and improving the well-being of local communities through their active participation in the tourism sector. Through this research, it is hoped that there will be an improvement in the quality of accessibility, local community empowerment, and the implementation of inclusive tourism principles that can strengthen Bira Beach's position as a sustainable and mutually beneficial marine tourism destination for all parties.

2. RESEARCH & METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative approach with an evaluative method to assess the effectiveness of inclusive tourism development at Bira Beach, Bulukumba Regency. The aim of this research is to evaluate the extent to which tourism development at Bira Beach has improved accessibility and local community empowerment, and to provide evidence-based recommendations for further improvement. This evaluative approach is essential for assessing the success of implemented programs or policies and offering insights into what is working well and what needs to be improved, in line with the research conducted by Junaid (2018) on the management of Bira Beach as a tourist attraction.

The evaluative research method allows the researcher to provide a systematic and objective assessment of the programs implemented in the context of inclusive tourism. This study adopts the Universal Design Principles theory introduced by (Mace, 1997), These encompass seven fundamental principles in creating an environment that is accessible to all, regardless of age, physical condition, or other limitations. These principles are used to evaluate the accessibility of tourism facilities at Bira Beach, with the aim of understanding to what extent both physical and social design can meet the needs of tourists, including those with physical limitations, as well as assessing the impact on local community participation in tourism management.

In this study, primary data were obtained through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation. Interviews were conducted with local communities directly involved in tourism activities, such as homestay owners, tour guides, and vendors, as well as with local tourism managers and tourism site management bodies to understand the policies and strategies implemented in the development of inclusive tourism. Additionally, participatory observation allowed the researcher to directly observe the physical and social conditions at Bira Beach, as well as the interactions between the local community and tourists in the context of inclusive tourism.

Secondary data were also used to provide a more comprehensive overview of the policies and planning for inclusive tourism development in the area. These secondary data sources include local government reports, development planning documents, and statistical data on tourist visits obtained from the Bulukumba Regency Tourism Office. These documents provide important context regarding government policies and their contributions to the development of inclusive tourism at Bira Beach.

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The data analysis methods in this study include thematic analysis, comparative analysis, and data triangulation. Thematic analysis was used to identify and analyze the main themes emerging from the interview and observation data. Each interview transcript was analyzed inductively to identify patterns related to tourism accessibility, local community empowerment, and the application of universal design principles. Comparative analysis was conducted by comparing data from different sources and informants to identify differences and similarities in perspectives on the development of inclusive tourism at Bira Beach. Data triangulation was performed to enhance the validity of the findings by comparing data obtained through various data collection techniques and different sources.

This study adopts a conceptual framework that combines the Universal Design Principles theory and the local community empowerment theory. Universal Design Principles are used to assess the extent to which facilities at Bira Beach are accessible to all, including tourists with disabilities. Meanwhile, the local community empowerment theory is used to evaluate the extent to which the local community is involved in tourism management and decision-making, as well as how they benefit economically and socially from the tourism sector.

This study is expected to provide implementable recommendations to improve the quality of accessibility and local community empowerment at Bira Beach, as well as to strengthen Bira Beach's position as an inclusive, sustainable, and accessible tourist destination for all.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Accessibility of Inclusive Tourism at Bira Beach

Tourism accessibility at Bira Beach for various groups of people, particularly for tourists with disabilities and vulnerable groups such as the elderly and pregnant women, is an issue that requires in-depth attention. Interviews with stakeholders at Bira Beach indicate that, despite efforts to improve, accessibility issues remain significant.

From the perspective of homestay owners, it was found that, although some improvements have been made, such as providing pathways for wheelchairs, other disability-friendly facilities, such as specially designed bathrooms for people with disabilities, are still very limited (Gillovic & McIntosh, 2020). This is in line with research that indicates that accessibility in tourism encompasses physical aspects that must be addressed in order to make a destination more inclusive (Darcy et al., 2020). Furthermore, homestay owners emphasized the need for government support in enhancing accessibility facilities and providing training to manage homestays that are accessible to all groups (Strelnikova et al., 2023).

"Tour guides also highlighted the challenges in serving tourists with disabilities, noting that terrain that is not always wheelchair-friendly, such as uneven pathways, hinders their tourism experience." (Robles et al., 2020). This reflects that tourism service providers need to be equipped with additional understanding and training related to accessibility needs (Shahzalal & Elgammal, 2023). On the other hand, souvenir vendors expressed a desire to improve accessibility facilities in their areas but felt that there was a lack of attention to this issue from the authorities (Strelnikova et al., 2023).

From the perspective of tourism managers, the Bulukumba Regency Tourism Office also acknowledges that although improvements have been made, disability-friendly infrastructure remains highly limited(Buhalis et al., 2023). They emphasize the importance of involving local communities and other stakeholders in accessibility planning (Rebelo et al., 2022). This aligns with findings that highlight the significance of collaboration among various parties as the key to creating a more inclusive environment at tourism destinations (Nigg & Eichelberger, 2021).

Tourists, both domestic and international, express their appreciation for the beauty of Bira Beach but also share negative experiences related to accessibility challenges faced by tourists with disabilities (Lei, 2020). Tourists with disabilities complain that many facilities are not disability-friendly, such as the path to the beach, which is very difficult to access (Santa, 2020). There is a strong desire to see more attention given to accessibility needs by tourism managers, as it is crucial for ensuring that all visitors can enjoy the tourist site without obstacles (Vrontis et al., 2022)

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Non-governmental organizations focused on the rights of persons with disabilities add that, although some efforts have been made, the level of accessibility at Bira Beach is still far from adequate (Kumar, 2023). They emphasize the importance of involving persons with disabilities in the planning and evaluation processes to ensure that their needs are addressed (Bowtell, 2015). Based on this interview, it can be concluded that, although there is an intention to improve accessibility at Bira Beach, its implementation remains limited. Prioritizing improvements in physical accessibility is urgent, including the provision of disability-friendly public facilities and training for local communities in the management of inclusive tourism. This study's recommendations stress the need for collaboration between the government, tourism managers, and local communities to establish Bira Beach as a tourism destination that is accessible to all groups.

Tabel 1. The results of the analysis of the application of the universal design concept in the development of inclusive tourism at Bira Beach.

Principles of Universal Design	**Aspects Assessed**	**Assessment Indicators**	**Description and Recommendations**
Equality of Use	Equality of Use Physical Accessibility (pedestrian paths, ramps, designated parking spaces)	Availability of disability-friendly pedestrian paths, ramps, elevators, and special parking spaces.	Bira Beach must ensure adequate physical accessibility, including barrier-free paths and easily accessible parking for people with disabilities.
Flexibility in Use	Diverse Facilities for Visitors (wheelchairs, tour alternatives)	Wheelchair facilities, boats, or other mobility aids, alternative tours with various media	offering a range of amenities that can be tailored to guests' requirements, whether they are individuals with special needs or those with disabilities.
Simplicity and Intuitiveness	Clear and Easy-to-Follow Directions, Use of Easy-to-Understand Symbols	Directions and symbols that are easy for all visitors to understand	Instructions should be made simpler with clear, accessible signs and simple-to-understand pictures and symbols.
Digital Information Accessibility	Accessible Website/Application, Information in Various Formats	A website that provides alternative text, audio transcripts, and customizable visual settings.	By offering alternative text, audio transcripts, and programmable visual options, Bira Beach may create a website or application that is accessible to people with disabilities.
Tolerance for Mistakes	Safe Evacuation Routes and Easily Accessible Facilities in Emergency Situations	All guests may quickly reach emergency facilities and clear escape routes.	designs for facilities that lower the possibility of mistakes and offer rapid, convenient access to emergency services.

Based on the results of the observations and the alignment with the research indicators conducted by the researcher, with reference to the application of the universal design concept in the development of inclusive tourism at Bira Beach, the following is an in-depth analysis of various aspects that need attention in order to enhance accessibility and inclusivity in the area.

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i. Equality of Use: Physical Accessibility

Aspects Assessed: a) Disability-Friendly Pedestrian Pathways: Bira Beach must ensure the availability of barrier-free pathways that allow individuals with disabilities to easily access the beach. This includes smooth and safe paths with no physical obstructions, such as piles of sand or rocks, that could hinder access, b) Ramps and Lifts for Accessibility: The presence of ramps or lifts in higher areas is essential to ensure good accessibility for visitors using wheelchairs or other mobility aids, c) Disability-Specific Parking Spaces: Providing adequate and conveniently located parking spaces close to facility entrances will assist disabled tourists or other vulnerable groups, such as the elderly and pregnant women.

The results of the observations indicate that, although efforts have been made to improve the roads and access to the beach, many areas still require improvements related to these facilities. The implementation of wheelchair-accessible paths and designated disability parking spaces remains minimal. This suggests that, while progress has been made, accessibility planning at Bira Beach still requires serious attention to ensure more equitable access for all groups.

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Figure 1: Documentation of Elderly Activity at Bira Beach
Source: Researcher, 2025

ii. Flexibility in Use

Aspects Assessed: a) Diverse Facilities for Visitors: The provision of various mobility aids, such as wheelchairs, accessible boats, or alternative transportation, will offer flexibility for visitors with special needs**,** b) Alternative Tours with Different Media: Visitors with hearing or visual impairments can benefit from alternative tours, such as adequate audio, visual, or text-based guides.

Bira Beach needs to provide various facilities tailored to the specific needs of each visitor, whether they require physical assistance such as wheelchairs, or those who need alternative tours. The use of mobility aids and tours with different media is crucial in creating a more inclusive tourism experience. Therefore, expanding these facilities can enhance the appeal of Bira Beach to a wider range of tourists.

iii. Simplicity and Intuitiveness: Instructions and Information

Assessed Aspect: a) Clear and Easy-to-Follow Directions: Visitors will find it much easier to navigate the seaside area without difficulty if they are given clear directions with easily comprehensible symbols and signage, b) Using Symbols That Are Easy to Understand: Using universal graphics and symbols can help make instructions easier to understand for users from a variety of backgrounds.

The findings of the observation suggest that unambiguous instructions and easily comprehensible symbols are essential to preventing confusion and difficulties for visitors. This applies to all visitors, not just those with disabilities, as elderly people and expectant mothers may require additional time to get about.

iv. Digital Information Accessibility

Assessed Aspect: a) Accessibility Website or Application: It is essential to provide digital platforms that are accessible to people with disabilities, such as websites or applications that offer alternative text and audio transcripts, b) Information in Multiple Formats: Visitors with special needs will find it easier to access information if it is available in multiple formats (text, audio, and video).

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Since many tourists now use technology to plan their journeys, having access to digital information is becoming crucial. Travelers with hearing or vision impairments will find this website or application, which is available in multiple forms, to be quite beneficial. By offering more responsive and inclusive digital services, Bira Beach can improve the experience of its visitors.

v. *Tolerance for Errors: Visitor Safety and Comfort*

Assessed Aspect: a) Safe Evacuation Routes: All visitors, including those in wheelchairs or with other physical restrictions, must have easy access to evacuation routes in order to ensure their safety, particularly during crises, b) Accessible Facilities in Emergency Situations: Management is responsible for making sure that all guests can physically access vital facilities, such as evacuation routes and emergency exits.

It is impossible to overlook safety, particularly in tourist areas. Visitors will feel more comfortable if evacuation routes are made accessible and secure. This further demonstrates the management's dedication to establishing a secure atmosphere for all.

vi. *Reducing Physical Burden: Access to Tourist Facilities and Activities*

Assessed Aspect: a) Easy Access to Beach Areas and Other Facilities: Ensuring that visitors do not have to walk too far or travel too difficult a distance to reach public amenities such as restrooms, dining areas, and seating, b) Reducing the Physical Distance Traveled by Visitors: Since most visitors may have physical restrictions, managers should take into account the distance visitors must travel to reach key places.

Reducing the distance that guests, particularly those with physical restrictions, must go is one of Bira Beach's main problems. Thus, the physical strain on visitors will be lessened by creating more effective routes and consolidating amenities at strategic locations.

vii. *Size and Space for Accessibility*

Assessed Aspect: a) Adequate Space for Mobility Aid Users: Ensure that there are spaces suitable for riding lessons or other forms of mobility in every coastal region. b) Spacious Parking for People with Disabilities: A park specifically designed for people with disabilities, which is very important for providing accessibility and comfort.

Visitors will feel safer and more at ease if there is a sizable enough space for those who require mobility aids like wheelchairs. The beach area and parking lot must be sufficiently large and conveniently accessible for guests with special requirements, according to the controllers..

Bira Beach must keep working to use universal design principles, which give priority to accessibility for all societal groups. Even if there has been some development, there is still much space for growth, especially when it comes to staff training, digital information, and physical accessibility facilities. Bira Beach may evolve into a really inviting tourism destination for everyone by making the design more inclusive and including more stakeholders in the process.

1.1. Accessibility Challenges for Travelers with Disabilities and Other Vulnerable Groups

1.1.1 Physical Acsessibility

Based on the interview results, it was revealed that physical access to the tourist area at Bira Beach is still very limited, especially for tourists with disabilities, the elderly, and pregnant women.

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Figure 2: Documentation of the Process of Elderly Activities at Bira Beach
Source: Peneliti, 2025

"Saya sangat kesusahan untuk turun ke bibir pantai, untung saya punya cucu bisa menggendong saya untuk turun dan beraktivitas disini" Elizabeth (89TH)

The services available to the elderly suffer from numerous flaws, including unlevel sidewalks, a lack of wheelchair ramps in certain locations, and paths to the beach and other public spaces that are not accessible to people with disabilities. This suggests that physical accessibility is still a major obstacle, even with certain advancements like the improved road to the shore..

1.1.2 Limited Facilities for Access:

Regarding amenities, a lot of homestay hosts, tour guides, and souvenir sellers agree that there are still very few accessible restrooms, parking spaces reserved for individuals with disabilities, and rooms big enough for wheelchairs. Travelers with disabilities who believed they still had a lot of trouble accessing some facilities also mentioned this. For instance, a significant problem is the absence of wheelchair accessibility or easily accessible seating for pregnant women and the elderly.

1.2. The Role of Local Communities and Tourism Managers in Improving Accessibility

1.2.1 Local Community Involment:

Homestay hosts, tour guides, and souvenir sellers are examples of local populations engaged in the tourism industry that show a readiness to modify and enhance services for vulnerable or disabled travelers. They do admit, though, that the government and pertinent organizations must continue to promote the improvement of accessibility facilities. For instance, homestay hosts are aware that older travelers and expectant mothers require more easily navigable amenities, however there are currently very few of these available. In a similar vein, souvenir sellers noted that their stores' entrances were too narrow for wheelchairs..

1.2.2 Training and Empowement:

Homestay owners and tour guides hope to receive further training on how to serve tourists with disabilities or other vulnerable groups. This indicates that although there is awareness of the importance of accessibility, empowering local communities still needs to be improved so they can manage more inclusive tourism.

1.2.3 Government and Collaboration with the Private Sector:

Local tourism management organizations recognize the pressing need to enhance physical accessibility and amenities for visitors with disabilities, including the Bira Beach Tourist Object Management Agency and the Tourism Office. The development of disability-friendly infrastructure has been moving slowly, nevertheless, which suggests financial and planning limitations. Thus, when it comes to designing and constructing inclusive infrastructure, it is critical to improve

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cooperation between local governments, the commercial sector, and local communities.

1.3 Advice From Tourist and Non- Govermental Organizations

1.3.1 Tourists with Disabilities:

Tourists with disabilities suggest improving accessibility features, such as ramps, better wheelchair paths, accessible restrooms, and more easily accessible parking. They felt that although there had been some improvements, there were still many difficult-to-reach areas, especially the paths leading to the beach. This underscores the urgent need for more inclusive physical design.

1.3.2 Senior Tourists and Pregnant Women:

Pregnant women and elderly visitors also encounter challenges, particularly because of the uneven walkways and a dearth of amenities like cozy seats. They want facilities that are safer and easier for these disadvantaged populations to access..

1.4 Recommendations for Improved Accessibility Based on the interviews and analysis conducted, several recommendations can be made to improve tourism accessibility at Bira Beach:

1.4.1 Better Accessibility Infrastructure:

It is imperative that local governments and management of tourist destinations develop and construct more accessible facilities right away, including ramps, wheelchair routes, accessible restrooms, and parking areas for visitors with disabilities.

1.4.2 Training and Empowerment of Local Communities:

Special training is required for homestay hosts, tour guides, and souvenir sellers on how to offer welcoming and inclusive services to visitors with disabilities and other vulnerable populations. To raise awareness of the value of accessibility, local governments might start outreach and training initiatives.

1.4.3 Cross-Sector Calloboration:

To create an environment that is accessible to all visitors, without physical, social, or economic barriers, local governments, tourism management, and local communities must work together more closely. Initiatives that engage the community in the planning and construction of infrastructure will foster a greater sense of accountability and concern for inclusive travel.

1.4.4 Evaluation and Participation of Persons with Disabilities:

The planning and assessment of Bira Beach's tourism management should engage people with disabilities. Their demands will be met by the policies and facilities created through a participative approach.

Overall, it is evident that despite Bira Beach's enormous potential to develop into an inclusive travel destination, significant obstacles still exist in the form of physical accessibility and auxiliary amenities. While there has been some progress, much more work has to be done to guarantee that visitors with disabilities, the elderly, expectant mothers, and other vulnerable groups can all enjoy Bira Beach's beauty without any obstacles. To achieve more inclusive and inviting tourism for everyone, cooperation between the government, local communities, tourism managers, and other organizations will be essential.

1.5 Empwerment of the local community in bira Beach

Numerous elements that affect the local community's empowerment are included in the development and management of inclusive tourism at Bira Beach. The findings of interviews conducted with stakeholders in Bira Beach's tourism environment point to both opportunities and difficulties in boosting local community involvement. Through these interviews, it was determined that the best way to empower the local community in tourism management is to take into account

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inclusive tourism principles, which place an emphasis on active involvement, training, and wider accessibility.

As for the factors influencing the empowerment of local communities in the management and development of inclusive tourism at Bira Beach, based on interviews with several individuals directly involved in the tourism sector, they provide valuable insights.

1.5.1 Community Involvement in Tourism Management

The research's distinguishing feature is that, although the majority of participants think there are chances for local communities to get involved in the tourism industry, their participation is still restricted to particular areas, such boat rentals and gift shops

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> *"Belum, saya belum mengikuti pelatihan pariwisata inklusif. Jika ada pelatihan tentang pemasaran dan pengelolaan usaha, itu pasti sangat membantu."* (Arif, 54th)

A policy that promotes increased community participation in the planning and administration of the tourism industry is required. In line with (Zimmerman, 2000) assertion that empowerment is attained when people or groups have the ability to alter and influence decisions pertaining to their lives, the government and other stakeholders must create opportunities for the public to actively participate in decisions pertaining to infrastructure and tourism policies. Local communities' participation in tourist management must be increased in this context, for instance, by involving them in more strategic decision-making processes like destination management and inclusive infrastructure planning.

1.5.2 Empowerment of the local Community's Economy

The local community's revenue benefits from tourism at Bira Beach, however it is still reliant on the busiest travel season. Off-season revenue is quite low

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> *"Pendapatan keluarga saya meningkat sejak sektor pariwisata berkembang. Warung saya lebih ramai, tetapi terkadang saya merasa kurang siap dengan permintaan yang meningkat."* (Tina, 34th)

Programs that diversify community revenue, like skill development and the development of locally marketed, sustainably marketed goods, are crucial in reducing reliance on the tourist season. Economic empowerment involves expanding access to resources that can raise communities' standard of living, according to (Kabeer, 2005) In this sense, economic empowerment means that local communities get long-term economic benefits from tourism rather than solely depending on the peak travel season.

1.5.3 Community Training and Capacity Building

The majority of Bira Beach's local population has not yet benefited from professional instruction in inclusive tourism management. While safety and hospitality training is available, there is still a dearth of training on accessible and inclusive tourist management. According to (Rappapot, 1987), capacity building through education and training is the only way to attain effective empowerment. To improve their ability to serve visitors from a variety of backgrounds and guarantee the inclusive growth of the tourism industry, local communities must receive training. As a result, it is critical that the local population receive more thorough training programs from the government and pertinent institutions.

1.5.4 The Role of the Community in Sustainable Tourism Management

The locals of Bira Beach are already well aware of how important it is to protect the environment and natural sustainability. However, more assistance is still required for sustainable tourist management in the form of community-based policies that protect the underwater habitat and keep

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beaches clean. According to Sen (1999), society must actively participate in the management of natural resources if social and environmental sustainability are to be attained. Therefore, in order to effectively engage the local population in conservation efforts, Bira Beach's tourism management must incorporate sustainability concepts.

1.5.5 Networking and Collaboration among Stakeholders

In Bira Beach, there is still little cooperation between the public and business sectors and the local residents. In order to develop more successful solutions for tourism management, empowerment theory highlights the significance of stakeholder participation. Accordingly, (M. , S. R. , & Q. S. Rauf, 2020) demonstrate that tourists' decisions to visit can be positively influenced by good accessibility, which can only be accomplished with strong collaboration between all stakeholders in the tourism industry.

Generally, the issues raised include skills development training, accessibility for visitors, and the role of the local community in resource and environmental management. One of the main challenges faced by the local community in Bira Beach is the lack of professional training to improve skills in tourism management. The respondents, who are tour guides, indicated that although they have opportunities, their competence needs to be improved thru more systematic and targeted training (Pribadi Iman et al., 2021; Syafrini et al., 2022). Studies on community-based tourism development show that community involvement in training can enhance their ability to manage quality accommodation and tourism services, thereby attracting more visitors (Ariani & Rahaju, 2023; Yuardani et al., 2021). This is consistent with data from other locations which shows that the presence of training programs in the tourism sector has been proven to increase community participation as well as the quality and competitiveness of the services offered (Iswari et al., 2023; Kurniawan, 2020).

Another important concern for the growth of inclusive tourism in Bira Beach is accessibility. According to interviews, there are still few accommodations for travelers with disabilities, which limits their ability to take advantage of the services that are available (Purnomo, 2018; Rifdah Nadhifatur & Kusdiwanggo, 2024). According to other studies, disability-friendly infrastructure is crucial for drawing in this market and fostering a more welcoming travel environment (Sekarlangit et al., 2024). In addition to enhancing tourism, improving accessibility will enable marginalized communities to engage in economic activity (Sekarlangit et al., 2024).

Depending on the time of year and how each respondent runs their business, the revenue from tourism also varies substantially. While some participants worried about volatility because of the off-season, others pointed out that revenue had increased since this sector's rise (Haryati & Matori, 2022). Local communities' well-being has been shown to be improved by the idea of economic empowerment, which encourages their involvement in tourism-related activities. According to research, local communities' role in the development of sustainable tourism can be strengthened by effective management and government support (Arifin Yayu Indriati et al., 2023; Wibawa & Budiasa, 2018).

Lastly, a number of studies have thoroughly documented respondents' opinions regarding the function of local communities in managing sustainable tourism. One important way to increase knowledge of the value of nature conservation is by active community involvement in environmental protection and the promotion of local products (Syam Robingun Suyud El et al., 2023; Tou et al., 2021). It has been demonstrated that a cooperative approach to tourism management that incorporates local people improves the threshold for the development of sustainable tourism (Lesmana & Sulandjari, 2023; Rahmawati & Darwis, 2023).

Overall, it can be said that readily available training, visitor accessibility, efficient management, and active participation in environmental conservation all have an impact on the local community's empowerment in inclusive tourism at Bira Beach. By overcoming these obstacles, local communities will benefit from more inclusive and advantageous tourism development. Furthermore, strengthening local communities through a variety of means will allow them to profit from the long-term

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advantages of the tourism industry in a fair and inclusive manner in addition to being able to take part in its management.

4. CONCLUSION

First, the results of the interviews show that Bira Beach's current tourist amenities are not completely accessible to all facets of society, including those with disabilities and vulnerable populations like the elderly and expectant mothers. Many places are still practically inaccessible despite significant accessibility advancements, especially for guests with physical restrictions. This suggests that in order to guarantee that all tourists may fully enjoy the tourism experience without any obstacles, inclusive infrastructure management and development are crucial (Hamdani, 2022). In order for all community groups to benefit from Bira Beach's tourism, the universal design principles must to be implemented to enhance accessibility (Ubaya & Farid, 2023).

Second, local communities' access to training and extension services, as well as their participation in management and decision-making, are variables that impact their empowerment in inclusive tourism at Bira Beach. It is clear from the interviews that the community still does not actively participate in or contribute to significant choices, even though the Tourism Office and tourism managers have worked to empower the community (Bahukeling et al., 2019; Masrun et al., 2023). Open channels of communication between the government, tourist managers, and the community are necessary to increase local community involvement (Berliandaldo et al., 2021). Enhancing community ability to manage sustainable tourism requires training in tourism management and providing amiable service to all groups, particularly in relation to inclusive tourism (Megawati et al., 2022)

In general, there is a connection between improved accessibility and local community empowerment in Bira Beach tourism management. Attempts to boost community involvement in tourism will be hindered in the absence of sufficient infrastructure. On the other hand, inclusive tourism development based on visitor demands will not be at its best without the community's active participation in planning and execution. In order to create an inclusive tourism environment and provide the community with sustained economic advantages, collaboration between the government, local communities, and third parties such as NGOs is essential (Megawati et al., 2022; Syhamtono et al., 2023).

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