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**TRANSFORMING COASTAL SPACES INTO EVENT DESTINATIONS:
A CASE STUDY OF SUMPANG BINANGAE, BARRU REGENCY-
INDONESIA**

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Abstract

The existing tourism literature offers a limited exploration of coastal areas as venues for organising tourism events. This study aims to (1) assess the current condition of coastal areas from a tourism and event perspective and (2) propose strategies for planning and implementing international events that support tourism development in these regions. The research draws on observations and interviews conducted with fifteen informants, including government officials from the regional tourism board and community members in the Sumpang Binangae sub-district, Barru Regency, Indonesia. Thematic analysis revealed significant opportunities for hosting international tourism events in Sumpang Binangae. However, challenges persist due to the limitations of utilising coastal areas for such events. The study identifies three types of outdoor events—maritime-based, cultural-based, and modern-based—that local stakeholders can effectively plan and organise. It proposes a framework for leveraging coastal areas as locations for international tourism events, emphasising the importance of applying the principles of inseparability, perishability, intangibility, and heterogeneity in event management. Additionally, the study highlights the potential for local residents to become event planners and organisers through targeted training and infrastructure development. This research contributes to the advancement of event planning in marine tourism destinations.

Keywords: Barru Regency, Coastal Area, Sumpang Binangae, Tourism Events

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INTRODUCTION

The local governments of Indonesia have undertaken various initiatives to attract tourists to their regions, with event organisation being a key strategy employed by many stakeholders (Junaid et al., 2023). Competition among destinations intensifies as travel becomes more convenient. Events have emerged as a significant motivator for tourists, either as participants or spectators, and have evolved into a powerful marketing tool for managing and developing tourism (Getz, 2008; Getz & Page, 2016; Rahayu, 2018). This is because tourists' participation in events can enhance the travel experience and provide opportunities for social interaction (Brown et al., 2011; Jago & Shaw, 1998; Richards, 2019). These events allow tourists to connect with local residents, which can positively impact their perceptions of a destination. As such, well-planned and organised tourism events have the potential to greatly improve the image of a region (Wong et al., 2018), making them a strategic tool for attracting visitors.

The academic community has shown increasing interest in researching tourism events. For example, Ismail and Iriani (2021) explored the relationship between hosting tourism-related events and travellers' destination choices. Yuliani and Fedri (2019) found that the implementation of the Minangkabau Travel Mart event positively impacted West Sumatra's tourism branding. Meanwhile, Yustina and Sukana (2021) identified the environmental, sociocultural, and economic benefits of hosting a tourism event in Taman Kumbansari, Denpasar, Bali. Finally, research in Winchester, England revealed that local communities welcomed events as they supported and preserved community culture and the local economy (Seraphin et al., 2018). Overall, there is a growing body of research on the impact of tourism event management towards local communities.

However, limited studies have examined coastal areas as venues for hosting events. Therefore, this paper focuses on Barru Regency as the research setting, given the commitment of its local government to leverage tourism as a strategy for regional development. The Sumpang Binangae Village in Barru Regency is one of the areas where the local government has adopted a tourism-based approach to coastal development. Despite domestic tourists visiting these coastal areas, the short duration of their stay has not significantly benefited the local community. To maximise the potential of these coastal areas, it is essential to organise events that enhance the tourist experience and boost the local economy. Based on this premise, this study aims to (1) assess the current condition of coastal areas from a tourism and event perspective, and (2) propose opportunities for planning and implementing events that support tourism development in these regions. The research contributes to the growing body of knowledge on tourism events in coastal areas.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Events play a crucial role in achieving social, cultural, and corporate goals as they are organised to foster collective experiences that align with specific group or organisational objectives (Bowdin et al., 2006). Since the 1980s, events have been closely tied to tourism, serving as powerful tools to attract visitors, enhance destination appeal, and contribute to regional development (Getz, 2008). Aside from their ability to range from local to international in scale, events provide destinations with the flexibility to cater to diverse tourist motivations, thereby strengthening their tourism potential.

Among the different types of events, festivals are perceived as unique due to their deep cultural connections and community involvement. Rooted in local traditions, festivals often embody a community's identity and reflect aspects such as ethnicity, language, and lifestyle, which appeal to tourists seeking authentic cultural experiences (Yuliza & Pramayoza, 2022). Beyond their cultural significance, festivals contribute to economic growth by enhancing local quality of life through tourism revenue and employment opportunities (Seraphin et al., 2018). Similarly, sports events attract a mix of active participants and spectators, offering them memorable experiences that positively influence their perception of the destination (Perić et al., 2019). These events, whether cultural or sports-related, collectively enrich the destination's appeal and foster lasting connections between tourists and local communities.

Organising successful events requires a structured approach that includes planning, organising, directing, and controlling each aspect to meet the desired objectives. Event management must address four key characteristics: inseparability, perishability, intangibility, and heterogeneity. These attributes underscore the need for real-time coordination and attention to participant experiences as events are often transient, specific to particular moments, and vary in how they are perceived by each attendee (O'Toole, 2005; Trošt et al., 2012).

Coastal areas offer distinct advantages for tourism events due to their natural beauty, cultural richness, and appeal as leisure destinations (Junaid, 2021). These areas have grown in popularity for beach and coastal tourism, attracting visitors through scenic landscapes, diverse activities, and vibrant local cultures (Hengky, 2023). Coastal tourism also stimulates the local economy by supporting micro-businesses like cafes, restaurants, and creative enterprises, thus providing vital income sources for residents (Mustain, 2024). Hosting events in coastal regions, whether maritime-themed or culturally oriented, presents valuable opportunities to further enhance local economies and attract more tourists. However, successful event management in these areas requires strong collaboration between community members, government, and private stakeholders to address logistical challenges and ensure sustainable, positive outcomes for everyone involved (Azinuddin et al., 2022; 2023).

In summary, tourism events are integral to regional development, offering diverse opportunities to engage visitors, strengthen community identity, and stimulate economic growth. When carefully planned and supported by collaborative efforts, events can transform destinations and contribute meaningfully to their tourism and economic landscapes.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study utilised qualitative data to analyse the current conditions in the coastal area of Barru Regency, Indonesia. A qualitative approach guided the authors in identifying and proposing strategies for event planning in coastal areas. The data were collected through field notes from two field observations at Barru Regency in August and September 2022. The observations focused on the physical condition of the area, providing an overview of the current state and examining the residents' activities and available facilities that could support the organisation of tourism events. These observations serve as the primary data for proposing event planning and implementation opportunities at the research site. During these research visits, informal interviews were also conducted with 15 informants that comprised government officials from the regional tourism board, residents and traders operating around the coastal area. Key information and insights from the informants were documented. All data were collected after obtaining consent from the South Sulawesi provincial and local governments.

The selection of Sumpang Binangae's coastal area as the research location was based on three justifications. First, despite the physical development of waterfronts, these coastal areas are yet to be fully optimised for tourism purposes. With proper management, Sumpang Binangae's coastal area has the potential to become a tourist destination. Second, while some community members in the Sumpang Binangae sub-district have attempted to develop tourism-related businesses, they still face challenges, particularly concerning income generation. Encouraging community efforts, including event management, can help address these obstacles. The local government is also advocating for the creation of a tourism icon in Barru Regency. Third, the Sumpang Binangae sub-district has garnered the local government's attention as a potential tourist area; however, achieving this goal requires strategic efforts, including event organisation.

Thematic analysis was employed to process the qualitative information. The analysis involved several stages: (1) thoroughly reading and understanding the data; (2) identifying key themes or information within the qualitative data; and (3) interpreting the data by presenting findings and extracting meaning. This process served as a qualitative data reduction technique to distil essential themes from the collected information (Altinay & Paraskevas, 2008; Junaid, 2016). All thematic analysis and data interpretation procedures were conducted with

consistent reference to relevant theoretical frameworks and research objectives. Finally, conclusions were drawn based on the results of the qualitative data analysis.

This study contributes to the development of event planning and organisation concepts by utilising coastal areas as event venues. Coastal areas can host outdoor events by applying core event principles and characteristics. The findings reinforce the concepts of inseparability, perishability, intangibility, and heterogeneity in event management. Additionally, with proper training and the utilisation of available infrastructure, local residents can take on the role of event organisers in tourism destinations.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

An Overview of the Sumpang Binangae Sub-District of Barru Regency

The coastal area of the Sumpang Binangae sub-district was analysed to formulate recommendations for planning and organising tourism events in Barru Regency. The local government of Barru Regency has built the Sumpang Binangae Beach platform with various targets and objectives (Figure 1), including to support community activities that uphold regional development. This is because the coastal area of Sumpang Binangae is prone to be affected by high waves in certain months. Therefore, the development of the coastal area, including the Sumpang Binangae Beach platform, serves as a wave barrier to mitigate such issue.

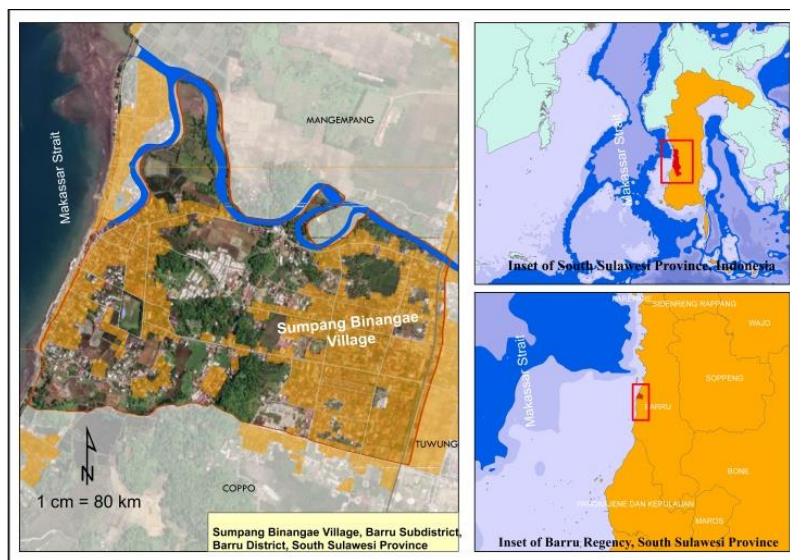


Figure 1: Map showing the location of the Sumpang Binangae sub-district, Barru Regency, Indonesia

Source: Masri Ridwan, 2024



Figure 2. The Sumpang Binangae Beach Platform and Coastal Area in Barru Regency
Source: Authors, 2022

Furthermore, the coastal area serves as a location for fishermen to host fish auctions and trading activities, which are patronised by nearby residents (Figure 2). The Sumpang Binangae Beach platform is also a photography spot for residents and tourists. Additionally, local residents use the location to sell food and soft drinks as a way to earn additional income apart from conducting other daily activities, such as fishing.



Figure 3. Zone three and four at the Sumpang Binangae sub-district
Source: Authors, 2022

The residents' traditional activities are prominently visible around the coastal area of Sumpang Binangae Beach. Beyond the locals' trading activities, visitors from outside Barru Regency can explore the beach and observe community practices related to fishery and other livelihoods. The coastal area has

become a significant source of income for the local population while serving as a place to relax and appreciate the natural beauty of the sea. The community utilises this coastal space for various activities aimed at improving their welfare. The local government has also recognised the potential of the Sumpang Binangae coastal area by making it a hub for several events. In August 2022, the Meompalo Karellae festival—a cultural celebration linked to the La Galigo script, a cultural heritage of South Sulawesi—was held here (disparpora.barrukab.go.id). In September 2022, the 'To Berru Cultural Festival' took place at the Sumpang Binangae Beach Pavilion (TribunBarru.com). Additionally, various community organisations have chosen this pavilion for their activities. For example, in February 2022, the Regional Assembly of the HMI Alumni Corps in Barru Regency organised joint gymnastics to celebrate the organisation's anniversary (mediationenergy.co). Local stakeholders in Barru Regency have been leveraging the Sumpang Binangae coastal area for events that benefit the community and their welfare. However, the community acknowledges that the range of activities in this coastal area remains limited, contributing to the often-quiet atmosphere of the Sumpang Binangae Beach platform.

An Existing Condition of Sumpang Binangae Coastal Area

The Sumpang Binangae area comprises of coasts and local residences. The authors divide the Sumpang Binangae area into four zones: the recreation zone and tourist attraction (southern part); the Sumpang Binangae Beach platform zone (main venue); the fishery activity and trading zone (northern part); and the residences zone where the community live. Figure 4 presents an overview of the Sumpang Binangae coastal area in Barru Regency.



Figure 4. General description of Sumpang Binangae’s coastal area and the division of regional zones
 Source: Authors, 2024

Zone One is the coastal area used for recreational activities. Batu Beach in Barru Regency is a popular destination for beach tourism activities among local residents and domestic tourists due to its well-maintained facilities and designation as a beach tourism attraction. Residents use the area between Zones One and Two to dock their boats upon returning from fishery activities. Tourism stakeholders can take advantage of the location between Zones One and Two to hold event activities. Zone Two is where all activities related to events are centred. Using the regional budget, the regional government has held two main events in Zone Two. The community also uses Zone Two to do informal activities. During the observation, the authors met with Tamiya Race Lover, an association whose members share a mutual interest in miniature, electric-powered race cars produced by the Japanese company Tamiya. The community members often utilise the spaces on the Sumpang Binangae pavilion to conduct group activities like miniature car races and competitions. However, the use of Zone Two by tourism stakeholders is only partially optimal because event organisation is highly dependent on the local government as the activity planner.

Zone Three is a coastal area where fishermen dock their boats upon returning from the sea. Residents also use this area as a location for selling

various types of local products, which eventually becomes a morning traditional market. Conversely, this traditional market has the potential to become a tourist attraction and improve tourists' experience while visiting Barru Regency. The market is in close proximity to the fish auction location, enabling the fishermen's catches to be sold directly to buyers. In the tourism context, fish auction locations can serve as tourist attractions that are based on marine products. Several destinations in Indonesia have become culinary centres based on fish auctions, including the Lappa fish auction in the Sinjai Regency, South Sulawesi and the Beba fish auction (culinary tourism) in the Takalar Regency, South Sulawesi.

Zone Four is where the locals' residences are located. In this zone, residents use their homes for various types of businesses, such as cafes, restaurants, and trading. It is hoped that residents will become essential to planning and organising events in the Sumpang Binangae area. The highway in Sumpang Binangae is an important area to support the event. Regarding the crowds passing by residents and vehicles, the actual conditions in the Sumpang Binangae highway area can be categorised as yet to be crowded. This is because the road is not an axis that connects one region to another. The width of the highway is about 12 meters, which can be used for various purposes when organising events.

The Opportunity for Planning International Tourism Events

The coastal area of Sumpang Binangae is the primary location of the authors' study in planning tourism events within the sub-district. The primary location for tourism events is the Sumpang Binangae Beach, which is a physical development in the form of a waterfront. The local government, through the Barru Regency Tourism, Sports, and Youth Office, often holds tourism events at the Sumpang Binangae Beach. However, the community expressed their concern regarding limited number of activities held at Ujung Batu Beach. This is aligned with the observation results, portraying a scarcity of visitors and quiet beach areas. A resident said that such conditions occur at night and during the day as well.

These conditions indicate the importance of planning and organising events, particularly at the Sumpang Binangae Beach. The purpose is to provide opportunities for residents in the Barru Regency to benefit from the existence of the Sumpang Binangae Beach. The arrival of visitors to the Sumpang Binangae sub-district is an opportunity for many small and medium businesses to promote and sell their products. Furthermore, it allows passing travellers to experience the unique features and qualities that the Barru Regency has to offer and consider it a tourism destination worth visiting. Well-planned events can prompt visitors to make Barru Regency their leading destination. The authors propose a number of

potential events that can be held in the coastal area of Sumpang Binangae (Tables 1, 2, and 3).

Table 1: Proposed events based on maritime potential

<i>Events based on maritime potential</i>			
No	Proposed Event	Reasons for Organising the Event	Opportunity for Organising the Event
1	Festival of maritime culture	Coastal community life can be an attraction for tourists by holding festivals. Various activities can support the festival, such as culinary based on maritime culture, dances, and performances.	Events can be held in Zone Two of the coastal areas by using other zones.
2	Festival of traditional boats	Barru Regency is synonym to marine life. Traditional boats can be tourism products and provide opportunities for traditional boat competitions and exhibitions.	The coastal and sea areas of Sumpang Binangae can be the main location for this activity.
3	Festival of Spermonde archipelago	Barru Regency and its surrounding destinations are part of South Sulawesi, which is famous for the Spermonde archipelago. It will be an exciting event focusing on exhibitions and publications about Spermonde.	Using coastal areas as activity venues will be relevant to the Spermonde Archipelago theme. However, tourism stakeholders must plan the activities according to the program's themes and objectives.
4	Traditional games festival	Traditional games tend to be lost. Hence, efforts are needed to bring them back so that the younger generation will better understand their culture.	The Sumpang Binangae Beach platform is an ideal location for such activities. These activities should involve culture lovers and the younger generation.
5	Festival of local culinary	Barru Regency and its surrounding destinations have local culinary delights with sales value that should be promoted. It can also promote economic transactions for local people and a love for local culinary delights.	The Sumpang Binangae beach pavilion is an ideal location for such activities. However, the local government must act as the planner and companion for the community and organisers so that the event can run according to the expected goals.

<i>Events based on maritime potential</i>			
No	Proposed Event	Reasons for Organising the Event	Opportunity for Organising the Event
<i>Events based on cultural and natural potential</i>			
6	Barru Tamiya race	During the authors' visit, a group of Barru youths utilised the beach platform to do their hobby of racing Tamiya cars.	Barru Tamiya race
7	Nine ball competition	A community group in Sumpang Binangae manages billiards and they are enthusiastic about this activity.	Nine ball competition
8	Sports event	Sports events have been proven effective in attracting domestic and foreign tourists. Many destinations in Indonesia have made sporting events as the main attraction for tourist visits, such as fun runs.	Sports event
9	Kites festival	Kite is a traditional game that can be an attraction for tourists. Various delegations from countries around the world or the archipelago can support the implementation of this event.	Kites festival
10	Competition of creativity and innovation of tourism village	The Barru Regency's local government advocates tourism villages as a strategy to develop regional tourism. Other areas in Indonesia can participate in the publication and exhibition of creative tourism village products.	Competition of creativity and innovation of tourism village.

Source: Authors, 2024

As proposed in Table 1, planning and organising events cannot be separated from the roles of the government, tourism industry, and local communities. The regional government, through the local tourism office, becomes the central planner and actor because it has the budget and power to regulate the implementation of events. Therefore, local governments can schedule event planning and budgeting activities. Other stakeholders also play an essential part of realising the various planned events. The government is one of many stakeholders that organises all activities. Hence, there should be a regulatory mechanism to manage the Sumpang Binangae Beach platform properly and focus more event activities on that location.

Mechanisms for Planning International Tourism Events

Tourism events are important attractions for visitors to an area and coastal areas that can host such events are crucial in the strategic planning and organisation of tourism initiatives. The Sumpang Binangae Beach has several advantages that make it an ideal location for hosting events. It is strategically close to the city of Barru Regency and offers ample space for events of various scales, from international to local. The coastal vicinity of the Sumpang Binangae sub-district has been actively utilised by residents to establish a variety of tourism businesses, including the Ujung Batu Beach, several café ventures, food and beverage micro-enterprises, and the Padongko Beach, which is celebrated as a key tourist attraction. Furthermore, the proximity of Bola Pitue, a traditional house illustrative of Barru Regency, enhances the cultural appeal of Padongko Beach. The area is characterised by a vibrant maritime culture with locals known for their warm hospitality and support towards tourism activities within Barru Regency. This hospitable environment is reinforced by the local government, particularly the Regional Board of Tourism, which actively promotes community engagement in developing regional tourism, further highlighting the potential offered by Sumpang Binangae Beach as a prime location for tourism events.

Accordingly, a framework is outlined to enhance tourism development in the Barru Regency through strategic planning and organising of events, particularly capitalising on the potential of the Sumpang Binangae Beach platform. While the local government has tapped into the attraction of Sumpang Binangae Beach by holding annual events, there is a recognised need among tourism stakeholders for a more robust calendar of events to bolster the destination's appeal. A proposed mechanism for the effective planning and organisation of such events includes the establishment of a local organisation. This body would act as an extension of the local government, specifically managing Sumpang Binangae, similar to the arrangement seen with the Ujung Batu Beach's management by the local organisation Pokdarwis Tunas Bahari. Furthermore, the regional government is suggested to offer training aimed at enhancing the skills needed for tourism area management and event management. This organisation, in coordination with various stakeholders, would play a pivotal role in not only planning and organising events but also in promoting Sumpang Binangae as an ideal event venue.

In the digital economy era, technology integration and access to digital markets, including social media, are crucial (Mior Shariffuddin et al., 2023; Mohd Salim et al., 2024). Local governments and institutions increasingly leverage technology for event promotion with social media playing a significant role in managing and promoting events. Academic research has demonstrated that event managers who actively use social media for promotion are more likely to achieve successful event outcomes (Sigala, 2018a, 2018b). Consequently, event

organisers can effectively utilise digital marketing strategies to enhance the promotion of events in Sumpang Binangae.

The successful planning and organisation of events should prioritise the processes of planning, organising, directing, and monitoring (Yuliza & Pramayoza, 2022). These processes can be conducted by local institutions chosen by the local government. In cases where no agency is responsible for managing the event venue, the Regency Tourism Office can take on the role of event organiser, representing the community in a community-based and sustainable tourism approach. Purnamawati (2021) emphasises the importance of the community in achieving the goals of community-based tourism, creating opportunities for local residents to earn income through tourism.

Events are interconnected and involve various stakeholders (inseparability). The Barru Regency Tourism Office and local agencies must collaborate and coordinate with relevant stakeholders to plan events. The participation of other stakeholders is essential for the local government to execute the event. For instance, conducting an event at the Sumpang Binangae Beach platform should involve both internal and external participants from Barru Regency (perishability). External participants, categorised as domestic tourists, can promote Barru Regency by participating in events. Both residents and event participants gain unique experiences when taking part in events (heterogeneity). Consequently, event organisers should prioritise providing optimal service to the participants. Management training focusing on customer service is essential in the event planning and organising process to ensure a unique experience for the participants. While event participants partly depend on delegations from outside the Barru Regency area, domestic and foreign tourists also visit destinations in the South Sulawesi province.

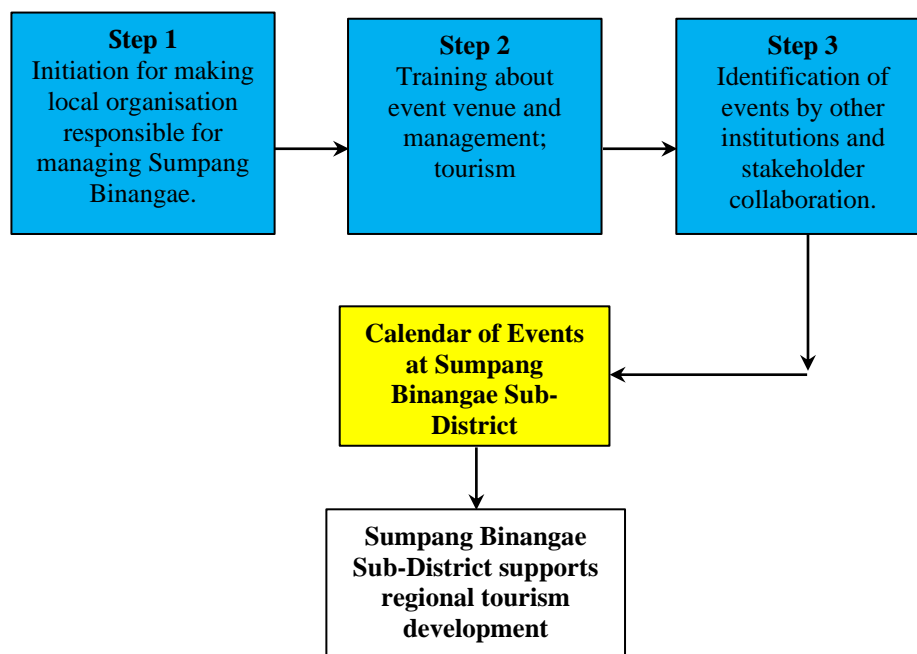


Figure 5. Scheme for event planning at the coastal area of Sumpang Binangae Sub-District in Barru Regency

Source: Authors, 2024

CONCLUSION

The efforts of the local government in Barru Regency to build the Sumpang Binangae beach are evidence of their concern for building infrastructure that can support regional tourism. This study illustrates that limited activities or events in the coastal area are one of the factors that must be maximised in terms of platform utilisation to support regional tourism. From a tourism perspective, having a calendar of events that includes all events held in Barru Regency, especially at the Sumpang Binangae Beach platform, is necessary. However, this goal has not been achieved well because tourism stakeholders have yet to optimise the infrastructure. Even though the local government has held an event on Sumpang Binangae Beach, it has yet to support the Barru regency's tourism development fully. The actual conditions show that the coastal area of the Sumpang Binangae sub-district has the opportunity to become the location for holding various events. Strategic locations, spaces for holding outdoor events, the marine life of local communities, the hospitality of residents, and support from relevant stakeholders in planning and organising events are opportunities for holding events in coastal areas.

This paper has described three types of events: maritime-based events, maritime-based events related to culture, and events based on current conditions. There are three stages to planning and organising events in coastal areas. Forming a local organisation that functions as an event planner and organiser is the first step for the local government of Barru Regency. Training for stakeholders is crucial in offering provisions to local institutions to prepare outdoor events and tourism activities in coastal areas. Identifying events and collaborating with internal and external stakeholders is the third stage in compiling a Sumpang Binangae coastal area event calendar. The implementation of a tourism event is not solely the role and task of the local government but involves various stakeholders in tourism destinations.

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