

# Exploring the Comfort Aspect of Self Efficacy for Sustainable Tourism in Pangururan District, Samosir Regency, Indonesia

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## ABSTRACT

Tourism initiatives that benefit both local populations and tourists contribute to long-term tourism growth. In order to build sustainable tourism, tourist locations must prioritize comfort. Comfort is extremely important in the tourist sector. It has a significant impact on travelers' decisions to visit touristic sites. Noise, cleanliness, traffic (both human and vehicle), the availability of public amenities, and local social contact all have an impact on comfort in the tourist industry. The purpose of this study is to determine the level of self-efficacy in the comfort zone of sustainable tourism in Indonesia's Pangururan District and Samosir Regency. A mixed method approach was used, involving the distribution of 268 questionnaires to visitors and residents, as well as interviews with representatives from the Samosir Regency. The results of the study show that self-efficacy comfort levels fall short of what is required for sustainable tourism. Reasonably high standards are met by the public facilities, which include parking spaces, roads, walkways, trash storage places, clean water, and information signs in both local and foreign languages. However, the degree of support for individuals with disabilities, waste disposal, and recycling activities falls short of the adequate standards. Thus, it is imperative to take more significant steps to ensure that all tourists can access and enjoy tourist destinations without any inconvenience. The recommendations for infrastructure and facility improvements are necessary to meet sustainable tourism standards and enhance the comfort aspect of tourism in the Pangururan District.

**Keywords:** comfort, self-efficacy, sustainable tourism

## 1. Introduction

An economy, tourism can also improve the welfare of residents in a city or region [1]. Well-managed tourism provides a guarantee of the quality of life of the residents and preserves nature and culture in the region. One of the methods and concepts applied in tourism development is sustainable tourism. One of the important assets in the tourism industry is the ability to effectively promote tourist destinations to tourists from various countries

[2]. Therefore, improving and developing the tourism industry is an effort to improve the quality of tourism in each region and create tourism that has an impact on sustainability [3].

The United Nations World Tourism Organization [4] defines sustainable tourism as a type of tourism development paradigm that includes economic, social, and environmental dimensions in the present and future generations. Additionally, sustainable tourism must provide benefits for visitors, the tourism industry, the environment, and the host community [5]. The growth of economic, social, and cultural aspects in the context of sustainable tourism is driven by resident social capital which is rooted in trust, social norms, and social networks. The growth of economic, social, and cultural aspects in the context of sustainable tourism is driven by resident social capital, which includes trust, social norms, and social networks. The concept of sustainable tourism is constantly evolving in response to these dynamics, in order to ensure that the results of sustainable tourism meet the needs of the local community and tourists, while providing extensive development opportunities in the future [6].

Self-efficacy is a theory based on the premise that individuals can motivate themselves and behave towards their environment [7]. Control over self-efficacy can be realized if one can pay attention to aspects of comfort, safety, accessibility and self-confidence in the environment [8]. A number of prior studies have focused on self-efficacy. For example, researcher [8] notes that one study looks at how self-efficacy can enhance heritage tourism in Medan City's historic corridor, and researcher [9] investigates the comfort and safety of Kuta Lombok tourism and finds that these factors have a significant impact on tourists' decision-making when planning trips, taking into account the local environment, economy, and social structure.

The case studies are located in North Sumatra Province. North Sumatra has several famous tourist locations that are visited by many tourists, especially tourism in Pangururan District, Samosir Regency. These tourist destinations have great potential for development, including natural tourism, historical, and cultural tourism. Local residents and the government are very dependent on these tourist destinations both for regional income and community welfare [10]. Regrettably, there are still issues and obstacles with the development of tourist attractions in Pangururan District, particularly with regard to comfort. The Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 10 of 2009 [11] regulating Tourism states that tourist locations ought to be able to provide comfortable accommodations that ensure visitors' safety and well-being. Self-efficacy at the local tourism sites might be impacted by comfort or commutability difficulties. Consequently, the purpose of this study is to ascertain the significance of self-efficacy for the development of sustainable tourism in Pangururan District, Samosir Island, as a travel destination.

### *1.1. Sustainable Tourism*

Sustainable tourism is a crucial concept for tourism development that has economic, environmental, and social impacts [12]. Sustainable tourism development is a dynamic process that will always face new challenges as technology develops [13]. The economic aspect of sustainable tourism focuses on the behavior and responses of residents and people in tourist destinations in obtaining income or economic benefits from tourism activities. The residents as one of the stakeholders need to be involved as an active participants in tourism activities [14]. The government's role is to ensure viable long-term economic activities, provide socio-economic benefits to all stakeholders fairly, such as permanent employment, opportunities to earn income or open a business, and social services to local residents, as well as help reduce poverty [15]. Environmental aspects in sustainable tourism that influence tourism sustainability consist of physical integrity, biodiversity, waste management, and a clean environment [16]. The optimal use of environmental resources is a key element in tourism development, as well as maintaining basic ecological processes, and contributing to the preservation of natural and biological diversity [4]. Socio-cultural aspects in sustainable tourism can be viewed from several indicators, namely assessing the level of satisfaction, trust, and cohesion of stakeholders [17]. Preserving cultural heritage and traditional values and contributing to intercultural understanding and tolerance [18]. Quality of life, community empowerment, support for the continuation of identity, culture, local values, and interest in indigenous residents [19]. So in this research, the study of economic, environmental, and socio-

cultural aspects are research variables to discuss sustainable tourism in Pangururan District, Samosir Regency, as seen in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Sustainable Tourism Variables

<b>Sustainable Tourism</b>	<b>Indicator</b>
Economic	Local business
Environment	Environment conservation Waste management
Socio-cultural	Local participation Culture preservations

### 1.2. Self Efficacy

Self-efficacy refers to an individual's ability to evaluate and manage their own experiences, thoughts, and behavior, which in turn affects their decision-making and actions [20]. Apart from that, By developing our self-efficacy, we gain the power to motivate ourselves and respond to the challenges of our environment [21]. Self-efficacy can be developed through an individual's level of knowledge and skills. In the context of sustainable tourism, self-efficacy is reflected in an individual's depth of understanding and skills that enable them to face challenges and solve problems by taking responsibility for their impact on the environment [8]. Self-efficacy is valued positively because it is able to show that an area has positive and supportive factors. Such as supportive environmental factors, good and adequate facilities, or well-established social and cultural activities. This is of course able to become an "identifier" of the area [22].

The comfort theory postulates that individuals experience a sense of contentment when their fundamental needs are met. Comfort in terms of individuals interaction consists of four aspects, including physical comfort, psychospiritual comfort, environmental comfort and sociocultural comfort [21]. The comfort aspect plays a crucial role in the tourism industry. It can greatly influence the decisions of tourists to travel to specific destinations [9]. If tourists feel uncomfortable in a place, it can negatively impact tourism and create low self-efficacy towards that destination [8]. In the tourism industry, comfort aspect can be influenced by physical factors such as circulation, noise, security, beauty, cleanliness, climate, and aroma [22]. The availability of public facilities such as toilet, public seats area, parking lots, waste disposal systems, and pedestrian areas [8][16]. It can also determine visitor comfort and directly impact their self-efficacy towards the place. Additionally, non-physical factors like social behavior and safety in a place can affect comfort [9]. For the purpose of this study, the elements of comfort aspect have been simplified and applied as indicators, which can be seen in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Comfort Apect Indicators

<b>Self-Efficacy</b>	<b>Indicator</b>
Comfort Aspect	Noise
	Cleanliness
	Circulation
	The existence of public facilities
	Local social interaction

## 2. Method

The case study is located in Pangururan District, Samosir Regency, Indonesia. The Pangururan sub-district was selected for the study as it has a variety of natural tourist destinations that can be developed. The selected tourist destinations in Pangururan District, Samosir Regency, Indonesia include Pasir Putih Parbaba Beach, Indah Situngkir Beach (PIS), Ulos Hutaraja Village, Tano Panggul Canal, and Reclamation Park (Figure 1). These five tourist destinations have great potential for further development and conservation so the people can know and would familiar with these tourist destinations and give of benefit to local residents and around them.



**Figure 1.** Map of case studies in Pangururan District

The comfort aspects of self-efficacy in the Pangururan District uses a mixed-method approach that involves both qualitative and quantitative methods for data collection. The research findings will be presented in a descriptive manner. The qualitative data was gathered through interviews and direct observations in the field. The researchers selected five key informants such as academics, tourism experts, tourist attraction managers, local government on Samosir Island, and local communities. In addition to field observations, information was also collected on the activities and physical characteristics of the residents. Meanwhile, the quantitative method involved the use of questionnaires aimed at both tourists and local communities. The assessment of each security variable listed in the questionnaire is on a five-point scale, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). A total of 268 questionnaires were collected, with 160 tourists and 108 locals responding, the respondents located in five selected tourist areas and the general area of Pangururan District. The results of the questionnaire survey will be reprocessed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23 with a Likert scale; The number 1 considered very low and the number 5 considered very high. The aim is to gain a thorough understanding of the mean ratings of perceptual items. Finally, the results of the quantitative and qualitative data will be triangulated to determine the accuracy of the data.

### 3. Result and Discussion

An analysis was conducted to assess the security measures of sustainable tourism in the Pangururan District. This study employed a combination of data collection methods, including questionnaires, interviews, and field observations. The results of the comfort aspect analysis obtained through questionnaires administered to local communities and tourists are presented in Table 3 and Table 4

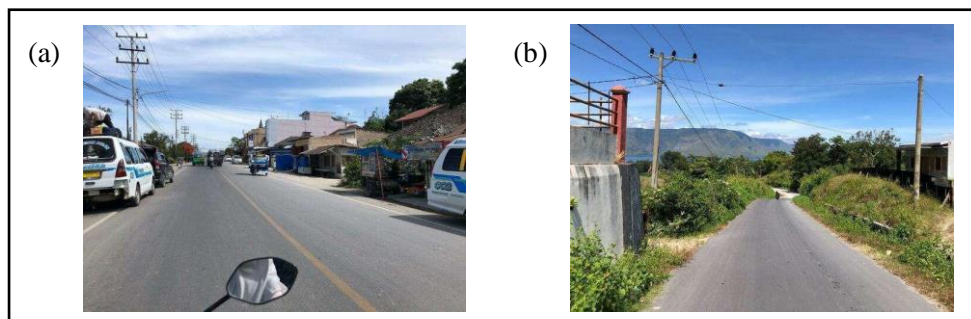
**Table 3.** Comfort Aspect for Local Communities

No	Statements	Value
1	The tourist area around the local communities does not cause the noise	3,7
2	The tourist area provides good and interesting views	4,2
3	The condition of the natural scenery is good	4,4
4	The water quality around local communities is good and comfortable to use	4,2
5	Tourist area is clean	3,8
6	There are recycling activities around the area	2,7
7	The air conditions around the local community area are comfortable	4,3
8	Public facilities are made from local and environmentally friendly materials	3,9
9	Public facilities around local communities are convenient to use	3,9
10	Waste from public facilities is managed well	3,9
11	Good interactions with visitors	4,4
12	Local community are comfortable interacting with tourists	4,3
13	There are waste management activities in the community	4,2
<b>Total Value</b>		<b>3,9</b>

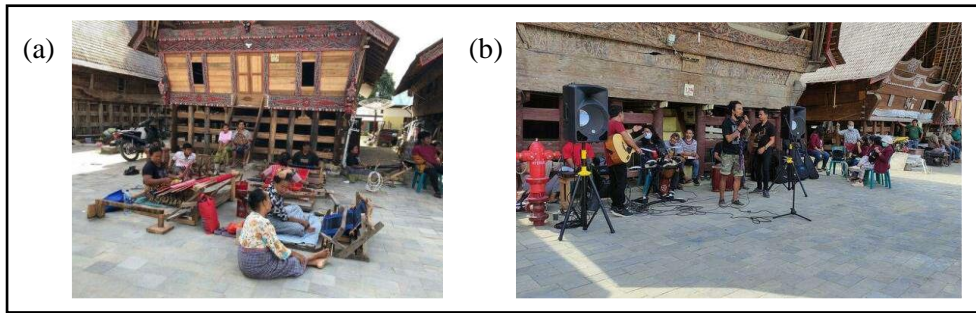
**Table 4.** Comfort Aspect for Tourists

No	Statements	Value
1	Tourist areas around tourists cause the noise	2,6
2	The tourist area provides good/interesting views	3,6
3	The natural scenery is well preserved	3,8
4	The water quality around tourists is good and comfortable to use	3,8
5	The tourist area around tourists is clean	3,5
6	There are recycling activities around the area	3
7	The air condition around the area is comfortable	4
8	Public facilities are made with local and environmentally friendly materials	3,5
9	The public facilities around tourists are comfortable to use	3,5
10	Public facility waste is managed well	3,2
11	The local community's response to visitors is good	3,8
12	Tourists feel comfortable while interacting with local community	3,9
13	Local community manages the waste well	3,3
14	Tourists feel comfortable traveling here	3,9
<b>Total Value</b>		<b>3,5</b>

Unwanted sound disturbance is often caused by noise in the surroundings. Noise is a pervasive issue and can be quite disturbing to people [23]. Most of the noise in an area is usually attributed to traffic and transportation activities [24]. The Pangururan District tourist destination is significantly affected by noise pollution, mainly due to transportation activities and tourist-related activities. Discrepancies exist between local communities and tourists concerning the noise levels experienced at tourist locations. These discrepancies are attributed to the fact that some tourist destinations may not experience significant noise that could disturb the surrounding environment. The transportation activities responsible for the majority of noise pollution occur mainly on the main sub-district roads and neighborhood roads leading to local villages, especially during holidays or peak hours (Figure 2). Large vehicles such as tourist buses and trucks, coupled with the proximity of tourist destinations to local communities, contribute significantly to the high noise volumes in these environments. Fortunately, community activities in the Pangururan District exhibit low noise levels. Local businesses and tourist attractions, such as Ulos Hutaraja Village, do not produce any noise that may cause discomfort to tourists. At this tourist spot, weavers work openly in front of traditional Bolon houses (Figure 3), providing a serene environment conducive to relaxation. Furthermore, the local government regulates and supervises entertainment in the form of an open music stage every Saturday to avoid excessive noise in the area. This measure ensures that tourists can enjoy their stay without any unnecessary noise pollution.

**Figure 2.** (a) Highways in Pangururan District. (b) Environmental road in Pangururan District





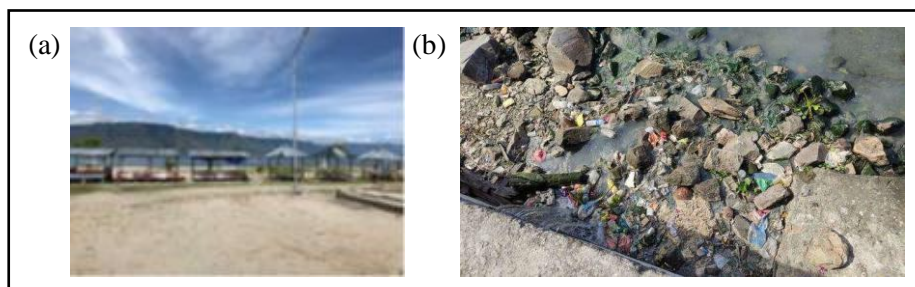
**Figure 3.** (a) Weaving activity in Ulos Hutaraja Village. (b) Outdoor entertainment in Ulos Hutaraja Village

Maintaining cleanliness is of paramount importance when it comes to creating a healthy and comfortable environment. Cleanliness is the act of keeping oneself and surroundings free from dirt [25]. In addition, as [22] points out, cleanliness is vital in enhancing the appeal of any location. Therefore, it's essential to prioritize cleanliness in our daily lives to promote a healthy and attractive environment. The Pangururan District tourist destination is meticulously maintained by the management and the local community, as evidenced by the high standards of environmental cleanliness. The availability of clean tourist destinations that are free of air pollution, have clean water, and are devoid of rubbish bestows a positive psychological influence and an unparalleled natural scenery to tourists. Pasir Putih Parbaba Beach, Ulos Hutaraja Village, and Indah Situngkir Beach have been singled out among the selected tourist locations due to their provision of facilities such as rubbish dumps, clean water, and a tidy environment that ensures tourists have a comfortable experience. However, the Reclamation Park requires special attention, as it still has a significant amount of scattered rubbish, particularly at the outskirts location, and there is a lack of adequate rubbish disposal sites and information (Figure 4). It shows that there are still individuals who have not maintained environmental cleanliness in Pangururan District. This is also supported by depth interviews with the key respondent: the Parbaba Beach Hotel Manager.

*«...becayse we (hotel) are part of comunnity (maintaining the cleanliness of tourist attractions) is still difficult... some local communities are aware and not... there must be development or guidance for the local communities...»*

Meanwhile, regarding recycling activities, these tourist destinations have not yet made it their main activity in recycling rubbish and waste. This is also supported by depth interviews with the key respondent: the Village Head of Lumban Suhi Suhi Toruan.

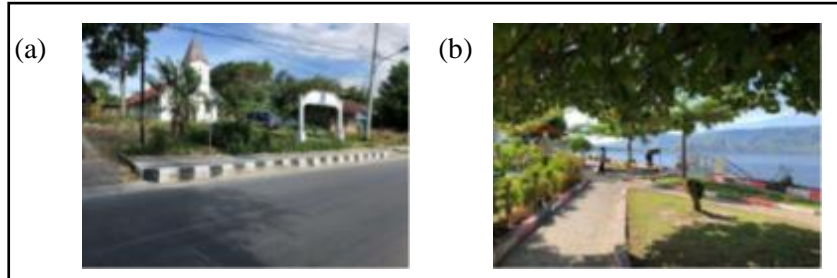
*«...we don't have recycling, but we have Wastewater Treatment Plant (IPAL) facility for this village. So all the waste water will treated first and then it returns safely and unharmed to nature...»*



**Figure 4.** (a) Indah Situngkir Beach. (b) Trash found on the outskirts of Reclamation Park

An efficient circulation system can make or break the reputation of an area. It has a significant impact on the comfort of activities and their placement. A poorly designed circulation system can result in a negative impression on the visitors. There are two types of circulation: vehicular circulation and human circulation. Therefore, it is crucial to ensure that the circulation system is well-designed, to create a comfortable and welcoming environment for the visitors [22]. The Pangururan District tourist destination boasts an efficient and well-maintained transportation system for both vehicles and pedestrians. The circulation system comprises

an extensive network of roads, pedestrian walkways, and neighborhood connectivity, with easy access to major highways. The pedestrian walkways are designed to accommodate visitors with disabilities, ensuring equitable and inclusive tourism. The landscaping elements incorporated in the layout and circulation of the pedestrian walkways are aesthetically pleasing and provide natural comfort to visitors. The Pangururan District's well-designed and well-maintained transportation system ensures a seamless and enjoyable experience for tourists visiting the area (Figure 5).



**Figure 5.** (a) Pedestrian path on the side of the main road. (b) Pedestrian path at Reclamation Park

Based on observations, one of the obstacles to comfortable circulation is the lack of information or road directions that are visible along the road to the tourist area, both on pedestrian paths and vehicle routes or highways. The lack of good information applied to traffic road signs and virtual map navigation (google maps) makes it difficult for tourists to find tourist destination locations accurately. Tourists look for solutions by asking local community even though there is a language barrier (Figure 6).



**Figure 6.** (a) Direction guide that difficult to read. (b) None information or direction sign in tourist destination at Raya Simanindo Street.

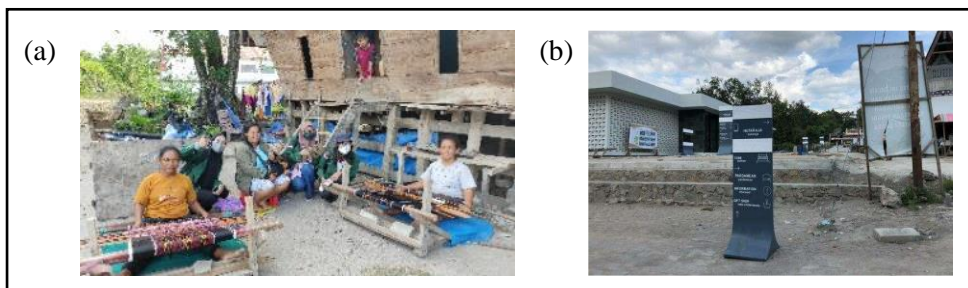
Public facilities are crucial for making tourist attractions comfortable and welcoming for visitors. These facilities include public toilets, seating areas, parking lots, waste disposal areas, and pedestrian walkways [8]. Public facilities such as toilets, seating areas, parking lots, rubbish dumps, and pedestrian area are crucial for the comfort aspects of tourists. Based on observations and questionnaire responses, these facilities are not fully sufficient. Among all the tourist attractions examined, the rubbish dumps and parking lots are the public facilities that are not well-maintained. The limited parking space has resulted in vehicles using the highway area as an alternative parking area which causing inconvenience for tourists and local communities. Furthermore, the rubbish dumps facilities are not fully provided at collection points, and there is no proper waste storage based on waste type distribution (Figure 7).



**Figure 7.** Lacking of rubbish dumps and limited parking lots in Indah Situngkir Beach

The concept of social interaction refers to the dynamic relationship between individuals and groups, as well as the interaction between groups and other social groups. This relationship is considered a fundamental prerequisite for social activities to take place [26]. When tourists interact with local communities, it can have both positive and negative impacts on socio-cultural aspects [27]. Therefore, it is important to understand the nature of this interaction and its effects on the community. Effective interaction between local communities and visitors is a vital aspect of enhancing visitor comfort at a tourist attraction [9]. The interactions between local communities and tourists in Pangururan District are positive. The local government has communicated its vision of transforming the area into a tourist destination, and the local communities have been given guidance and socialization on this matter. While Bahasa Indonesia is the national language of communication, some of the local communities can only converse in traditional language or the Batak language, due to their strong social traditions. This has led to some tourists misunderstanding and create language barrier, but the local community remains friendly and helpful to visitors. To improve communication with foreign tourists, it is recommended that foreign languages should be used in information signs and that there should be more international language tourism workers and local community members who are proficient in foreign languages. Among the tourist destinations in the area (Figure 8), Ulos Hutaraja Village is an example of a place that uses English and Bahasa Indonesia in its information boards to help both international and domestic tourists. This is also supported by depth interviews with the key respondent: the Village Head of Lumban Suhi Suhi Toruan.

*«... If the tourists visit, then local communities must serve them well, such as become friendly and having interaction with tourist...eventhough we (local communitites) still having conversation with simple english conversation. that's what must be done, especially in tourist villages or hotels...»*



**Figure 8.** (a) Social interactions with local communities who works as ulos craftsman at Ulos Hutaraja Village. (b) Information stand at Ulos Hutaraja Village

#### 4. Conclusion

The self-efficacy on comfort aspect in Pangururan District tourist destinations is facing challenges related to noise pollution, cleanliness, transportation infrastructure, and language barriers. But on the other hand, it offers unique opportunities for memorable experiences. Noise pollution is a major concern, especially from transportation and tourist activities. However, efforts are being made to regulate entertainment to minimize disturbances. While cleanliness standards are generally high, certain areas like Reclamation Park require attention due to scattered rubbish. The transportation infrastructure is efficient but lacks adequate signage for easy navigation, leading to inconvenience for tourists. Public facilities like toilets and parking lots are insufficiently maintained, impacting visitor comfort. Despite these challenges, interactions between local communities and tourists are positive. The local government is actively promoting tourism and providing guidance to communities. Language barriers exist, but initiatives like using foreign languages in signage, as seen in Ulos Hutaraja Village, show promise in enhancing communication. Overall, addressing these challenges while leveraging the district's natural beauty and cultural richness can transform Pangururan District into a premier tourist destination that offers good experiences to both domestic and international tourists.

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## 6. Conflict of Interest

The authors certify that the publication of this research study does not involve any conflict of interest.

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