

CILILIN AS A PARAGLIDING SPORT TOURISM DESTINATION IN WEST BANDUNG REGENCY

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Abstract

The potential for paragliding sport tourism at Bukit Gantole Cililin, West Bandung Regency, is very promising because it offers a combination of extreme sports and natural beauty. However, if this spot is to become a desirable tourist destination, serious efforts from various stakeholders are required. The purpose of this study is to determine the efforts needed to enhance the potential of Bukit Gantole Cililin so that it can develop into a paragliding sport tourism destination in West Bandung Regency. The research method used is a qualitative descriptive method. The research techniques include data collection through observation, interviews, documentation, and literature study. Based on observations and interviews, it has been shown that visitor numbers to this tourist site have continued to decline due to suboptimal management, poorly maintained and incomplete facilities, and the lack of synergy between tourism managers and the surrounding community. Therefore, this tourist site requires greater attention from various related parties. Based on field data collection, efforts to increase the potential of paragliding sport tourism at Bukit Gantole Cililin can be carried out through several measures, namely improving accessibility, facilities, transportation modes, activities, information, as well as the involvement of the government, local communities, and private sector so that Bukit Gantole tourism in West Bandung Regency can be revitalized.

Keywords: *Potential, Tourism, Sport Tourism, Paragliding*

A. Introduction

Bukit Gantole Cililin Tourism in West Bandung, Indonesia, holds great potential as a paragliding sport tourism destination. The following are several reasons why Bukit Gantole can become an attractive location for paragliding, along with some recommendations for optimizing its potential (Marieska Lupikawaty & Haris, 2019). Not only does it offer breathtaking views, but tourism in this mountainous slope area also serves as one of the extreme sports locations, namely paragliding. Bukit Gantole was once chosen as the venue for the prestigious PON XIX event. It is one of the hillside areas located in Cililin, West Bandung. As one of the best locations in Indonesia for paragliding, this area stands at an altitude of approximately 1,600 meters above sea level and offers a wide panorama of captivating natural scenery (virtualtour.Bandung Barat, 2020). Paragliding, as part of sport tourism, provides a unique and thrilling experience for sports enthusiasts, while also contributing to the economy and environmental awareness in the destinations visited. The potential for paragliding sport tourism is enormous, as it offers a combination of extreme sports experience and stunning natural beauty.

In addition to being famous for its paragliding activities, Bukit Gantole also offers other tourist attractions such as Extreme Swing and Sky Net. This West Bandung tourist destination also features a campsite called "Above the Clouds Bandung," which has been equipped with various selfie spots and wide open grounds. Based on preliminary observations of the Bukit Gantole Cililin tourism area in West Bandung, several fundamental issues related to its tourism potential were identified. These include a significant decrease in the number of visitors, making the site increasingly quiet—both among those who wish to enjoy the natural beauty of Bukit Gantole and those seeking to try paragliding. Other problems include poorly maintained facilities, limited activities that lead to a lack of visitors, inadequate transportation access, and insufficient information sources. Based on the above background, Bukit Gantole Tourism must receive special attention from various stakeholders, especially the local government. The West Bandung Regency Government and related parties should make serious efforts to revitalize this tourist destination so that it can once again become one of the leading and popular tourist destinations in the West Bandung area. This raises the research question: "What efforts can be made to enhance the potential of Bukit Gantole Cililin as a Paragliding Sport Tourism destination in West Bandung Regency?"

B. Literature Review**Tourism Potential**

Tourism potential refers to everything found in a tourist destination that has the attractiveness to make people interested in visiting the place. A similar definition describes tourism potential as everything possessed by a tourist attraction that can be used to develop the tourism industry in the region (Setiawan, 2019).

The 6A concept in tourism is often used to describe six essential elements that must exist in the development of a tourist destination. These are:

1. Attractions (Tourist Attractions),
2. Accessibility,
3. Accommodation,
4. Amenities (Facilities),
5. Activities, and
6. Available Information.

Tourism

Tourism encompasses all activities within society related to tourists. Essentially, tourism arises due to interactions between tourists and tourism service providers/the tourism industry, in offering facilities and services to meet tourists' needs, so that this interaction is interconnected (Pranata, 2022). Tourism refers to the entirety of relationships and phenomena that arise from the presence of foreigners whose travels are not for permanent residence and are unrelated to earning a livelihood. Tourism is a phenomenon involving the movement of people, goods, and services, which is highly complex. It is closely related to organizations, institutional and individual relations, service needs, service provision, and so on (Sugeha, Nurmandi, & Suswanta, 2021).

Sport Tourism

Sport tourism is all forms of human involvement, either actively or passively, in sports activities—participating as an athlete or in the organization of an event, for non-commercial purposes or for business/commercial reasons, which requires travel away from one's residence or workplace. The implementation of sport tourism activities can increase the number of tourists to a destination, since this involves not only sports tourists but also recreational sports activities. These categories can be further classified into main participants and secondary participants (Afrilian, 2019). In addition, sports also involve people as active participants, such as competitors and/or reserve athletes. As for passive participants, community members such as supporters are also involved. Sport tourism has now become a profitable market, given the potential of destinations worldwide and the diversity of sports. As an economic driver, this sector is growing, and managers are beginning to take advantage of this area, particularly because of its contribution to regional development.

Sports tourism refers to individuals and/or groups of people who actively or passively participate in sports competitions or recreation. Sports become the primary motivation for traveling, even though the travel element can enhance the overall experience. Sport tourism has grown into an industry in developed countries and can significantly influence national growth (Sudiana, 2019). Sport tourism is a synergistic phenomenon that goes beyond a mere combination of sports and tourism. Therefore, it requires an understanding of both sports and tourism, along with a conceptual framework that does not separate their meanings but highlights elements that synergize and complement each other. One way to understand the phenomenon of sport tourism is by first understanding sports and tourism individually, then reconstructing a broader understanding of sport tourism from these definitions.

Paragliding

Paragliding is a free-flying sport using a fabric wing (parachute), where take-off and landing are performed on foot by utilizing wind currents. Wind itself has several types, including dynamic lift and thermal lift. The wind conditions in the paragliding take-off area are very crucial for both athletes and tourists who will fly. Paragliding is one of the free-flight sports. It can be defined as a parachute that can fly and carry the pilot's body. This parachute or aircraft takes off and lands using the pilot's feet. Paragliding takes off from a hillside or mountain by utilizing the wind. By harnessing the wind, the pilot can fly at very high altitudes and cover long distances. What makes it fascinating is that all of this is done without using any engine—solely relying on the power of the wind.

Previous Studies

1. Several previous research findings serve as references for this study:
2. Agung Yoga et al. (2020) in their study entitled "*Analysis of Village Tourism Potential with a Case Study Framework in Ngajum Village, Malang*" using the Participatory Action Research method found that Ngajum

Village has untapped tourism potential. The shortcomings in the components of attractions and available packages can be addressed through the development of artificial tourist attractions.

3. Novi Arista Agustin, Kanom, and Randhi Nanang Darmawan (2021) in their study entitled "*Analysis of the Potential of Grilled Fish Culinary Tourism as a Tourist Attraction at Blimbingsari Beach, Banyuwangi*" using a qualitative research method found that the presence of culinary tourism has a significant impact on the community, particularly those involved in managing tourism in Blimbingsari.
4. Henny Kustini (2019) in her study entitled "*Analysis of Tourism Potential for the Development of Sewu Kembang Tourism Village in Nglurah, Karanganyar, Central Java*" using a qualitative descriptive method concluded that there are several tourism potentials in Sewu Kembang Tourism Village, including ornamental plant centers as agro-tourism, Menggung site, Lumpang Museum, and Dukutan Ceremony as cultural tourism, as well as natural attractions such as the Pleaseran campground and Sendang Telaga Asmoro. The development of Nglurah as Sewu Kembang Tourism Village was carried out through community group mentoring programs, raising awareness of local potential, and supporting ornamental plant businesses through improvements in both soft and hard capacities.
5. Nurul Farha Hi. Adam, Cynthia E.V. Wuisang, and Johansen C. Mandey (2019) in their scientific article using SWOT analysis entitled "*Analysis of Cultural Tourism Potential in Ternate City in Efforts to Develop Urban Tourism*" stated that each object's potential is based on the characteristics of cultural tourism and provided development directions for existing cultural tourism objects in North Ternate District.
6. Susy Bhudiharty, Kania Ratnasari, and Diana Marizka (2019) in their scientific article entitled "*Analysis of Marine and Cultural Tourism Potential in Belitung, West Belitung Regency*" using a qualitative descriptive method stated that the marine and cultural tourism potential in the region is very beautiful and diverse. However, this potential has not been widely known by domestic, let alone international, tourists. To increase recognition, strong cooperation among related elements such as the local government, community, and entrepreneurs is needed.

C. Research Method

The research method used is qualitative descriptive. This method examines the status of a group of people, an object, a condition, a system of thought, or a class of events in the present time (Siaahan, 2019). Data collection is carried out through a combined triangulation approach, followed by inductive/qualitative data analysis. The results of qualitative research emphasize meaning rather than generalization (Sugiyono, 2019). The purpose of this research is to provide a complete and accurate description based on facts. The research object is the location to be studied, analyzed, and examined. The object of this research is Bukit Gantole Cililin Tourism Site, located in Singajaya Village, Cihampelas District, West Bandung Regency, West Java. This study was conducted from August to September 2025.

The data collection techniques used in this study include observation, interviews, documentation, and literature study.

1. The observation technique was carried out through the following steps:
 - a. Conducting a site visit to Bukit Gantole Cililin Tourism,
 - b. Observing and objectively recording the potentials of Bukit Gantole Cililin Tourism, and
 - c. Conducting interviews with related parties to identify alternative efforts to enhance the potential of Bukit Gantole Cililin Tourism.
2. The interviews were conducted to obtain more specific information regarding the Bukit Gantole Cililin Tourism object from relevant informants in order to interpret the existing situations and phenomena.
3. Documentation involved recording past events in the form of writings, images, or historical works.
4. The literature study was conducted by collecting information through reviewing existing literature to identify concepts and theories closely related to the research problem.

The data sources used in this research are:

1. Primary Data: obtained directly from the management of Bukit Gantole Tourism Site and the Department of Culture and Tourism of West Bandung Regency.
2. Secondary Data: obtained from sources closely related to the research object, in this case, Cimarga Village Government. In addition, ten tourists also served as supporting data sources in this study.

Table 1
Research Informants Target

No	Informant	Number (People)	Characteristics
1	Head of Singajaya Village	1	Local government of Bukit Gantole tourism site
2	Tourism Manager	1	Resides right next to the Bukit Gantole tourism site
3	Local Community around the Site	4	Located approximately 5,679 meters from the Bukit Gantole tourism site
4	Tourists	4	Visitors to Bukit Gantole
	TOTAL	10	

Source: Processed by the Researcher, 2025

In addition to the informants mentioned above, the author also complemented the study with several supplementary informants (*emergent sampling design*) in order to obtain more accurate information. Data analysis in qualitative research is carried out both during the data collection process and after data collection has been completed within a certain period. Miles and Huberman in (Sugiyono, 2019:321) state that activities in qualitative data analysis are conducted interactively and continuously until completion, so that the data becomes saturated. The activities in data analysis are based on the following flow.

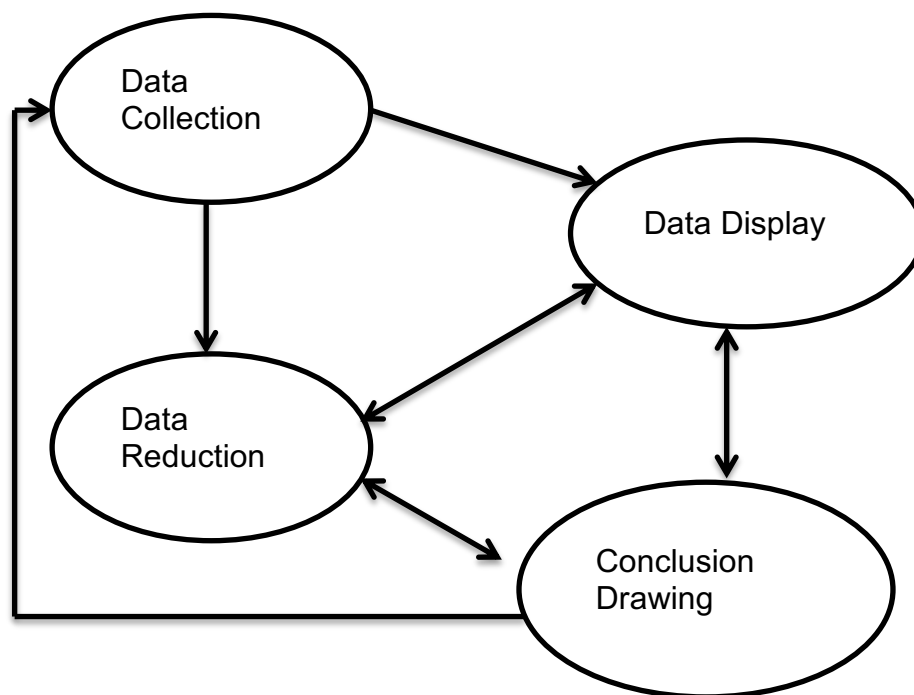


Figure 1. Data Analysis
Source: (Sugiyono, 2019:247)

D. Results and Discussion

Observation Results

Bukit Gantole is a sports tourism site located in Cihampelas District, West Bandung Regency. This tourist destination is approximately 25 km from Bandung city center. The trip to Bukit Gantole can be taken by either two-wheeled or four-wheeled vehicles, with a travel time of about 46 minutes to 1 hour, depending on traffic conditions. The access road to Bukit Gantole is paved and suitable for both motorcycles and cars. However, caution is needed, especially since the road is quite steep, at an altitude of 930 meters above sea level. Unfortunately, the entrance gate

to Bukit Gantole appears deserted, with no guards present. This has contributed to the continuous decline in visitor numbers each month. Designated as a village with tourism potential, Bukit Gantole has opportunities for development, one of which is paragliding tourism. Paragliding is a sport that uses a fabric wing called a parachute, allowing participants to fly. Bukit Gantole is one of the recognized paragliding sites. Similar to other nature-based tourism areas, visitors at Bukit Gantole are expected to be mindful of their speech as a form of respect for local ancestral culture. This was proven when an international paragliding participant failed to do so, which negatively affected his flight activity. The participant experienced a mishap when his parachute collapsed during pre-flight. Thus, respecting and honoring local culture is mandatory for anyone, anywhere.

Bukit Gantole is clear evidence of local creativity—or what the people of Bandung call *motekar*—that can significantly boost the economy through tourism. It has allowed the people around Bukit Gantole to think beyond agriculture and plantations, by utilizing nature-based tourism to earn income from various services. The rise of Bukit Gantole, now recognized as one of the best paragliding spots in Indonesia, cannot be separated from a major event: the pre-PON XIX 2016 competition. At that time, the West Bandung Regency Government seized the opportunity to host the event despite widespread pessimism. The courage of the government to host the first international-level event in this highland area, situated at 1,600 meters above sea level, deserves appreciation. Although it was only a pre-world championship, the event, which was attended by athletes from different parts of the world, was considered quite successful. Later, the PON XIX 2016 West Java paragliding competition was held in a hilly area not far from Bukit Gantole. The selection of Bukit Gantole as the paragliding venue was an acknowledgment of its reliable potential.

The advantages of Bukit Gantole include its highly suitable and ideal paragliding take-off point. The site offers a combination of mountains and wide, flat plains, making it perfect for cross-country paragliding competitions. Additionally, the presence of several thermal points (geothermal heat updrafts) enables paragliding athletes to fly higher—up to nearly 1,900 meters above sea level—and remain airborne for as long as four hours. The wind currents also allow athletes to perform maneuvers. The landing area consists mostly of wide, open hills below, with additional authorization from the Deputy Regent for landings in rice field areas. The Name Bukit Gantole: The name "Gantole" refers to the two large hills in the area or may originate from a distinctive geological feature or a specific location near the hills. In general, the term "Bukit Gantole" refers to the physical features or landmarks of the region. The ticket price for this tourist site is IDR 30,000, with no difference between weekdays and weekends. Bukit Gantole Cililin operates from 07:00 AM to 06:00 PM. During these hours, visitors can experience tandem paragliding accompanied by a professional pilot. The cost of paragliding is IDR 450,000 per person, though prices may vary depending on visitor criteria.

Interview Results

Based on the interviews with the informants, the synthesis can be summarized as follows:

- Access to Bukit Gantole tourism is already quite good for anyone to visit using any type of vehicle. However, due to its elevation, visitors often feel concerned and must be extra cautious when traveling to Bukit Gantole.
- Accommodation to the tourist site is limited to only one type of public transportation, namely motorcycle taxis (*ojek*) available at the base. This transportation can take visitors directly to Bukit Gantole.
- The available facilities are still inadequate. There are only toilets, a prayer room (*mushola*), a parking lot, an open field for outdoor activities with a capacity of 1,000 people, and photo spots. As for food stalls or kiosks, many are no longer in use due to the lack of visitors.
- Activities that can be done at Bukit Gantole include hiking, family gatherings, enjoying the scenery, and watching the sunrise or sunset.
- Information needed by tourists is currently insufficient, as it can only be accessed through Instagram and certain social media platforms.

Author's Findings

Based on field research, the author obtained several findings as follows:

- Bukit Gantole Cililin, West Bandung, has very strong potential. Besides offering a stunning landscape, it also has great potential as a sport tourism destination, namely paragliding. Bukit Gantole has once hosted the PON XIX event in 2016, an international-level paragliding championship with participants from around 20 countries.
- A structured and comprehensive effort is needed for Bukit Gantole to realize its potential as a sport tourism destination.
- In developing Bukit Gantole as a tourist attraction, the active involvement of the surrounding community is essential. This is because local tourism development efforts will directly impact the welfare of the local community itself.

4. It is crucial for the local government to maximize its role in developing Bukit Gantole tourism. So far, the government has not paid sufficient attention to Bukit Gantole, despite it once being the host of a national event. However, there are ongoing plans for Bukit Gantole to once again host a paragliding event. Therefore, the government is expected to participate in managing Bukit Gantole tourism, particularly in terms of cleanliness and safety, to ensure the event runs smoothly. Many visitors have expressed disappointment with the government's lack of development efforts and complained about the poorly maintained site. The government should immediately give more attention to Bukit Gantole, which has such promising potential.
5. There has been no involvement from the private sector in assisting the development of tourism at Bukit Gantole. The government still tends to be passive in seeking support from external parties. If this destination were to receive additional support from external stakeholders, Bukit Gantole tourism could advance and grow significantly.

Discussion

The discussion of this research focuses on efforts to enhance the potential of Bukit Gantole Cililin Tourism. As previously explained, Bukit Gantole Cililin in West Bandung has excellent potential, offering stunning landscapes, wide-open spaces that are very suitable for outdoor activities, and strong potential as a Sport Tourism destination, particularly paragliding.

1. Based on the research findings and the author's observations, various realistic and measurable efforts are needed to further develop this tourism potential. The possible efforts include:
2. Improving access to Bukit Gantole Cililin Tourism, which is already quite good, but still needs to be enhanced, especially by providing preventive and maximum safety measures on the steep roads leading to the tourist site.
3. Upgrading public facilities at the tourist site to be more adequate. In addition to toilets, prayer rooms, parking areas, and outdoor activity fields, proper lodging, paragliding equipment rentals, and other facilities could also be provided.
4. Increasing the number of transportation modes for visitors to reach the tourist site. Not only relying on motorcycle taxis (*ojek*), but also adding other means of transport. A cable car system to the site could even be considered.
5. Expanding the range of activities available, such as creating children's playgrounds, a paragliding museum, or other more engaging attractions.
6. Improving tourism information for Bukit Gantole through various media platforms, such as developing a dedicated website including online ticket booking services with attractive features.
7. Strengthening the involvement of local government and communities to work together in developing and advancing the tourist site.
8. Enhancing the role of the private sector in supporting the development and growth of the tourist site. In this case, the government must be more creative in gaining stronger and more effective support from private stakeholders.

E. Conclusion

This research finds that the condition of Bukit Gantole Tourism can still be improved to reach its potential as a preferred and popular tourist destination. Based on the research results, it can be concluded that efforts to enhance the potential of Bukit Gantole Tourism include: improving accessibility to the site, adding public facilities for visitors, increasing the variety of transportation modes, providing more creative activities at the site, expanding and upgrading information services through both offline and online media, strengthening the active involvement of the government and local communities, and increasing the participation of the private sector in building, developing, and advancing Bukit Gantole Cililin Tourism.

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