

Community-Based Sustainable Tourism Development in Gunung Kelir Village, Yogyakarta

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Abstract

Purpose, This study aims to explore the development of community-based sustainable tourism in Gunung Kelir Village, Kulon Progo, Yogyakarta, by highlighting the role of local communities and government collaboration in enhancing destination attractiveness and sustainability. Methodology/Design/Approach, The research employs a qualitative descriptive approach, drawing on observations, documentation, and interviews with local stakeholders to analyze strategies, community participation, and government support in tourism development. Findings, The findings indicate that the success of tourism development in Gunung Kelir Village is driven by active community participation in planning, facility development, cultural events, and decision-making processes. Collaboration with the Kulon Progo Tourism Office through infrastructure development, site revitalization, destination management training, economic empowerment, and tourism promotion further strengthens the village's competitiveness. Training programs and local product marketing, including culinary and handicrafts, enhance the community's capacity and welfare. The application of community-based tourism ensures that the economic benefits are distributed fairly across the community, while also fostering a strong sense of ownership and commitment. Originality of the research, This research contributes to the discourse on sustainable by presenting Gunung Kelir Village as a model of effective synergy between local communities and government institutions. It emphasizes the integration of natural resources, local culture, and strategic collaboration as key factors in building a competitive and sustainable tourism destination.

Keywords community-based, sustainable tourism development, local participation

INTRODUCTION

Kulon Progo is one of the regions in the Special Region of Yogyakarta (DIY) that plays an important role in supporting the tourism industry and enhancing the overall tourism development of the province. Located on the western side of Yogyakarta City, this regency covers an area of 586.3 km², consisting of 12 districts, 1 urban village, and 87 rural villages, with a population of approximately 445,655 people (Kulon Progo Regency, 2022).

Gunung Kelir Village, or Pedukuhan Gunung Kelir, is situated within the Jatimulyo Village, about 35 km from Yogyakarta City. The village is named "Gunung Kelir" because of its unique geological formation: steep limestone cliffs in the southeast that resemble a *kelir* (the white screen traditionally used in shadow puppet performances). The village offers both well-known and lesser-known tourist attractions, alongside rich cultural traditions. Notable tourism sites include Gunung Kelir Hill, Tanaman Viewing Post, Kiskendo Cave, Sumitro Cave, Silodo Cave, Segembor Waterfall, Batu Blencong, Grujugan Sewu, as well as traditional performing arts such as *Jathilan Klasik*, *Jathilan Kreasi Baru*, *Angguk*, *Ndolalak*, *Cibantul*, *Wayang*, *Kethoprak*, and customary rituals such as *Baritan* and *Bersih Dusun*.

A tourism village holds unique appeal, both in its natural environment and in the social and cultural life of its community. When these attractions are presented authentically, they become powerful draws for visitors. Previous studies by Gautama et al. (2020) and Nugroho et al. (2021) emphasized that human resource development is a key factor in the successful management of tourism villages.

Community involvement in tourism activities has become a widely recognized model for sustainable development. Indonesia is currently emphasizing the importance of human resources, and Suansri (2018) highlighted that the success of a tourism village depends on the active participation of local communities in planning, implementation, and evaluation. The role of the community must be balanced with those of the government and private sector. However, in practice, community participation often remains relatively small compared to the influence of other stakeholders.

Several supporting factors for community participation include leadership within local institutions (Kristiana & Nathalia, 2022). According to Nisa (2019), community-based tourism generates positive impacts on both the economy and the preservation of natural resources. Furthermore, Mahanani & Listyorini (2021) noted that community-based tourism development considers four main components: community participation, community empowerment, benefits for local residents, and environmental conservation.

The Indonesian Village Law No. 6 of 2014, Article 18, states that: “Villages have the right and authority to carry out village development, foster community life, and empower village communities based on local initiatives, original rights, and village customs.” This legal framework underscores the autonomy of villages in pursuing development, including the establishment of tourism villages. Full community participation is therefore essential to ensure that tourism development truly reflects the interests of the people whose lives are directly affected.

Based on this background, the present study aims to examine and explore the tourism potential of Gunung Kelir Village, Kulon Progo, in order to design sustainable tourism development strategies that empower local communities. This research is expected to provide several benefits: (1) for government and tourism stakeholders, as input for sustainable tourism planning in rural areas; (2) for local communities, as a source of information about their role and the potential benefits of tourism development; and (3) for academia, as a contribution to the study of community-based sustainable tourism development.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Sustainable Tourism Development

Tourism development can be defined as an effort to improve or advance a tourist attraction in order to make it more appealing, both in terms of the site and the facilities it offers, thereby attracting more visitors (Barreto & Giantari, 2015). Furthermore, according to Marpaung in Aliyah et al. (2020:20), the development of a tourism village is understood as a process through which a village evolves into a tourism center that encompasses both entertainment and educational elements.

The Regulation of the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy No. 9 of 2021 on Guidelines for Sustainable Tourism Destinations states that sustainable tourism is a form of tourism that considers the current and future economic, social, and environmental impacts, while addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment, and local communities. Moreover, sustainable tourism principles can be applied to all types of tourism activities across various destinations, including mass tourism as well as other forms of tourism.

Tourism Village Development

A village can be designated as a tourism village if it possesses tourism potentials that can be developed into attractions and activities for visitors. A tourism village is characterized by unique features and distinctive attractions, which may include the physical characteristics of the rural natural environment as well as the social and cultural life of the community. These are then managed and packaged into tourism attractions through tourism development (Atmoko, 2014).

According to Cooper et al. in Amerta (2019:41), several key components in the development of a tourism village are as follows:

1. Attractions - Tourist attractions that may originate from physical features such as natural beauty, cultural heritage, and various activities related to tourism.
2. Accessibility - The ease of reaching the tourism destination, supported by the availability of adequate transportation facilities.
3. Amenities - Supporting facilities such as accommodations, entertainment venues, restaurants, souvenir shops, and other services.
4. Ancillary Services - Institutional support facilities, including human resource planning, education and training programs, promotional and marketing strategies, and related organizational aspects.

Hermawan (2016) argues that a tourism village is an area closely linked to local wisdom, such as traditions, potentials, or culture, which are managed according to its capacity and aimed at fulfilling the social and economic interests of the community. Based on the views of several scholars, it can be concluded that a tourism village is a rural area with unique local wisdom across various aspects of life, developed into attractions to stimulate visitor interest. Furthermore, Suryawandani and Wiranatha (2017) explain that a tourism village refers to part or all of a village area that possesses tourism potential, products, and activities which can be developed and managed by local community groups in a sustainable manner.

Community-Based Tourism

One of the widely implemented approaches to sustainable tourism development in various villages is *community-based tourism (CBT)*. According to Wijayanto (2018), community-based tourism positions the local community as the main actor by empowering them in various tourism-related activities, so that the benefits of tourism can be maximized for the community. Local residents are the ones most familiar with their own environment, and every development activity must take into account the social and cultural values of the community. Therefore, every decision in planning should reflect the active role of the local population. Anggarawati (2018) emphasizes that the concept of community-based tourism aims to improve the welfare of local communities, requiring collaboration and support among the government, private sector, and local residents in tourism management and development. Community-based tourism creates employment opportunities for local people and improves their livelihoods (Kristiana, 2019).

In essence, empowerment is about providing strength to those who lack or have limited power, enabling them to possess the capacity needed for self-actualization (Ulum, 2016). Nawir (2018) asserts that community empowerment prioritizes the role of local communities as the primary actors in development. Efforts to empower communities must consider their unique characteristics, backgrounds, and contexts. Importantly, empowerment begins with creating conditions and an enabling environment that allow community potential to flourish (Supriadi et al., 2017).

Wijayanto (2018) further argues that the direct involvement of local communities ensures that tourism development and management programs align with community aspirations, match local capacities, and foster strong community commitment through a sense of ownership. Community-centered development, when sustained over the long term, allows for greater continuity and resilience in tourism initiatives.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a qualitative research design with a descriptive approach to explore sustainable tourism development through the concept of community-based tourism. The research was conducted in Gunung Kelir Village, Kulon Progo Regency, Special Region of Yogyakarta (DIY). Data collection was carried out at the selected research site through interactions with relevant stakeholders to obtain accurate information (Creswell, 2018). This method was considered the most appropriate for identifying and analyzing the tourism potential of Gunung Kelir Village.

The data sources in this study consist of both primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through direct observation of tourism actors in Gunung Kelir Village to identify existing tourism potentials, attractions, as well as the strengths and challenges in developing community-based tourism. In addition, interviews were conducted with tourism practitioners and relevant stakeholders to explore the extent of local community involvement in tourism development. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were also carried out to formulate a community-based tourism development plan that was mutually agreed upon by all parties, with key informants including the Village Head or representatives of Gunung Kelir and Jatimulyo Village Offices, village tourism managers, private sector representatives, the Kulon Progo Tourism Office, local tourism awareness groups (*Pokdarwis*), and community members. Meanwhile, secondary data were collected through literature studies, including documentation, books, and both print and electronic media sources related to the research topic.

The data analysis employed in this research is qualitative descriptive analysis, aimed at providing an in-depth understanding of community participation in community-based tourism development in Gunung Kelir Village. Furthermore, the study seeks to describe the tourism potential of Gunung Kelir Village as a prospective and attractive tourism destination in the Special Region of Yogyakarta.

RESULTS

General Overview of Gunung Kelir Village

Gunung Kelir Village, located in Jatimulyo, possesses diverse and appealing tourism potentials that contribute to its attractiveness as a rural destination. The village is endowed with remarkable natural beauty, as it lies on the slopes of Mount Sumbing, offering scenic views of rolling hills, lush rice fields, and refreshing air that captivates visitors. Beyond its landscapes, the community preserves rich local culture and traditions that remain an integral part of daily life. Tourists have the opportunity to visit traditional hamlets, take part in customary ceremonies, and engage directly with local residents to gain a deeper understanding of their social and cultural values.

Culinary experiences also play a significant role in the village's appeal, with authentic Javanese dishes such as *Nasi Gudeg*, *Nasi Pecel*, *Soto*, *Liwetan*, *Gatot*, and various traditional snacks reflecting the cultural richness of the community. For adventure-seeking travelers, the village offers outdoor activities including trekking, hiking, and camping, with routes surrounded by captivating natural scenery that enhance the sense of exploration. Additionally, Gunung Kelir holds strong potential for agrotourism and ecotourism through community-owned plantations, where visitors can enjoy plantation tours while experiencing the tranquil atmosphere of the rural environment. Collectively, these attractions form the foundation for Gunung Kelir's development as a sustainable community-based tourism destination.

Figure 1. Tourism Potentials of Gunung Kelir Village



Source: Research Team Documentation, 2023

The development of tourism in Gunung Kelir Village, Kulon Progo, represents a strategic effort to utilize the village's natural and cultural potentials in order to improve the welfare of the local community and support regional economic growth. Through tourism development, Gunung Kelir Village can offer visitors unique experiences, such as enjoying the scenic beauty of the hills, exploring rivers, and engaging with local culture. Moreover, tourism development can generate new employment opportunities, expand local business networks, and encourage investment in tourism infrastructure. By adhering to the principles of sustainable tourism, the development of Gunung Kelir Village is expected to provide long-term benefits for the local community, the environment, and visiting tourists.

Village Development Initiatives by the Tourism Office of Kulon Progo Regency

The Tourism Office of Kulon Progo Regency is one of the local government institutions that plays an important role in the field of tourism. Within the Tourism Office of Kulon Progo, there are three divisions: the Division of Destinations, the Division of Marketing, and the Division of Empowerment. Each division carries out different roles, tasks, and functions in developing tourism in

Kulon Progo Regency. Gunung Kelir Village, also known as Jatimulyo Village, is one of the villages that has received special attention from the Tourism Office of Kulon Progo Regency due to its diverse tourism potential. With its unique attractions, Jatimulyo Village has significant opportunities to be developed into an appealing and multifaceted tourism destination. In this regard, the Division of Tourism Empowerment plays a crucial role in conducting guidance for tourism enterprises and services, as well as in developing human resource capacity and tourism institutions. The division's main responsibilities include: (a) providing guidance for tourism enterprises and services, (b) developing human resources, tourism institutions, and creative economy capacity, and (c) carrying out other official tasks as assigned by the Head of the Office.

Several programs have been implemented by the Tourism Office of Kulon Progo in developing Jatimulyo (Gunung Kelir) Village. First, tourism infrastructure development focuses on building or improving access roads to tourism sites, providing clean and comfortable public toilets, and ensuring sufficient parking facilities, thereby improving accessibility and visitor comfort. Second, the revitalization of tourist sites aims to restore and enhance the appeal of existing attractions through park improvements, upgrading facilities such as kiosks and food stalls, creating new attractions, and introducing environmentally friendly recreational facilities. Third, destination management training is offered to local communities, covering aspects such as destination management, customer service, tourism promotion, and environmental protection, with the goal of improving service quality, visitor experience, and destination sustainability. Fourth, local community empowerment initiatives encourage residents to produce high-quality tourism products and services, such as handicrafts and local culinary specialties, with additional support in marketing and product distribution. Finally, local tourism promotion is carried out through various channels, including websites, social media, brochures, and participation in tourism fairs, to increase destination visibility and attract more visitors to Jatimulyo Village.

Through these programs, the Tourism Office of Kulon Progo Regency seeks to strengthen the tourism potential of Jatimulyo Village, empower the local community, and enhance the local economy in a sustainable manner. By involving multiple stakeholders and efficiently utilizing available resources, Jatimulyo Village is expected to grow into a competitive and attractive tourism destination.

Community Involvement in Tourism Activities

The community of Gunung Kelir Village places significant emphasis on social awareness and mutual care among its residents. This collective concern fosters togetherness and strengthens the social values embedded within the local society. Such commitment is reflected in several communal activities carried out to support the development of tourism facilities in the village. These activities include. Constructing supporting facilities for tourism, such as community halls (pendopo), places of worship (musholla), gazebos, toilets, bridges, and walking paths within tourist areas.

1. Conducting routine communal work (gotong royong), such as cleaning tourist sites, maintaining gardens and farmlands, and repairing infrastructure like footpaths or stairways leading to specific tourist spots.
2. Organizing community meetings to discuss tourism development, covering aspects such as sustainable infrastructure, natural resource management, and marketing strategies to attract more visitors.
3. Hosting regular cultural and artistic events, including traditional dance performances, local music, and handicraft exhibitions, to enrich the tourist experience while promoting local cultural heritage.
4. Carrying out environmental initiatives such as tree planting or ecosystem restoration around tourist sites as efforts to preserve nature and beautify tourist areas.
5. Establishing local economic cooperation groups, such as farmer associations or micro-enterprises, to empower the community in developing sustainable, locally based tourism products.

Discussion

The development of tourism in Gunung Kelir Village, Kulon Progo, prioritizes community participation at every stage. The local community plays an active role in designing and implementing various activities that support sustainable tourism. This participation includes activities such as communal work, community deliberations, and cultural events. Through active involvement, environmental cleanliness and sustainability are maintained, ultimately enhancing the attractiveness of the destination. This aligns with studies conducted by Gautama et al. (2020) and Nugroho et al. (2021), which highlight that human resource development is a key factor in the successful management of tourist villages.

As explained by Suansri (2018), the success of a tourist village also depends on the active participation of the community in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of tourism activities. In addition to communal work, the people of Gunung Kelir Village also engage in collective deliberations to discuss and plan tourism development. These discussions cover essential topics such as sustainable infrastructure development, natural resource management, and marketing strategies. Such community deliberations ensure that each step in tourism development considers the interests and perspectives of all stakeholders involved.

Beyond community involvement, leadership within local institutions also plays an important role in strengthening participation (Kristiana & Nathalia, 2022). In the case of Gunung Kelir Village, the Tourism Office of Kulon Progo Regency has been involved in several areas, including infrastructure development, revitalization of tourist sites, destination management training for the local community, and tourism promotion. Through these programs, the Tourism Office seeks to enhance the tourism potential of Jatimulyo Village, empower local communities, and strengthen the local economy in a sustainable manner. The sustainable tourism development strategy in Gunung Kelir Village also emphasizes local economic empowerment. The establishment of cooperative economic groups, such as farmer associations and micro-enterprises, enables the community to produce quality tourism products. Support in the form of training and marketing initiatives ensures that the economic benefits of tourism are distributed across the community.

The concept of community-based tourism (CBT) serves as the foundation for sustainable tourism development in Jatimulyo or Gunung Kelir Village. CBT in Gunung Kelir clearly creates employment opportunities for the local population and improves community welfare. With direct involvement from the local community, the alignment of development and management programs with community aspirations is better guaranteed, in accordance with existing capacities, while also fostering a strong sense of ownership and commitment among residents.

CONCLUSION

The tourism development of Gunung Kelir Village in Jatimulyo, Kulon Progo, holds significant potential with its natural beauty, local culture, traditional culinary offerings, adventure tourism, and agrotourism. Community participation plays a crucial role in advancing tourism in the village. Local residents are actively involved in communal activities, facility development, community deliberations, cultural events, and environmental conservation. Support from the Tourism Office of Kulon Progo Regency, including infrastructure development, revitalization of tourist sites, training, and promotional initiatives, further strengthens sustainable tourism development. The application of community-based tourism (CBT) has proven effective in empowering local residents and enhancing their welfare.

Several recommendations can be proposed to further develop Gunung Kelir Village as an attractive and sustainable tourist destination that provides economic and social benefits for the local community, as follows: (1) The Tourism Office should increase the frequency and quality of training for local residents in tourism management, service delivery, and promotion to enhance their competencies in managing the destination; (2) Digital marketing efforts should be strengthened through social media, websites, and online tourism platforms to broaden market reach and attract more visitors; and (3) Partnerships with the private sector should be established to encourage investment in tourism infrastructure and the development of facilities that enhance visitor

experiences.

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