



Community-Based Entrepreneurship Development for Sustainable Ecotourism: A Case Study in Bogor Regency, Indonesia

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Received: Feb 20, 2025

Revised: April 7, 2025

Accepted: June 2, 2025

Online: June 9, 2025

Abstract

Rural areas often face socioeconomic and environmental challenges, including limited economic opportunities and the degradation of natural resources, which necessitate sustainable development models. This study addresses this critical issue by examining the potential, impacts, and optimization of community-based Ecotourism for sustainable development in selected sites in Bogor Regency, Indonesia. Using a qualitative approach and a multiple-case study method, the research revealed that community-based Ecotourism enhanced local economic welfare by diversifying income sources, creating job opportunities, and fostering entrepreneurial activities through ticket sales, guide services, and local product marketing. Further, it contributed to social welfare by empowering local communities, strengthening social cohesion, and supporting community-led initiatives such as interest-free loans and disaster relief programs. Environmental benefits were observed by consistently applying sustainable practices, including effective waste management and biodiversity conservation. Despite these gains, the study identified critical challenges: the need for improved infrastructure, enhanced governmental support, and ongoing capacity building for local stakeholders. Unlike previous studies, this research advances the literature by integrating economic, social, and environmental dimensions into a unified framework for sustainable Ecotourism, offering valuable implications for policymakers and practitioners in rural tourism development.

Keywords: *sustainable ecotourism, community-based entrepreneurship, Social empowerment, environmental sustainability*

INTRODUCTION

Community-based ecotourism has emerged as a promising approach to address socioeconomic and environmental challenges in rural areas, which often grapple with issues such as poverty, unemployment, and the unsustainable use of natural resources. Grounded in sustainable development theory and community participation frameworks, this approach integrates environmental conservation with community development to create a balanced model for economic growth and sustainable natural resource management. Unlike conventional tourism models that often marginalize local stakeholders, community-based ecotourism emphasizes active participation and local ownership in tourism management, ensuring that benefits are distributed equitably among community members (Butarbutar & Soemarno, 2012). This model contrasts mass tourism, which can lead to environmental degradation and limited local economic benefit, highlighting the critical need for alternative sustainable approaches.

Complementary to ecotourism, community-based entrepreneurship (CBE) empowers local communities. Drawing on social capital theory and principles of inclusive growth, CBE facilitates the creation of diverse income streams through activities such as ticket sales, guided tours and local product marketing. This generates employment opportunities and improves living standards in rural areas—a finding highlighted in previous studies by Mandrysz (2020) and Parwez (2017).

In addition to generating economic benefits, community-based ecotourism preserves local culture and traditions. By enabling community members to share their heritage through tourism

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initiatives, these projects foster cultural awareness and strengthen social cohesion, reinforcing the cultural identity of the host community (Hertel, 2018; Soedarso et al., 2022).

Despite these promising outcomes, significant challenges remain. Issues such as inadequate infrastructure, limited governmental support, and insufficient capacity-building efforts continue to hinder the full potential of community-based ecotourism. The primary research objective of this study is to explore the potential, impacts, and optimization strategies for community-based ecotourism in Bogor Regency, Indonesia. Specifically, this study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the potential of community-based ecotourism in the selected sites in Bogor Regency regarding activities, local involvement, and environmental practices?
2. What are the social and economic impacts of ecotourism on local communities in these sites?
3. How can community-based entrepreneurship in these ecotourism sites be optimized, and what are the future challenges?

Addressing these questions, this study examines three distinct ecotourism sites within Bogor Regency—Lembur Anyar, Curug Kembar Cisangku, and Curug Leuwi Hejo—to develop a comprehensive framework that integrates economic, social, and environmental dimensions.

Unlike earlier research that predominantly focused on individual case studies or singular aspects of sustainable tourism, this study uniquely compares multiple local contexts. It offers policy-relevant insights to promote sustainable rural tourism development. Ultimately, this study provides evidence-based insights for policymakers and practitioners, offering a comprehensive framework that reconciles environmental conservation with local economic empowerment. This study aims to advance the literature by demonstrating how localized CBE models can serve as a replicable template for sustainable rural tourism development.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Community-Based Entrepreneurship (CBE)

Community-based entrepreneurship has attracted growing scholarly attention as an effective mechanism to stimulate locally driven economic development in rural communities. As noted by Peredo and Chrisman (2006), CBE emphasizes that entrepreneurial activities should be rooted in the social and cultural context of the community, ensuring that decisions and benefits are shared equitably among local members. Mandrysz (2020) further argued that such enterprises pursue economic gains and advance social objectives—promoting empowerment, collective identity, and the building of social capital. Similarly, Wanniarachchi et al. (2018) contended that local entrepreneurship can help mitigate marginalization by harnessing indigenous knowledge and skills. Although these studies provide strong evidence regarding the economic impacts of CBE, they often focus on financial outcomes, leaving integration with environmental and cultural dimensions underexplored. This gap requires a more holistic examination of CBE that embraces multiple sustainability dimensions.

Ecotourism as a Sustainable Development Strategy

Ecotourism is recognized as a form of sustainable tourism that simultaneously fosters environmental conservation and stimulates local economies. Hakim (2004) defined ecotourism as educating visitors about natural habitats while ensuring their preservation. Similarly, Butarbutar and Soemarno (2012) demonstrated that ecotourism initiatives can serve as powerful catalysts for rural development by providing income opportunities and creating incentives for conservation. Despite these benefits, the existing literature often treats economic and environmental outcomes as separate domains. The lack of an integrated framework linking these aspects highlights the need

for studies that holistically address ecotourism, considering the conservation of natural resources and the sociocultural impacts within local communities.

Integrating CBE with Ecotourism

The intersection of community-based entrepreneurship and ecotourism offers promising potential for sustainable rural development. By merging the principles of local empowerment and inclusive participation from CBE with ecotourism's conservation and educational goals, communities can develop resilient and adaptive economic models. [Hertel \(2018\)](#) suggested that such integration facilitates improved local governance and enhanced stakeholder engagement, ultimately leading to better-managed tourism initiatives that benefit both people and the environment. However, there remains a notable dearth of studies that compare multiple local implementations of CBE within the ecotourism context, particularly in rural Indonesia. This gap underscores the necessity of research that documents these practices and evaluates their comparative effectiveness in promoting overall sustainability.

In summary, while prior research has highlighted the economic advantages of community-based entrepreneurship and the conservation potential of ecotourism, the literature largely lacks integrative studies that bridge these dimensions. The current research addresses this deficiency by examining distinct local models in Bogor Regency, offering a comprehensive framework that connects economic, social, and environmental outcomes in a replicable manner.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative research design anchored in a case study approach to explore the dynamics of community-based ecotourism in Bogor Regency, South Wales. The research design was chosen to capture the complexity of local practices and the interplay between economic, social, and environmental dimensions.

Data were collected through multiple methods to ensure triangulation and enhance the reliability of the findings. In-depth interviews were conducted with key stakeholders—including local community members, ecotourism managers, and visitors—to gather firsthand insights into the operational strategies and perceived impacts of community-based entrepreneurship initiatives. In addition, systematic observations at the selected ecotourism sites were carried out to document environmental practices and community interactions, complementing the interview data. Analyzing reports, business plans, and policy documents further enhanced the contextual understanding of the implemented strategies.

Participants were selected using purposive sampling, focusing on individuals directly involved in various ecotourism activities. The data collection process spanned 6 months, allowing the researchers to capture the fieldwork's seasonal variations and dynamic aspects. All interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim to ensure accuracy, and data analysis was performed using thematic analysis by [Braun and Clarke's \(2006\)](#) guidelines. This approach facilitated the systematic coding and categorization of data to identify core themes and patterns, such as organisational structures' impact on sustainability and the role of capacity building in enhancing local empowerment.

Foundational methodological texts, including [Kvale \(2007\)](#), provided the theoretical underpinnings for the interview protocols and data interpretation. Integrating qualitative data from diverse sources ensured a comprehensive and replicable analysis, ultimately contributing to a robust framework for understanding the multifaceted impacts of community-based ecotourism.

Site Selection and Uniqueness

Three ecotourism sites in the southern region of Bogor Regency were included in this study:

Lembur Anyar, Curug Kembar Cisangku, and Curug Leuwi Hejo. These sites were selected purposively based on the following criteria:

1. Established Community-Based Management: Each site has an active local community involved in managing and operating ecotourism activities.
2. Diverse Natural Attractions: There are various natural attractions (waterfalls, scenic hills, rice fields, rivers) typical of the region.
3. Varying Organizational Structures: The sites exhibit different models of community organization and enterprise management (e.g., cooperative, CV/limited partnership, community group).
4. Accessibility and Popularity: These ecotourism destinations are recognized in Bogor Regency and attract regular visitors.

The uniqueness of these sites lies in their grassroots development, driven by local initiatives to conserve the environment while creating economic opportunities. For example, Lembur Anyar is known for its integrated agrotourism and educational programs. Curug Kembar Cisangku emerged from a community effort to resolve land use conflict with a state-owned enterprise (Perhutani) and now operates as a partnership. Whereas, Curug Leuwi Hejo manages a cluster of several waterfalls and natural pools, showcasing a broader area-based community management.

Data Collection

Data were collected using multiple methods to ensure triangulation and enhance the findings' reliability. The data collection process is outlined below.

1. In-depth Interviews: A total of 45 in-depth interviews were conducted.
2. Participants: Primary data were collected through in-depth interviews with local community members, ecotourism managers, and visitors to the three sites. The participant distribution is detailed in Table 1.
3. Process: The interviews were semi-structured and guided by key themes such as ecotourism potential, government role, innovation and creativity, and the social and economic impacts of ecotourism development. Interviews were audio-recorded (with consent) and then transcribed verbatim.
4. Structured Questions: While largely semi-structured, interviews with visitors and managers also included structured questions corresponding to the research themes to ensure consistency.

Table 1. Participant Details for In-Depth Interviews

Number	Category	Lembur Anyar	Curug Kembar Cisangku	Curug Leuwi Hejo	Total	Role Description
1	Manager Ecotourism	2	2	2	6	Individuals responded to management and operational issues
2	Local Community	5	5	5	15	The local community is involved
3	Visitor	10	10	10	30	Individuals who visit for recreation

Number	Category	Lembur Anyar	Curug Kembar Cisangku	Curug Leuwi Hejo	Total	Role Description
Total Participants		17	17	17	51	

5. Systematic Observation: Observations focused on tourist-community interactions, environmental management practices (e.g., waste disposal, conservation efforts), the condition and use of facilities, visitor flow, and the general functioning of the ecotourism sites.
6. Frequency: To capture typical operations and variations, each site was visited multiple times (at least 3-4 visits per site) over six months, including weekdays and weekends. Observations were conducted at different times of the day.
7. Framework/Criteria: Observations were guided by a checklist based on sustainable tourism indicators (e.g., presence of clear signage, waste separation, community involvement in service provision, and visitor behaviour). Field notes and photographs were taken to document observations. No specific pre-defined named framework was rigidly applied, but principles from general ethnographic and observational research from [Angrosino \(2007\)](#) were followed.
8. Document Analysis: Relevant documents included local government reports related to tourism development in Bogor Regency, internal management documents from the ecotourism sites (e.g., meeting minutes, simple financial records where available, promotional materials), business plans (if any), and published articles or previous research studies on tourism in the region.
9. Selection criteria: Documents were selected based on their relevance to understanding the history, management, economic activities, community involvement, and challenges of ecotourism sites.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Community-Based Ecotourism Potential: Activities, Involvement, and Environmental Practices

This study identified several tourism activities among the three examined sites in Bogor Regency. For instance, Lembu Anyar Ecotourism offers natural scenery, family recreation areas, natural swimming pools, and camping facilities. At the same time, Curug Kembar Cisangku Ecotourism provides gazebos, swimming pools, camping areas, and local enterprise products such as endemic plant cultivation and organic fertilizer production. Table 2 summarizes the diverse enterprises and activities observed in these locations. These findings echo [Parwez's \(2017\)](#) observation of the importance of income diversification for enhancing community resilience.

Local community involvement emerged as a central factor in the management and ownership of these initiatives. In Lembu Anyar, management is organized through a cooperative model with approximately 50 active residents, fostering increased social cohesion and collective ownership. In contrast, Curug Kembar Cisangku operates under a limited partnership (CV) model, demonstrating how different organizational structures can shape operational dynamics. [Aquino et al. \(2022\)](#) noted that flexible organizational models are often linked to better adaptability and responsiveness to market changes. Such differences suggest that communities with more inclusive and adaptable structures may be better equipped to capitalize on their ecotourism potential.

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Regency. For instance, Lembur Anyar Ecotourism offers natural scenery, family-recreation areas, natural swimming pools, and camping facilities. A manager from Lembur Anyar stated.

"We try to offer a complete experience, from enjoying the views to active camping." This diversity attracts different types of families and groups." - Lembur Anyar Manager

Ecotourism Manager, Lembur Anyar. Curug Kembar Cisangku Ecotourism provides gazebos, swimming pools, camping areas, and local enterprise products, such as endemic plant cultivation and organic fertilizer production. The visitor survey results also support these insights. Respondents noted the natural beauty and quality of the facilities and highly appreciated the warm interactions with local residents. Visitors reported high satisfaction with the overall experience—albeit with recommendations for facility improvements and better environmental management. These observations confirm that community engagement and quality of services are critical factors in sustainable ecotourism.

Table 2. Enterprises and Activities in Three Locations

No	Location	Types of Enterprises and Activities	Description
1	Leuwi Hejo Ecotourism	Management of water tourism across multiple sites (e.g., Leuwi Hejo, Leuwi Benjol, Curug Barong, Leuwi Ceupet, Leuwi Lieuk, Cibaliung)	Local residents operate stalls (~70 stalls), provide tracking guide services (~10 guides), and engage in farming activities (e.g., cultivating citronella and cloves).
2	Lembu Anyar Ecotourism	Nature-based tourism management featuring hill and rice field scenery, rivers, waterfalls, bamboo forests; includes family recreation parks, natural swimming pools, and camping areas.	Managed by a cooperative of 50 local residents (supported by 4 managers) offering accommodation options (homestays, villas, cottages, glamping) and supporting 10 local MSMEs.
3	Curug Kembar Cisangku Ecotourism	Management of water tourism, including facilities such as gazebos, prayer rooms, toilets, swimming pools, and camping grounds; complemented by local business ventures.	Operated as a limited partnership (CV), this model integrates local enterprise activities like endemic plant cultivation, sheep farming, ground coffee production, and organic fertilizer production.



Figure 1. Entrance of Leuwi Hejo Ecotourism

Figure 1 captures the main entrance of Leuwi Hejo Ecotourism, highlighting the site's natural

beauty and inviting atmosphere. The well-maintained entrance not only serves as the first point of contact for visitors but also reflects the local community's commitment to preserving and promoting its natural heritage. Clear signage and surrounding vegetation enhance the overall visitor experience, highlighting the region's emphasis on sustainable tourism practices.

Local community involvement emerged as a central factor in the management and ownership of these initiatives. In Lembur Anyar, management is organized through a cooperative model with approximately 50 active residents, fostering increased social cohesion and collective ownership. A community member involved in the cooperative shared.

"Being part of the cooperative means our voices are heard, and we share in the successes." It is not just a job but our place." - Community Member Lembur Anyar.

In contrast, Curug Kembar Cisangku operates under a limited partnership (CV) model, demonstrating how different organizational structures can shape operational dynamics. [Aquino et al. \(2022\)](#) noted that flexible organizational models are often linked to better adaptability and responsiveness to market changes. Such differences suggest that communities with more inclusive and adaptable structures may be better equipped to capitalize on their ecotourism potential.

The visitor survey results also support these insights. Respondents noted the natural beauty and quality of the facilities and highly appreciated the warm interactions with local residents. One visitor remarked.

"The waterfalls are beautiful, but what made the trip special was how friendly and helpful the local guides were. They know the area." - Visitor, Curug Leuwi Hejo.

Visitors reported high satisfaction with the overall experience—albeit with recommendations for facility improvements and better environmental management. These observations confirm that community engagement and quality of services are critical factors in sustainable ecotourism.

Social and Economic Impacts

Economic Benefits

Community-based ecotourism has significantly increased local incomes through various sources, including ticket sales, guide services, accommodations, and the sale of local products. For example, the Leuwi-Hejo site generates considerable revenue from entrance fees and ancillary services, with net monthly incomes reported substantially after accounting for operational costs. The manager of Leuwi Hejo explained.

"Ticket sales are our main income, but the food stalls run by locals and the guides also bring in a good amount." We try to ensure a fair portion goes back to community development and site maintenance." - Ecotourism manager Leuwi Hejo.

Similar positive economic impacts were documented in Lembur Anyar and Curug Kembar Cisangku. This pattern agrees with the findings of [Parwez \(2017\)](#) and [Mandrysz \(2020\)](#), who emphasized the role of diversified income streams in bolstering community welfare.



Figure 2. Main Facilities at Lembur Anyar Ecotourism

Figure 2 highlights the core facilities of Lembur Anyar Ecotourism, including scenic camping areas, natural swimming pools, and other recreational spaces. The image illustrates the harmonious blend of nature and thoughtfully developed tourism infrastructure, offering visitors an authentic rural experience. This underscores how community-based entrepreneurship can be leveraged to provide diverse and sustainable tourism services that enrich the local economy and enhance community welfare.

Social Benefits

Job creation, skill enhancement, and social empowerment are evident in the studied areas. The active involvement of local stakeholders in the management of tourism facilities has led to substantial social capital and increased community resilience. A young adult working as a guide at Curug Kembar Cisangku stated.

“Before this, there were not many jobs here, especially for young people.” Now, I have an income and have learned a lot about hospitality and even met new people” - Community Member (Guide).

Curug Kembar Cisangku. Social programs—such as interest-free loans and disaster relief initiatives funded by ecotourism revenue in Lembur Anyar—demonstrate the broader social impacts beyond direct economic gains. As argued by [Butarbutar and Soemarno \(2012\)](#), such integrated approaches alleviate poverty and strengthen the fabric of local society.

Table 3. Economics Benefits and Welfare Improvement

No	Location	Economic benefits and welfare improvements	Average Monthly Income (IDR)
1	Leuwi Hejo Ecotourism	Income generated from ticket sales, food stalls, and guide services. This revenue creates job opportunities and enhances local income, thus contributing to overall welfare.	225,000,000
2	Lembu Anyar Ecotourism	Revenue from entrance fees, tour packages (including student/training programs), accommodations, and	105,500,000

		camping services. These benefits are directly linked to enhanced local economic empowerment and community-driven initiatives.	
3	Curug Kembar Cisangku Ecotourism	Income from entrance tickets, parking fees, and camping activities, supplemented by community capacity building through training and local enterprise collaborations.	46,677,000

Environmental Sustainability

This study documents proactive environmental practices, including systematic waste management, tree planting programs, and biodiversity conservation. Despite increased visitor-borne waste, all sites have implemented mitigation measures, as outlined in Table 4. A manager at Lembur Anyar highlighted his efforts.

"We have a 'Hari Bersih Lembur' program every month, and we try to educate visitors about not littering. Protecting our environment is key to our attraction." - Ecotourism manager, Lembur Anyar.

These efforts support the view that sustainable ecotourism and community-based management can safeguard natural resources while fostering economic growth. This finding aligns with prior research emphasizing the dual benefits of environmental stewardship and economic advancement (Butarbutar & Soemarno, 2012; Kummitha & Kummitha, 2021).

Table 4. Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

No	Location	Environmental Impact	Impact Management and Mitigation Measures
1	Leuwi Hejo Ecotourism	Increased waste generation, particularly river litter.	Improved waste disposal facilities; collaborative waste management; tree planting programs; strict wildlife protection measures.
2	Lembu Anyar Ecotourism	Elevated waste levels, water quality degradation, disturbance of local vegetation, and plastic pollution.	Strict waste management; monthly "Hari Bersih Lembur" programs; tree planting initiatives; and visitor education on environmental conservation.
3	Curug Kembar Cisangku Ecotourism	Increased visitor-borne waste and challenges in maintaining native habitats.	Weekly cleanliness evaluations; enhanced visitor education on maintaining cleanliness; regular tree planting; and provision of adequate waste disposal facilities.



Figure 3. Key Features of Curug Kembar Cisangku Ecotourism

Figure 3 captures the essential features of Curug Kembar Cisangku Ecotourism, such as gazebos, water attractions, and areas supporting local enterprises like organic product cultivation. The photograph demonstrates how local stakeholders integrate tourism with traditional industries, thus fostering economic growth and promoting environmental conservation. This visually represents the successful incorporation of community-driven initiatives in eco-friendly tourism, which contributes to the overall development of the region.

Optimization of Community-Based Entrepreneurship and Future Challenges

While the potential of community-based entrepreneurship (CBE) in promoting sustainable ecotourism is clear, the study also identified several challenges that require attention. The key issues are as follows:

Infrastructure Needs

Visitors commonly noted inadequate public facilities (e.g., toilets, information centers), and limited access roads. Table 4 shows the specific areas requiring improvement at each site.

Government Support and Capacity Building

There is a notable gap in sustained governmental support, particularly in financing and technical training programs. Enhanced capacity building is critical to empower local entrepreneurs and ensure long-term sustainability.

Organizational Structures

The variation in management models—cooperative versus limited partnership—appears to influence operational efficiency and the ability to respond to market and environmental challenges. [Aquino et al. \(2022\)](#) indicate that inclusive and adaptive frameworks yield better outcomes. A deeper analysis suggests that organizational flexibility is directly linked to improved sustainability, as more dynamic models enable rapid adaptation to changing tourism trends.

These challenges prompt several recommendations. First, improvements in infrastructure and access should be prioritized to enhance visitor experience and operational efficiency. Second, policies offering financial support and technical guidance must be strengthened to ensure local communities receive sustained backing. Third, promoting organizational models emphasising broad participation and transparent decision-making could further empower communities to manage their local ecotourism enterprises.

A comparative reflection with other community-based ecotourism projects in Southeast Asia suggests that while the fundamental principles remain similar, contextual nuances—such as local

governance structures and cultural dynamics—play a critical role in determining the success of these initiatives. Integrating these lessons can help tailor more effective, region-specific strategies for sustainable rural tourism development.

Table 5. Current Management Status and Facility Improvement

No	Location	Current Management Status	Facilities Needing Improvement	Additional Support Required
1	Lembu Anyar Ecotourism	Fairly optimal: managed by a local cooperative with a solid operational structure but facing certain infrastructural gaps.	Public facilities (e.g., toilets, information centers) and overall infrastructure enhancements (e.g., signage).	Increased capital assistance, marketing support, and improvements in health and education facilities.
2	Leuwi Hejo Ecotourism	Partially optimal operational management exists but remains limited in addressing certain service and infrastructural needs.	Improved waste management systems, better road access, and enhanced visitor amenities (e.g., eco-friendly public areas).	Regular technical training, financial support, and targeted assistance in tourism management practices.
3	Curug Kembar Cisangku Ecotourism	Optimal in some aspects: Strong organizational model (limited partnership) with consistent operation, but gaps persist in service standards.	Upgraded public facilities (e.g., restrooms, visitor centers), enhanced environmental education signage, and promotional materials.	Support for management training, increased promotional activities, and development of better transportation infrastructure.



Figure 4. Photos of Data Collection Through Visitor Questionnaires and Interviews with Management

CONCLUSIONS

This study explored the potential, impacts, and challenges of community-based ecotourism initiatives driven by local entrepreneurship in Bogor Regency. The analysis reveals that effective community engagement through diverse organizational models—from cooperative to limited partnership—can significantly enhance local economic welfare, foster social empowerment, and promote environmental sustainability. Integrating community-based entrepreneurship with ecotourism diversifies income streams and plays a crucial role in preserving local cultural heritage

and natural resources.

Based on the findings, several recommendations are proposed. First, investments in infrastructure—such as improvements to public facilities and waste management systems—are essential to supporting sustainable tourism. Second, sustained governmental support in terms of financial assistance and targeted capacity-building initiatives is paramount to empowering local stakeholders. Third, an inclusive and adaptive organizational framework is recommended to facilitate transparent decision-making and swift responses to market and environmental changes.

Unlike previous research that has examined isolated cases or singular aspects of sustainable tourism, this study offers a comprehensive, comparative analysis of multiple ecotourism sites within a single regional context. This integrated framework, which bridges economic, social, and environmental dimensions, not only advances academic discourse but also provides practical insights for policymakers and practitioners engaged in rural tourism development.

Overall, our findings underscore the importance of a holistic approach to fostering a resilient and inclusive rural economy. They pave the way for continued research and the development of replicable models in community-based ecotourism.

LIMITATION & FURTHER RESEARCH

Although this study provides valuable insights into the dynamics of community-based ecotourism in Bogor Regency, several limitations merit consideration. First, the research was confined to three specific sites, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other regions or contexts. Second, the reliance on qualitative methods—while beneficial for depth of understanding—may introduce subjectivity and limit the ability to capture long-term trends quantitatively. Finally, although effective for in-depth analysis, the relatively small sample size of interviews and observations suggests that future studies could benefit from a larger dataset and a mixed-methods approach.

Future research should consider expanding the geographical scope to include diverse ecotourism sites in different rural regions. Incorporating quantitative analysis alongside qualitative insights and conducting longitudinal studies will help to capture temporal variations and provide a more robust assessment of the sustainability of community-based initiatives. Furthermore, comparative studies across regions or countries could further illuminate the contextual factors that shape the success of community-based ecotourism, ultimately leading to more tailored policy interventions.

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