
THE ROLE OF THE COMMUNITY IN DEVELOPING ECOTOURISM POTENTIAL IN KILUAN VILLAGE, KELUMBAYAN DISTRICT, TANGGAMUS REGENCY

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine the role of the local community of Pekon Kiluan Negeri in developing ecotourism potential and the factors that support and inhibit ecotourism development. This type of research is descriptive qualitative research. The number of informants in this study was 10 people determined through purposive sampling. The data collection techniques used were in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation. The results of this study indicate that the community in Pekon Kiluan Negeri participated in the planning, implementation, and monitoring of ecotourism activities. However, after COVID-19, community concern and involvement have begun to decrease, because Kiluan tourism has fluctuated so that the community no longer benefits from ecotourism, only a few are still involved so the role of the community is not as optimal as before.

KEYWORDS

Community; Potential; Ecotourism.

INTRODUCTION

Ecotourism is a sustainable development of tourism to maintain environmental sustainability that includes the role of local communities so that the community benefits from it (Rijal, 2020). Ecotourism managed by the community is an alternative to improving the lives of local communities because it impacts improving the economy and can also provide changes in ecological and social aspects ([Anwariningsih, 2021](#)). One important indicator in the development of ecotourism is the involvement of local communities in it, the emphasis on the role of the community in managing ecotourism is known as a community-based ecotourism system (Asy ari et al., 2021). Community-based ecotourism is defined as a form of ecotourism in which local communities exercise control and participate in the development, management, and provision of most of the benefits to the community, community awareness of the existence of natural tourist destinations becomes a forum for development activities that fulfill the desires of the community and prioritize the needs of visitors (Rijal, 2020). In developing community-based ecotourism, each village is asked to identify potential tourist attractions. The goal is to empower communities through tourism ([Rizkianto et al., 2018](#)).

Tourism villages have become a new trend in tourism, the government hopes to develop these tourism villages as part of sustainable tourism, to improve the welfare of local communities, and to encourage the revival of tourism. In developing tourism villages, many villages in various regions have been created with their respective potentials. Until 2021, the number of tourism villages in Indonesia was 83,820. One of the tourism villages that has quite high potential is Pekon Kiluan Negeri which is located in Lampung Province, precisely in Kelumbayan District, Tanggamus Regency, which is included in the management and development area of ecotourism-based conservation areas.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study uses a descriptive qualitative research method, namely presenting or describing each data displayed. Qualitative research uses a series of texts to present research data in qualitative research to capture the deepest meaning not only in the form of numbers, because numbers cannot represent all findings in the field, besides numbers are also just symbols ([Raco 2010](#)). This research was conducted in Pekon Kiluan Negeri, Kelumbayan District, Tanggamus Regency, to determine informants using purposive techniques. Primary and secondary data sources. The data collection process is through in- depth interviews, observation, and documentation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The role of the community is vital in the development of ecotourism. The community is the main actor in the development of ecotourism, the community functions as a provider of visitor needs and the community must also be involved in the management of ecotourism development so that the community benefits from the development of ecotourism, which by its objectives for community welfare ([Taufik, & Eprilianto, 2022](#)).

Community Participation in Ecotourism Planning

Planning is an important process for designing how ecotourism activities will be in the future, for that in this case the importance of community involvement by the purpose of ecotourism is for the welfare of the community. At this planning stage, community involvement can be done through socialization to discuss the programs to be implemented ([Febriana, 2020](#)).

At this stage, greater community involvement is important, because the community understands better what potential there is in their village so that they can make the right decision in the potential development plan so that the community has a sense of ownership and responsibility. This is in line with the research of [Taufik, & Eprilianto, \(2022\)](#) which states that in tourism the role of the community is used to plan activities and prepare the needs of tourists so that the community benefits from the existence of tourism

Community Participation in the Implementation of Ecotourism

The role of the community in the implementation stage of ecotourism is a continuation of the design including submitting proposals and completing tourism facilities and infrastructure, Local community involvement can be in the form of assistance with manpower, money, and materials as a provision of needs for tourists ([Kaharuddin, 2020](#)). The implementation of ecotourism is carried out through collaboration from various parties, stakeholders, the community, and the government.

At this stage, the Kiluan Pekon community has implemented its role in ecotourism, they provide boat facilities for dolphins and become tour guides and villa managers. However, in this case, community involvement is still limited and not optimal because, since COVID-

19, tourism has experienced large fluctuations that impact the economy of people working in tourism. The lack of visitors means that people no longer get the benefits of ecotourism so those who used to be actively involved now prefer to take care of their gardens and become fishermen.

Ecotourism development is still being carried out to this day with the role of Pokdarwis which still dominates, they continue to strive for Kiluan Bay tourism to revive so that people can feel the impact again and be involved again in its development Currently, the community involved in implementation includes those who have food stalls, homestays, and boats. In line with that, [Kaharuddin \(2020\)](#) stated that the role of the community in ecotourism planning could be in the form of assistance with manpower, money, and materials as well as providing tourism facilities. In this case, the role played by the local community of Pekon Kiluan Negeri, Kelumbayan District, is assistance with manpower, and materials and providing tourism facilities.

Community Receives Benefits of Ecotourism

The community receives the benefits of ecotourism in this case the local community gets results in tourism management such as job opportunities, and business opportunities (Kaharuddin, 2020). This role has been obtained by the Pekon Kiluan Negeri community with the existence of ecotourism activities, the community feels the positive impact, especially on the economy because ecotourism activities open up job opportunities for the community, with them becoming tour guides, renting houses to be used as homestays, and renting boats for dolphin tours and opening up culinary business opportunities.

In addition, the benefits received by the community with the development of this ecotourism are that many academics carry out activities at the location such as holding community service and conducting socialization to open the insights of the local community. This condition is by the research of Kaharuddin et al. (2020), with ecotourism the community has job opportunities and businesses that help the economy. However, all of that did not last in the long term because tourism had fluctuated due to Covid-19, so for now not all Pekon Kiluan people receive the benefits of this ecotourism, only a few who do have an interest in tourism such as villa managers and boat owners.

Monitoring Ecotourism Activities

According to Yoeti (2000), ecotourism management requires continuous supervision because problems, needs, commitments, and the ability to manage are significant to reduce the negative impacts caused. Through the active role of the community in monitoring ecotourism activities, a strong relationship can be created between ecotourism managers, local communities, and the natural environment, thus ensuring the sustainability of ecotourism in the long term.

The role of the community in ecotourism monitoring activities by participating in maintaining environmental cleanliness maintaining the cleanliness of the ecotourism environment can be an attraction for tourists to visit because one of the important elements that supports the development of ecotourism is the cleanliness of the ecotourism environment so that tourists will feel comfortable and satisfied with their visit.

Kiluan Bay has high eco-tourism potential. its development is carried out properly, it will become a sustainable ecotourism that provides positive impacts and benefits that can be obtained by the local community. This case is in line with Aziz's research (2008) which states that ecotourism must be considered as a joint effort between the local community and visitors to protect land, culture, and biology by helping local community development. Here, community development means strengthening local community groups to control and manage valuable resources in ways that sustain natural resources.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTION

From the presentation of the results and discussion, the researcher concluded that the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the development of ecotourism in Pekon Kiluan Negeri. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, tourism activities in Kiluan Bay have experienced a very drastic decline in visits and even went on hiatus for some time, which has affected community involvement. The role of the community in developing ecotourism is currently not optimal, as seen from the fact that more people choose to garden and become fishermen.

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