

Strategies For Integrating SDGS Into Local Community-Based Eco-Tourism Initiatives

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ARTICLE INFO

ABSTRACT

Received: 20 Dec 2024

Revised: 20 Feb 2025

Accepted: 27 Feb 2025

The integration of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into local community-based eco-tourism initiatives is crucial in promoting sustainable economic growth while preserving cultural heritage and the environment. This study explores strategies for embedding SDG principles within eco-tourism initiatives in Rendeng Village, Bojonegoro Regency, focusing on pottery edu-tourism as a means of fostering local economic development. Employing a qualitative methodology, data was collected through semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs), participant observations, and document analysis. The findings reveal that eco-tourism development has significantly contributed to community empowerment, job creation, and cultural preservation. However, challenges such as inadequate promotion, environmental concerns, and competition from similar tourism ventures pose barriers to its sustainability. A SWOT analysis was conducted to formulate strategic recommendations, emphasizing collaboration between local communities, government, and private stakeholders. Key strategies include enhancing marketing efforts, leveraging digital platforms for tourism promotion, and improving infrastructure to support sustainable tourism. The study highlights the necessity of a comprehensive approach to balancing economic benefits with environmental conservation and cultural sustainability. By integrating SDGs into eco-tourism, local communities can achieve long-term prosperity while fostering responsible tourism practices. This research offers practical insights for policymakers, tourism planners, and local entrepreneurs in developing sustainable tourism models that align with global sustainability goals.

Keywords: Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Eco-Tourism, Community Empowerment, Pottery Edu-Tourism

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is an important economic sector(Hussein et al., 2021; Tang, 2021)(Clifton & Benson, 2006) for many countries around the world. According to data from the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), in 2019, international tourism reached 1.5 billion tourist arrivals, and its direct contribution to global GDP reached 4.4 trillion US dollars. However, the rapid growth of tourism also poses a number of challenges (Alam et al., 2024; Kunjuran, 2024), including environmental damage (Ivona et al., 2021), reduced quality of life for local communities(Stone & Stone, 2020), and loss of cultural heritage.

On the other hand, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by the United Nations (UN) provide an important framework for achieving sustainable development throughout the world (Pforr, 2001). Of the 17 SDGs goals, several have direct relevance to the tourism sector (Clifton & Benson, 2006), including goals on eradicating poverty (SDG 1), preserving biodiversity (SDG 15), and promoting peace and justice (SDG 16).

One approach that is increasingly recognized in implementing sustainable tourism (Mensah, 2019) is eco-tourism based on local communities (Zielinski et al., 2020)(Dogra et al., 2022)(León-Gómez et al., 2023). Eco-tourism emphasizes nature and culture preservation (Koderi et al., 2018)(Azizah et al., 2020), while providing direct benefits to local communities (Wikantiyoso et al., 2021)(Meyer, 2016)(Hafezi et al., 2023). The integration of SDGs (Alipour et al., 2020) into eco-tourism initiatives such as this is important, as it ensures that tourism growth not only provides economic benefits, but also contributes to achieving broader sustainable development goals.(Salman & Mohamad, 2020)(Jacobson & Robles, 1992)(Wijijayanti et al., 2020). By involving local communities in the management and operations of eco-tourism (Syafinas et al., 2024), can improve their welfare through job creation and education (Lam et al., 2011)(Syafinas et al., 2024), and increasing capacity(Basri et al., 2022). All this, in turn, contributes to reducing poverty and inequality, and improving the overall quality of life.

However, integrating SDGs into local community-based eco-tourism is not an easy task (Stone & Stone, 2020). Various factors such as a lack of understanding of the SDGs (Zielinski et al., 2020), economic pressures, and the interests of diverse stakeholders often act as barriers (Meyer, 2016). Previous studies have investigated various strategies that can be used in this effort, but not many have comprehensively examined these strategies from an SDGs integration perspective.

METHOD

To explore the strategies for integrating Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into local community-based eco-tourism initiatives, this research employs a qualitative methodology(Arntsen & Waldrop, 2018)(Jackson et al., 2007) focused on understanding the nuanced and context-specific practices within these communities(Eriksen, 2018)(Moser & Korstjens, 2017). The primary data collection methods include semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs), participant observation, and document analysis. Semi-structured interviews will be conducted with key stakeholders such as local community leaders, eco-tourism operators, policymakers, and representatives from NGOs. These interviews allow for in-depth exploration of individual perspectives and experiences regarding the integration of SDGs. FGDs will gather diverse viewpoints from community members, facilitating a collective understanding of the benefits and challenges associated with eco-tourism initiatives.

Participant observation will involve the researcher engaging directly in eco-tourism activities and community meetings, providing an opportunity to observe real-time interactions and strategies employed for integrating SDGs. This immersion helps capture the practical aspects and everyday dynamics that may not be evident through interviews alone. Additionally, document analysis of project reports, policy documents, promotional materials, and local development plans will provide a comprehensive view of the formal strategies and policies in place. This method ensures a robust triangulation of data, enhancing the reliability and depth of the findings.

Data analysis will be conducted using thematic and content analysis techniques(Menzel, 2015)(Stadtländer, 2009). Transcriptions of interviews and FGDs will be coded to identify key themes and patterns related to the strategies and impacts of SDG integration. Narrative analysis will further explore the stories and experiences shared by community members, highlighting their perceptions and outcomes of eco-tourism initiatives. To ensure the validity and credibility of the research, methods such as triangulation, member checking, and peer debriefing will be employed. Triangulation(Arntsen & Waldrop, 2018)(Farazmand et al., 2019) involves corroborating evidence from multiple sources, while member checking will involve sharing findings with participants for validation. Peer debriefing will

allow for critical feedback from colleagues and experts in the field, ensuring a comprehensive and accurate portrayal of the data.

RESULT

Local Community-Based Ecotourism

The development of sustainable tourism through local communities requires a lot of effort that must be done. In developing tourism, it must look at various aspects around such as the environment; economic growth; and social. The three aspects that have been mentioned will become a guideline to be interconnected and related to various stakeholders, namely the government; private sector and local communities(Farazmand et al., 2019). With the collaboration of various parties in order to achieve a goal in the form of sustainable development through ecotourism based on local communities.

Ecotourism can be said to be an alternative tour that can be provided in the hope of improving the economic life of the community; open up jobs; and can explore the resources owned so that it becomes an asset to be used as an ecotourism that the wider community can visit. The benefits of ecotourism are that it can provide opportunities for tourists to learn about ecosystems and the importance of protecting the environment by promoting through various social media(Farazmand et al., 2019).

One example of an area that utilizes its resources and local wisdom into ecotourism and prioritizes local communities is Rendeng Village in Malo District, Bojonegoro Regency. The tourism offered in Rendeng Village is in the form of tourism that can be used as a lesson around Bojonegoro Regency by utilizing pottery into various interesting forms so that the community can see and make crafts from pottery. Pottery educational tourism was formed in 2015 by producing various forms of characters, especially the latest cartoon characters on television to attract consumer attention. In addition, it also produces piggy banks, cauldrons, angklo, flower vases, statues, home decorations, jugs and others. In addition, the motifs also vary such as animal motifs, cartoon characters, flowers and others.

The production of pottery in Rendeng Village in ancient times was only made of clay and then burned without using coloring. In addition, the manufacture of pottery in Rendeng Village was also for the production of household appliances such as cobek, piggy bank, barrel. But now the making of Rendeng Village pottery has progressed by using colorants and along with the times, the creativity of local residents automatically increases by developing their skills by making pottery in various forms of piggy banks such as tigers, cows, chickens, lions and others.



Figure 1 Pottery Crafts in Rendeng Village

Source: Researcher Documentation, 2024

The various forms available in the pottery educational tour are adjusted based on existing trends in order to attract buyers. In addition to being able to buy directly, in Pottery Educational Tourism (WEG) is also provided a place for people to make crafts directly. Therefore, this tour is often used as a visit by several students at kindergarten and elementary school levels. In this tourist village is often used as a place to hone student creativity because here will be taught how to make pottery crafts from the initial stage.



Figure 2 Student activities for making pottery crafts

Source: Researcher Documentation, 2024

Since the introduction of educational pottery tourism, Rendeng Village has attracted many customers and tourists from both within and outside the city. Although there are still many people who come directly to Rendeng Village to buy pottery, there are also craftsmen who still deliver special orders from customers outside the city. Many visitors prefer to visit directly because they can see the pottery being made. Visitors learn about the basic elements used in pottery making, how to shape pottery using molding tools, how to shape pottery with rotary tools, and how to paint pottery, besides that the crafts that have been made can also be taken home by students.

SWOT Analysis

SWOT analysis is a way to systematically identify various factors to formulate a strategy. A strategic planning method used to evaluate strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in a project or a business speculation. The four factors will form the acronym SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats). SWOT stands for the internal environment of Strengths and Weaknesses and the external environment of Opportunities and Threats faced by the business world. Marjohan: 2024 states that strategic planning must analyze the organization's strategic factors (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in its current condition. . By analyzing these four elements thoroughly, SWOT analysis helps analyze the development strategy of local community-based edu-tourism in Rendeng Village as the importance of the role of strategy in the development of pottery businesses carried out by pottery craftsmen. Good strategies and goals in the development of a business, able to increase business income and be able to compete. In conducting research using the SWOT method, 2 supporting factors are needed both from outside (external) and from within the environment itself (internal).

The following is a SWOT analysis table on local community edu-tourism development strategies in achieving SDGs in Bojonegoro Regency which can be seen from 2 factors, namely internal and external factors.

Table 1 Internal factors

Dimensions	Strenght	Weakness
Economic	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The production of pottery, which is the main commodity of Rendeng Village and the main source of livelihood, has been successfully shipped outside the city. 2. With the existence of this tourist village, people who used to work domestically and abroad (TKI) have returned to Rendeng village because the village has the potential to earn income. 3. Has the potential in the form of pottery that is printed to have the best quality and is different from other pottery results which tend to have a rough texture and images that are different from the original. 4. Becoming a pottery-producing tourist village in Rendeng Village which makes the village more famous and visited by the wider community 5. Since the existence of edu-tourism pottery, the residents of Rendeng Village have experienced progress because there is a food corner available. 6. The existence of technological developments that make it easier for people outside the village to make easier pottery purchase transactions 7. This tour offers a wide selection of prices that can be reached starting from Rp. 10,000- Rp. 40,000 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rendeng Village residents in promoting pottery products have not been carried out optimally because they are constrained by expeditions (fragile and heavy) expensive in packing 2. In the development of edu-tourism, in the past there were still constraints on the limited human resources of craftsmen and places for making pottery because at the beginning of the formation of edu-tourism pottery was not supported by the Village Government. In addition, the budget is not yet adequate 3. Has a competitor pottery originating from the same Rendeng Village called smart pottery (private ownership)
Socio-Cultural	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The local residents have skills in pottery making since ancient times which were then passed down to their successors, which makes this village can be used as a tourist village. 2. There are approximately 40 people from the youth organization who are willing to join in developing the tourist village. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There are some who choose not to follow their parents as pottery artisans and choose other jobs.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. With this pottery craft can preserve and introduce local products that are owned to be able to be recognized more widely by the community 4. With the existence of this pottery tourism village can make direct knowledge and learning for school children, teachers to parents to participate in making pottery crafts 5. Rendeng Village pottery has a detailed, smooth shape according to its original character. In addition, the learning process of pottery tourism education in Rendeng Village is fully carried out by tourists (printing, basting, drying, and painting). 	
Environtment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The community fully supports and agrees to the development of pottery tourism education and residents also welcome the existence of tourism education 2. Since the existence of this pottery educational tour, Rendeng Village has experienced progress that can be felt by residents. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There was a flood because Rendeng Village is near the Bengawan Solo river, which caused the pottery to take longer to dry. 2. Some routes leading to the tourist village location were damaged 3. The environment in the tourist village looks arid due to the lack of plants and trees around the location 4. 4. There are still inadequate toilets and scattered garbage (lack of trash cans) 5. Lack of awareness of tourists in maintaining environmental conditions
Village Government	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Realize that it is important for village officials to build more appropriate infrastructure in the tourist village location. 2. Receive assistance from the Provincial (2019, 2020) District Government (2019, 2020) and Village Government (2022). 3. The development of edu-tourism is developed by Bumdes. 4. All facilities and tools for pottery are funded by the Bumdes cash. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Because the existence of this tourist village is still relatively new, the development and construction are still being carried out in stages. 2. the website that can be used as a promotional media in Rendeng village is not updated.

Table 2 Eksternal Factors

Dimensions	Opportunity	Threat
Economic	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the existence of improvements with pottery edu-tourism has a positive impact and attracts tourists to visit 2. Already have regular tourists every year, namely several elementary schools to visit and conduct learning for children to train fine motor skills and skills practically or directly 3. The interest of tourists is quite high and enthusiastic about the edu-tour of Rendeng Village pottery and this is one of the factors to further improve the optimal development strategy 4. There are opportunities for partnerships when viewed from the products produced and the potential obtained 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Having pottery competitors from the same Rendeng Village has the same potential to develop and compete.
Socio-Cultural	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The community is aggressively working to improve the attractiveness of regional tourism and many want to try new destinations 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Negative thinking from the community to innovate and stay in the comfort zone
Environment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Environmental conditions that still have land that can be developed for the better and make the place more comfortable will definitely get positive value for the community. 2. The existence of this tourist village makes the village crowded because tourists increase every day 3. Around the location there are still no tourist destinations that feature pottery 4. There is a tourist location near the pottery village, namely Tirto Mangu swimming pool 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There is pollution in the form of dust because the environment is still arid and there are rarely plants in the area
Village Government	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Providing support if pottery craft tourism progresses will be supported and can be an icon of Rendeng Village. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lack of attention to the use of updated technology may pose a threat to the village.

The strategy carried out in the local community edu-tourism development strategy in achieving SDGs in Bojonegoro Regency according to SWOT analysis by looking at the tourism geographic information matrix is to produce four alternative strategies, namely alternative SO strategies (create strategies that use strengths to take advantage of opportunities), alternative WO strategies (create

strategies that minimize weaknesses to take advantage of opportunities), alternative ST strategies (create strategies that use strengths to overcome threats) and alternative WT strategies (create strategies that minimize weaknesses and avoid threats).

1. SO Strategy (Strength and Opportunities)

There are several development strategies in optimizing strengths to take advantage of local community edu-tourism opportunities in achieving SDGs in Bojonegoro Regency, namely:

- a. Has the potential in the form of pottery that is printed to have the best quality and is different from other pottery products which tend to have a rough texture and images that are different from the original. This means that these pottery products have the possibility or ability to be made using techniques that produce superior quality. The molding technique used is able to produce pottery that is smoother, more durable, and precise in shape and detail.
- b. The production of pottery, which is the main commodity of Rendeng Village and the main source of livelihood, has been successfully sent out of town. Many residents of Rendeng Village rely on pottery production as their main source of income. The work or business of making and selling pottery is an economic activity that sustains the lives of people in the village. The pottery produced is not only marketed or used locally, but has also managed to penetrate a wider market, even outside the city. This can be interpreted as a significant achievement in terms of the distribution and popularity of pottery products from Rendeng Village, indicating that the pottery is in demand by consumers in other areas.
- c. The local residents have skills in pottery making since ancient times that were then passed down to their successors, which makes this village able to be used as a tourist village. their ability to make pottery is not new, but has existed and developed since the past. This skill was probably passed down from their ancestors and became part of the local culture.
- d. The community fully supports and agrees to the development of the pottery edu-tour. The diligence and skills of the residents of Rendeng Village have been enthusiastic and have approximately 40 people from the youth organization who want to join in developing the tourism village.

2. WO Strategy (Weakness and Opportunities)

There are several strategies in minimizing weaknesses by taking advantage of opportunities in local community edu-tourism in achieving SDGs in Bojonegoro Regency, namely:

- a. Increase promotion and improve better development programs to attract visitors so that they are ready to face competition between objects.
- b. Make innovations in packaging (packing) by using special packaging materials. Utilize safer and more economical packing materials such as foam, bubble wrap, or special wooden boxes that can protect pottery from impact during shipping. Packaging technologies such as foam-in-place (foam molded to the product) can also be used to protect the pottery from damage. Then working with expedition services, villagers can establish partnerships or negotiate with expedition service providers to obtain special rates or discounts, especially if there are large and regular shipments.
- c. Establish a website management team that is responsible for managing and updating the website content. This can come from among the villagers who have skills in technology or work with outsiders who are experienced in website management. In addition, plan periodic updates by creating a content calendar to plan periodic updates. This calendar contains a schedule of when content should be updated, such as new product information, village events, related news, or special offers.
- d. Improving the human resources of artisans through intensive training and skills development for villagers, both existing artisans and aspiring young artisans. Cooperation with training institutions,

universities, or non-governmental organizations (NGOs) can help improve artisans' skills in pottery-making techniques, design innovation, and how to produce pottery on a larger scale. In addition, the provision and improvement of production sites by creating integrated production centers. Utilize vacant land to create a centralized pottery production center. This center can be equipped with adequate facilities such as a manufacturing room, raw material storage, and a training area. On the other hand, it is possible to optimize the budget by applying for government funds and grants by submitting edu-tourism development proposals to the local government, relevant ministries, or donor agencies that support the development of MSMEs, culture, and tourism. For example, apply for programs for village funds, MSME grant assistance, or creative economy development programs from the central government.

3. ST Strategy (Strength and Treats)

There are several strategies in using strengths to overcome threats in local community edu-tourism in achieving SDGs in Bojonegoro Regency, namely:

- a. Optimizing the natural potential and uniqueness of tourist attractions by maintaining den maintaining tourist attractions on an ongoing basis to face competition for tourist attractions
- b. Development and construction of tourist attractions that have an environmentally friendly element by exercising strict control over the implementation of elements of tourist actors that are not in accordance with the attitudes and actions of tourist actors that can threaten damage to tourist objects. In addition, make improvements to tourist attraction facilities so that visitors can feel comfortable.

4. WT Strategy (Weakness and Treats)

There are several strategies in minimizing weaknesses and avoiding threats in local community edu-tourism in achieving SDGs in Bojonegoro Regency, namely:

- a. Cooperation with the government with the private sector, Working with the local government to get infrastructure and regulatory support, as well as with the private sector for the development of tourist facilities, such as restaurants, or transportation. Government support in the form of promotion and accessibility can strengthen the attractiveness of tourist attractions.
- b. Partnerships with Tour Agencies Establish partnerships with travel agents and tour operators to help promote and manage tourist visits. By working with them, you can reach a wider range of travelers and utilize their expertise in attracting tourists.
- c. Supervise and maintain existing facilities at the tourist attraction site.

CONCLUSION

The journal on the development of community-based edu-tourism in Rendeng Village highlights several key conclusions:

1. **Significance of Edu-Tourism:** Edu-tourism, particularly focused on pottery craftsmanship, has emerged as a vital economic driver for the local community. It not only provides a new source of income but also helps preserve and promote local culture and traditions.
2. **SWOT Analysis Insights:** The SWOT analysis reveals that the strengths of the community include traditional skills in pottery making and local enthusiasm for tourism. However, weaknesses such as inadequate promotion and limited human resources pose challenges. Opportunities exist in the growing interest of tourists in educational experiences, while threats include competition from other pottery producers and environmental issues.

3. **Role of Government and Infrastructure:** The support of local government is crucial for developing the necessary infrastructure to enhance edu-tourism. Collaboration between local, provincial, and national authorities is essential to ensure sustainable growth and development.
4. **Environmental Awareness:** There is a need for increased environmental awareness among both tourists and local residents. Efforts to promote cleanliness and environmental conservation are necessary to maintain the attractiveness of the tourist destination.
5. **Recommendations for Development:** To optimize the potential of edu-tourism, it is recommended to enhance marketing strategies for local products, provide training for artisans, and develop adequate facilities to improve the tourist experience. Collaboration among community members, government, and the private sector is vital for creating a supportive ecosystem for sustainable edu-tourism.

In conclusion, the development of edu-tourism in Rendeng Village presents a significant opportunity for economic growth while fostering cultural preservation and environmental sustainability. The success of this initiative relies on effective collaboration among stakeholders and a commitment to sustainable practices aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

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