



Boosting Local Economy through Tourism: Community-Based Tourism on Cultural Tourism Activities

Tasya Zahwa Prayoga¹, Filda Rahmiati², Grace Amin³,

Felix Goenadhi⁴, Mohammed Hariri⁵

^{1,2,3,4}President University, Indonesia

⁵Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka, Malaysia

Correspondent: tasya.prayoga@student.president.ac.id¹

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ABSTRACT: Tourism may have a variety of positive outcomes including increased local economy, creation of jobs, and infrastructural improvements. The objective of this research is to examine the Community-based tourism (CBT) approach in order to achieve several SDGs to strengthen local economy. This study employs a qualitative approach that includes observation and interviews conducted in phases with Kutu Wetan Village, Indonesia. The village has the competitive advantage of having several cultural attractions with rich history story about the presence of Ponorogo regency. All of the measures in this study are used with the intention of stimulating the development of all tourism facilities to increase the destination's appeal that diversifying the local economy and creating jobs. Results shows that Kutu Wetan Village still lack variety of entrance points (tour packages, cultural events, homestays, culinary option, and transportation business). Successful implementation of CBT Kutu Wetan are depends on their cooperative mindset and local's strong economic interest. To achieve long-term sustainable tourism development in supporting the local economy, it is important for Kutu Wetan village to build an appealing and genuine destination that offers diversify tourist attraction while maintaining the surrounding environment and culture.

Keywords: Cultural Tourism, Local Economy, Community-based Tourism, Tourist Attraction, Kutu Wetan Ponorogo.



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INTRODUCTION

The significance of tourism as the most significant economic engine in the world has been studied from a wide range of fields of study, including economics, social sciences, environment, legal system, psychological research, and ergonomics (Subadra, 2019). Additionally, the definition of tourism could differ in character based on the positions taken by the various researchers. Tourism may be defined as individuals or groups getting away from their everyday lives or attempting to do so by traveling to various locations, during which they enjoy engaging in various activities offered by local businesses and unwinding for a day or more. To put it another way, the definition

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establishes a connection between the subject, the organization responsible for running tourism operations, and the object, which is the location that visitors go to.

The tourism industry is the primary driver of job creation worldwide. The travel sector in Indonesia has evolved led to a growth in the amount of foreign currency earned from tourism each year. It has been successful in resolving job issues for a significant number of individuals ([F. Rahmiati et al., 2021](#)). It has been included in Indonesian tourism legislation at global levels, particularly the idea that strives to battle poverty in areas where tourist development is growing. As authorized stakeholders enacting rules, governments are essential in ensuring local community engagement in tourism. This is mainly accomplished by enacting specific regulations governing local community participation in tourist development. As a result, there is no reason for tourist firms to restrict locals from starting tourism-related businesses ([Lemy et al., 2019](#)). The desire to contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is another central element motivating Indonesia to begin sustainable tourism development for its locations. Human Rights Based Development in Indonesia (2019) targeted Indonesia in 2030 to devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products which are contribute to SDGs 8 (Decent Work, and Economic Growth).

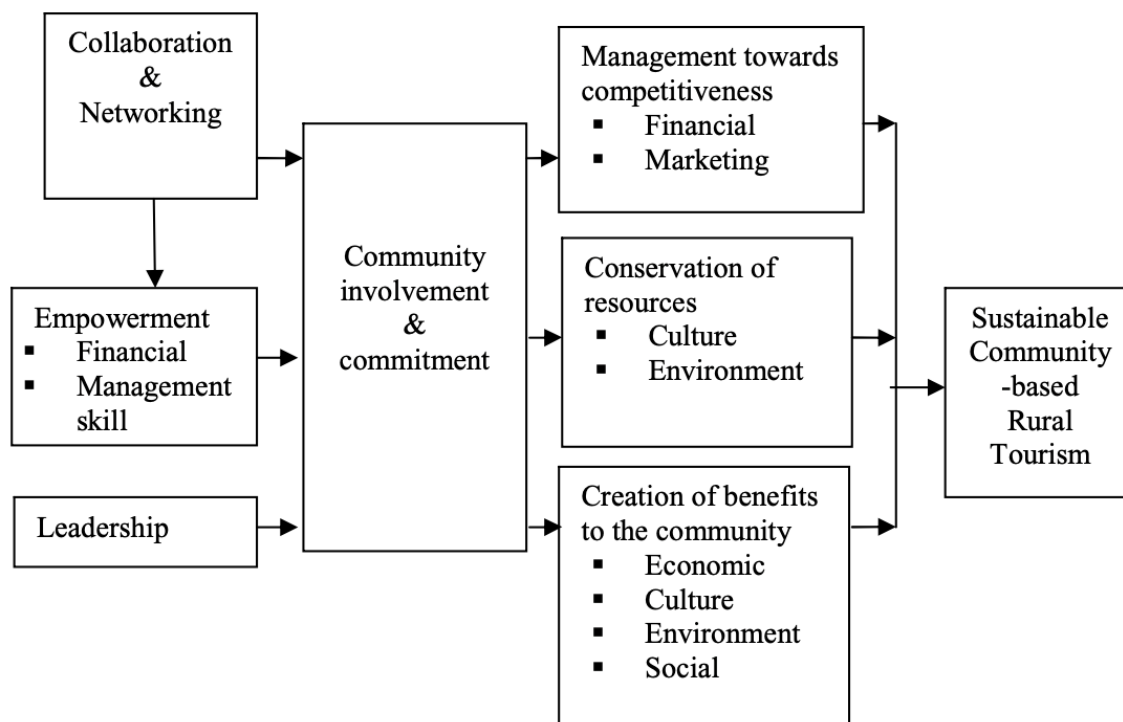
It is known for tourism has three bases and important actors: tourists, locals, and stakeholders. A balance between these is crucial to ensure the continuous improvement of the industry because one cannot exist without the other. Tourism experience by cultural capital can improve the well-being of residents and tourists, and well-being can be a creative opportunity to innovate in destinations ([Ancuța & Jucu, 2023](#); [Garcês et al., 2020](#)). [Subadra \(2019\)](#) also emphasizes that local communities have a significant part in tourist development at all stages—planning, development, supervision, and assessment. Tourism development begins with community input on the proposed enterprise. This is done to win local consent, raise tourism awareness, and introduce significant advantages that the local people may directly profit from when the planned tourism enterprise runs its course. Local communities are not only involved in the direct social interactions between guests (tourists) and hosts (local communities), which determine the tourists' experience quality and behavior in the destination, but they also act as paid hosts who provide tourism-related services to tourists. Local communities must participate in the tourist business to benefit from expansion and official and informal job possibilities ([Juliana et al., 2023](#)).

Several studies confirms that the setting of community-based tourism (CBT) is an essential consideration in light of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). CBT is expected to contribute to SDG1 No Poverty because it has been proven to assist job creation and increase localized economic ties, which results in fewer economic outflows. CBT also thought to contribute to SDG5 Gender Equality since it has been proven to encourage gender equality. The method is also viewed as a good driver for SDG11 Sustainable Cities and Communities since it promotes local involvement, empowerment, and decision-making while enhancing local infrastructure like health care, transportation, and communication, all of which are beneficial to the community ([Agapito & Chung-Shing, 2019](#); [Asker et al., 2010](#); [Carvalho et al., 2015](#); [Pasanchay & Schott, 2021](#)).

Based on the above details, Community-based tourism (CBT) is an alternative to tourist development in developing countries. Local people may manage natural and cultural resources to boost the local economy and benefit from this tourist concept. The local community organizes

optimal rural tourism and encourages collective participation (Lo & Janta, 2020). Therefore, this study objective is to examine the community involvement and commitment impact destination competitiveness for tourist development by utilizing Sustainable Community-Based tourism (CBT) concept that contribute to several SDGs explained.

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework



Source: Adopted from Kayat (2014).

Community-based Tourism

The concept of community-based tourism as the root of our research plays a significant part in destination marketing as it requires a local community's participation. The community are suggested to first value its destination attraction before effectively marketing it to visitors, meaning cultural awareness among the community regarding tourist development is essential (Carvalho et al., 2015; Kayat, 2014). This method involves community involvement at all stages, from idea generation through planning, execution, management, monitoring, evaluation, and benefit sharing. In addition, Pasanchay and Schott (2021) stated that community-based tourism might help to reach the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) when the UN's Agenda 2030 and SDGs were established in 2015. CBT promotes local participation, empowerment, and decision-making and will eventually improve community-beneficial infrastructure. It also can be an effective tool for strengthening social ties and improving community well-being, and in the end, building a community in rural crisis (Cáceres-Feria et al., 2021). However, a CBT business cannot survive without effective management of its destination competitiveness as well as adequate infrastructure for accessibility to reach its destination. Biodiversity, a beautiful natural landscape, and a community's cultural traditions are equally valuable as physical assets, but they are harder to maintain sustainably. Building community capacity is also necessary to guarantee that people have

the knowledge, skills, and drive necessary to create a CBT product that considers sustainability ([Kayat, 2014](#)). This concept is consistent with community-based tourism strategies, which, when properly managed, can increase local benefits through participation in tourism activities while increasing the perceived value of the tourist experience. To ensure the sustainability of the CBT product, all stakeholders involved in this program need to acquire skills to be responsive, transparent, and participatory.

Cultural Capital

[Ng et al., \(2023\)](#) states that cultural-creative events perform an essential role in attracting tourists and creating a unique sense of place. They provide visitors with opportunities to engage in specialized cultural activities, such as workshops, learning experiences, and performances, which offer pragmatic participation in the local culture. These events are instrumental in attracting creative tourists with specific cultural interests and have a significant impact on local creativity, fostering cultural networks and collaborations. Cultural and creative events contribute to community development by revitalizing traditional skills and cultural practices. These events provide platforms for the transmission of cultural knowledge and skills from one generation to another, ensuring the preservation of cultural heritage. It is also believed that activities such as weaving skills, handicraft production, and traditional dances are taught and practiced more frequently, leading to cultural resilience and the preservation of local traditions ([Lu & Qian, 2023](#)). [Mahfud et al., \(2023\)](#) also mentions that cultural events affect the economy because they open up new opportunities for town residents. Traditional crafts, regional cuisine, and performances are turned into sellable goods that bring in money for the neighborhood and visitors. This cultural capital may support Sustainable Development Goal 1: No Poverty by enhancing livelihoods and generate employment opportunities by utilizing their cultural wealth and enhance the overall tourism product by providing visitors with authentic cultural experiences. By immersing themselves in local traditions, participants gain a deeper understanding and appreciation for the destination, which fosters cultural exchange and intercultural dialogue ([S. I. Ng et al., 2022](#)). Consequently, community-based tourism initiatives thrive, and communities benefit from the economic, social, and cultural advantages of tourism development ([Kayat, 2014](#)). Therefore, incorporating cultural and creative events into tourism strategies, destinations can attract a diverse range of tourists, enhance their cultural identity, and contribute to the achievement of sustainable development goals ([Labadi et al., 2021](#)).

Case study – Kutu Wetan, Ponorogo.

Ponorogo is a district in East Java, and it is situated in the western region of the province of East Java, close to Central Java and 200 kilometers southwest of Surabaya City, the provincial capital of East Java, Indonesia. This case study focuses on Kutu Wetan Village, Jetis District, known as the predecessor of Ponorogo. The name “Kutu” is credited to Ki Ageng Kutu, an important figure in the mythology surrounding the formation of the Ponorogo region and a native of the Jetis village of Kutu. The phrase “Kutu Wetan” is derived from this word. The Javanese word for “East” or “Tim” is Wetan. The tourism potential of Kutu Wetan Village has been explored since this region is the birthplace of its cultural performing arts Reog, Ponorogo Regency, that serves cultural and creative in several events that captured the public’s interest locally. Moreover, the village have Suru Kubeng, a memorial site where visitors from various tribes and religions gather to pray. Suru

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Kubeng is the history of Ponorogo's existence. According to Ipong Muchlissoni, the former regent of Ponorogo, this location is the predecessor of Ponorogo because Ki Demang Ketut Suryong alam used it as a place for meditation ([Marhaban & Nurdiyanto, 2019](#)). This site holds cultural and historical significance, making it an iconic for tourism appeal in the village. Its development not only preserves the local cultural heritage but also showcases the village's rich cultural diversity. The involvement of the local Women Farmers Group (KWT) in arts and handicrafts products adds to the attractiveness of its location and the overall tourism experience. The KWT contributes to the cultural capital of the village by creating unique handicrafts that represent the local traditions and skills of the community. These products can be sold to tourists, providing an additional source of income for the villagers. In order to compete with other nations, Sandiaga Uno, the Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy of the Republic of Indonesia, also urges upcoming village tourism participants, as the intention of tourists to visit rural areas would be the focus of the tourism industry's long-term growth ([Kompas.com, 2021](#)).

This case study will show the contingency and the development of the Ponorogo regency, specifically in Kutu Wetan village. Prior information mentioned, the village have several tourism potentials that serve as the major attraction and focus on destination identity. Previous research conducted by [Filda Rahmiati et al., \(2021\)](#), confirms the possibility of Kutu Wetan village developing into an area centered around community-based tourism. The villages are well-accessible, and the roads that lead to the tourist attractions are adequate. Nevertheless, the Reog Ponorogo, which is managed by its own community in Kutu Wetan, is hesitant to manage its cultural attraction on a national level and is ill-equipped to handle it fully through its own organization. The Suru Kubeng site itself is kept in pristine condition, and the community understands this as a characteristic feature of this environment. The community is just concerned with keeping the village in good condition; they only take care of the places for their own necessity. [Amin et al., \(2023\)](#) research also stated, the local community of Kutu Wetan was unaware of its amazing cultural treasures and skills. They had never considered the possibility of promoting their unique heritage and rich culture will drawing large numbers of visitors. To her finding, the community are capable to provide innovative ideas through brainstorming that will boost their economy. The village's natural beauty, neighborhood activities, and culture will all be highlighted in this study. At this stake, community-based tourism depends on acceptance and support from the local community for developing its tourism potential regarding the resources, distinctive culture that these communities possess ([Achmad et al., 2023; Putra et al., 2021; Wearing & McDonald, 2002](#)). By all of these perspectives, there is a chance to know the role of local community in the creation of community-based tourism potential, promote tourism and local production in line to implement sustainable development in rural areas. This case study will examine CBT model for tourism contribution in line with SDGs for the development of Kutu Wetan tourism village.

METHOD

The study method is based on [Richards and Munsters \(2010\)](#) book titled "Cultural Tourism Research Method". To achieve the objective of the study, qualitative methods, field-base observations, and non-formal interviews were employed, qualitative data were analyzed using

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thematic analysis. The results of the field observation and interview data from local residents were reported, analyzed, and discussed. Data were gathered by using both primary and secondary data to describe the case under study. With regard to secondary sources, brochures, web pages, news, studies, and official documents on Kutu Wetan Tourism village were consulted. These sources, alongside observations conducted on the village in 2021-2022 will describe existing resources and activities, as well as tourism and community involvement in the village. Several tourism stakeholders are included for being the informants; the village head of Kutu Wetan Regency, Didik Saksono, S.H, its regency journalist (media), and its local community.

By using these research methods, the paper could contribute to a deeper understanding the impact of cultural tourist development on the local economy through community-based tourism. In sum, qualitative methods provide precise answers to specific questions and reach a richness of descriptions and explanations of nearly unidentifiable local contexts.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Kutu Wetan Village Community-based Tourism Development

In supporting the main pillars of sustainable tourism, we used [Kayat \(2014\)](#) conceptual framework in measuring the sustainability of Kutu Wetan Tourism Products. Additionally, it makes it possible to examine the correlations that focusing on three main objectives (collaboration & networking, community involvement and resource conservation), which will deepen our understanding of the sustainable tourism field.

Components	Attraction	Creation of benefits to the community
Collaboration & Networking	Kutu Wetan Reog Ponorogo has performed for the Indonesian Independence Day (Sukmana, 2022), the Selan Tradition (village cleaning/ <i>bersih desa</i>), which featured Reog art as the famous tourist attraction in Ponorogo Regency, a carnival called Unto Ronggo Besari Art, and unique elephant art performances (Kominfo Ponorogo, 2017).	Boost local economy, create chances for cultural tourism, increase awareness of local's rich history, and serve as a gateway for the opening of tourism in Kutu Wetan Village.
Empowerment and Community Involvement	A handmade woven plastic bag is already available and famous in Ponorogo Regency's Kutu Wetan such as craft facilities and several unique local snacks (snacks from moringa, mushrooms, catfish, bitter gourd, banana, and sweet potato), are run by Peasant Women's Group or <i>Kelompok Wanita Tani</i> (KWT). In 2020, there are 59 restaurants available, and these amenities do not include local shops in Ponorogo Regency, which are circulated throughout the region.	Further employments opportunities in tourism sector.

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	The accommodation facilities such as hotels and housing are provided to welcome tourists with 18 hotels, 39 homestays, and a total of 988 rooms	
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Source: Data Processed (2023)

As we noted from non-formal interviews and observation in 2021, the majority of the village's tourist-related enterprises are run by the locals. People who were not born in the village and currently reside elsewhere only own a small number of homestays. In some situations, these are already-existing businesses that have made adjustments to the new tourism environment with little to no investment. Others are family-run companies that have grown as a result of the expansion of tourism, including local restaurants, local handicraft shops, and homestays. Despite a few of its drawbacks, there is broad agreement in Kutu Wetan for tourism activity has a favorable impact, but the contribution of tourism to the local economy is still quite modest.

It is proving to be a regular occurrence in Kutu Wetan CBT as the local residents own the property to contribute to developing their local economy and would consider an important local resource through tourism. In Kutu Wetan, this opportunity would directly attract visitors, creation of jobs, and infrastructural improvements. In order to diversify distribution channels to promote its destination, it is important to build strong networks with other tourism stakeholders as it will improve revenue ([Schott & Nhem, 2018](#)). It is highlighted that cultural revitalization largely manifests itself in reinforced community identity, structures, and practices, which will support the SDG11 Sustainable Cities and Communities. It also results in new employment prospects for the community people.

Promoting Kutu Wetan Cultural Tourism and Conservation of Resources

The development of a tourist village depends heavily on Mr. Didik's leadership support as the head of Village. This may serve as motivation for nearby towns to actively participate in tourism village events. It is proved when Reog Ponorogo traditional dance was successfully performed last year in three different places in Bali; Puri Ubud, The Arma Festival 2023 and The Green Kubu Restaurant. This opportunity are supported by applied research activities from President University lecturers and funded by the Ministry of Education and Culture for the 2023, and able to impress and entertain both domestic and international travelers ([Hariyanto, 2023](#)). The primary goal of this event is to boost the local economy, create chances for cultural tourism, increase awareness of Indonesia's rich history, and serve as a gateway for the opening of tourism in Kutu Wetan Village. The events mentioned have an important influence on local innovation, encouraging cultural collaboration and networking.

While the aforementioned tradition of promoting community-based tourism is still developing, the Suru Kubeng site settlement is sacred. The fundamental issue facing a tourist village's tourism growth is the tension that arises from trying to implement new tourism features while preserving traditional traditions. These put further pressure on the locals to conserve the environment and local culture while still achieving economic gain without sacrificing its cultural significance. Therefore, the community understands this situation as a characteristic feature of this environment and considered as potential tourist attraction. Back then, our researcher, alongside with village head and local community, reconstruct the side to be attractive for tourists and appreciated as a

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cultural heritage site in the destination. This component preserves the vibrant culture of the healthy tourist site, upholding cultural integrity and enhancing the significance of regional customs. After the reconstruction, Kutu Wetan village was presented as a possible tourism destination by President University to travelers from six nations: China, Pakistan, Timor Leste, Peru, Kazakhstan, and Russia. A truly unique and historic event is the Reog performance that Kutu Wetan Village is hosting in Suru Kubeng during this activity. The fact that the community is holding Reog in Suru Kubeng for the first time in 700 years adds to the significance and uniqueness of this occasion (Prayoga, 2023). Travelers from different nations can experience the local way of life in several aspects (beautiful scenery, traditional culture, culinary, and handicraft), which embodies a strong sense of cultural identity and legacy. International visitors will benefit Kutu Wetan Village economically in terms of empowerment. Increased demand for products and services like homestay, culinary, souvenir, and other services will lead to improvements in the infrastructure and services for tourists as well as economic prospects for the local community. To satisfy the demands of tourists, improvements must be made for homestay facilities, culinary options, transportation, and multilingual tour guides.

Figure 2. Before and after the reconstruction of Suru Kubeng



Source: Authors Documentation, 2023

Seeing a lot of potential tourism attraction, the community still having several barriers of Community-based tourism development such as; lack variety of entrance points such as tour packages, organized into a list of cultural events, creating community-based events by residing at homestays run by locals and interacting with them. Moreover, it is found that the locals still having ineffectiveness and inefficiency for the growth of tourism centered around the community, lack of current research and information on particular field-oriented tourism. CBT in Kutu Wetan village area must become a public tourism policy and a model of sustainable tourism development in the tourist industry in order to be successful in the cultural tourism sector (Putra et al., 2021;

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[Wearing & McDonald, 2002](#)). It can be accomplished by creating new tourism product that are still connected to earlier products and by creating existing tourism offerings. This aspect is chances to develop self-employment in small and medium-sized income-generating activities, opening the way for reducing the community's poverty and generating cultural creativity that will support SDG 1 No Poverty, and SDG 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth. This center's presence of KWT also can boost product quality and distribution, raising the local community's economic and social status, which supports SDG5 Gender Equality.

Figure 3. Tourism Potential in Kutu Wetan



Source: Author Documentation, 2023

At this stake, the tourism sector is significantly distinct from other sectors since, if done well, can have several positive effects on the economy for both nation and the local community ([Hilman & Kartika, 2020](#)). Locals in Kutu Wetan must perform their responsibilities correctly in order to preserve the satisfaction of tourists through their cooperative mindset and still need to be trained in a variety of hospitality-related tourism topics. Moreover, the local government in Kutu Wetan and other tourism-related stakeholders have also played significant roles in assisting the CBT development as a destination for cultural tourism. In order to guarantee the sustainability of the village's tourism growth, local government must carefully balance the requirements and desires of both the citizens and the government. Our case study demonstrates how the key elements influencing the growth of CBT are those that simultaneously connect the community to one another (interaction, institutional leadership, collective action) and tie the community to its surroundings (sense of community, attachment to the territory), fostering cooperation and creating community. CBT develops into a shared attempt that strengthens these components, uniting the

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villagers and community life. CBT mobilizes community resources and enables community members to be active facilitators of social change.

CONCLUSION

Kutu Wetan Village is progressively coming around to the idea of developing tourism based on community involvement. Its broad implications are dependent upon the community's active involvement in the decision-making process surrounding tourism and its activities. It is known for Kutu Wetan's local community have been creating a lot of improvements regarding its destination attraction; cultural (Reog Ponorgo, Suru Kubeng), agriculture and nature (hills, green rice fields, corn fields), creative economy, and unique culinary delights by local community. Kutu Wetan village shown its community to aware of its destination competitive advantage and actively participate to enhance the CBT models. This particular case demonstrates that the key elements for understanding the success of CBT are located in the community itself, in the elements that help establish and strengthen the community, enable cooperation, and promote collective action. Several attractions mentioned could be significant resources for further sustainable tourism development. To ensure the well-being of the communities, it is important to diversify the offerings (tour guides, travel agencies, housing (homestay), culinary option and transportation businesses) for the tourists' activities. These resources constitute a public good, meaning that everyone who uses them in the area can profit from them. In addition, the village also need a proper management system to collaborate with local community, provide relevant training/guidance for community learn about tourism, local culture, language skills and has a string legal basis. It is believed that increasing the competency (knowledge, skill, and attitude) of the local people is extremely important in order to provide them the opportunity to boost its local economy. The opportunities for local people to gain direct economic impacts from tourism really depend on the qualifications owned both for soft competency – understanding the knowledge of their tourism attraction offered – and hard competency – the practical or life skills required to accomplish the work.

Indeed, given that cultural capital is increasingly recognized in both tourism research and practice, incorporating cultural capital into Sustainable Development Goals adds additional analytical layers that are relevant in the context of different forms of tourism regulation. In close collaboration with the government, product development will create a unique condition for Kutu Wetan CBT and address its shortcomings. It is crucial to involve local residents, empower the local community, conserve and cultivate cultural resources, and, finally, maintain the overall sustainability of tourism resources.

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