

Research Article

Economic Empowerment and Community Resilience through the Development of Lejja Tourism Villages: Impact Analysis, Participation, and Sustainability

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the economic impact, level of community participation, and sustainability challenges in the development of Lejja Tourism Village, Soppeng Regency, as a community-based tourism model. The approach used is qualitative with data collection techniques through in-depth interviews, participatory observations, and documentation studies. Data were analyzed using open coding methods to identify key themes emerging from the experiences of communities and local stakeholders. The results of the study show that tourism development in Lejja has a positive economic impact in the form of income diversification, the growth of local culinary and handicraft businesses, and the increasing role of village institutions such as BUMDes. However, these economic benefits have not been evenly distributed due to limited access to capital and differences in geographical positions between village areas. The level of community participation is still dominant at the implementation stage, while involvement in strategic decision-making is still low due to the top-down governance model. In addition, sustainability challenges arise such as increasing waste volume and decreasing hot water discharge that demand the application of the triple bottom line principle in environmental governance. On the other hand, communities show high adaptive capacity through social solidarity and local business innovation that can maintain economic resilience during times of crisis. This study concludes that the development of Lejja Tourism Village can be an instrument for economic empowerment and community resilience if managed through collaborative governance, strengthening human resource capacity, and inclusive and sustainable tourism policies. These findings enrich the literature on community-based tourism in rural Indonesia's context and provide practical recommendations for local governments and village institutions in strengthening local economies based on sustainable tourism.

Keywords: community-based tourism; economic empowerment; BUMDes; community participation; sustainability; Lejja Tourism Village.

1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism has become one of the leading sectors in regional and national economic development in Indonesia, sebagaimana dijelaskan oleh [Saraswati, \(2021\)](#) which emphasizes that this sector is a key strategy in sustainable development in rural areas. Apart from being a source of foreign exchange, this sector also plays a role in strengthening the local economy, creating jobs, and developing regional cultural identity, as evidenced in a study by [Latif, \(2018\)](#) regarding the role of tourism villages in encouraging local economic growth. In the context of rural development, community-based tourism (CBT) is increasingly recognized as an effective approach to empowering communities and creating inclusive economic growth; These findings are strengthened by research by [Purwani et al., \(2023\)](#) which highlights the potential of villages in the development of community-based tourism. CBT places the community as the main actor, not just the beneficiary, thereby encouraging economic independence, social solidarity, and environmental sustainability, through a case study of strengthening village institutions in a sustainable tourism model ([Jane & Pawitan, 2025](#)).

However, in practice, many tourism villages in Indonesia face a gap between potential and realization of economic benefits. The increase in the number of tourists and the growth of tourism businesses is not always followed by an equitable distribution of people's welfare ([Yunani et al., 2023](#)). The phenomenon of growth without equity describes a condition when the economic benefits of tourism are concentrated in a certain group, while some local communities are only in labor without access to decision-making ([Sari et al., 2021](#)). In addition, weak village institutional capacity, limited capital, and cross-sectoral policy coordination are still the main obstacles in realizing fair and sustainable tourism governance ([Purwani et al.,](#)

2023; Renanti et al., 2024).

Lejja Tourism Village in Soppeng Regency, South Sulawesi, is one of the interesting examples to be studied in this context. Lejja has natural potential in the form of natural hot springs and beautiful forest landscapes, as well as the cultural richness of the Bugis people that are still preserved (Fachry, 2025). The development of tourism in this region has had a positive impact on local economic growth, especially through the culinary, handicrafts, and homestay management sectors (Adhikerana et al., 2021). The existence of BUMDes as village economic institutions also strengthens the role of the community in the tourism value chain (Rahayu et al., 2023). However, on the other hand, there are problems regarding the inequality of benefit distribution, limited community participation in decision-making, as well as environmental problems such as increasing the volume of waste and decreasing hot water discharge (Fachry, 2025).

This condition shows that there is a research gap that needs to be answered, namely how the mechanism of economic empowerment of the tourism village community contributes to the formation of community resilience in the context of sustainability. So far, studies on village tourism in Indonesia highlight more economic impacts or institutional strengthening (Latif, 2018; Marsuki et al., 2025), but have not integrated aspects of inclusive growth, community resilience, and sustainable governance at the same time. In fact, these three aspects are very important to understand the extent to which local communities can adapt to social, economic, and environmental changes caused by tourism activities (Buchari et al., 2024; Darmi & Mujtahid, 2024; Simanihuruk et al., 2024).

In terms of state of the art, this study strengthens the literature on community-based tourism in Indonesia by adopting a multidimensional approach that connects three main pillars: economic empowerment, social participation, and sustainable governance (Nur Riswandy Marsuki et al., 2025). The integration of the three reflects a new direction in the study of village tourism, where development success is measured not only by increased income, but also by the ability of communities to build socio-economic resilience in a sustainable manner (Simanihuruk et al., 2024). This approach is in line with the Sustainable Development Goals, especially SDG 8 (inclusive economic growth) and SDG 11 (sustainable community development) (Darmi & Mujtahid, 2024).

Thus, this study focuses on the analysis of economic empowerment and community resilience through the development of Lejja Tourism Village by examining in depth three main aspects: economic impact on the community, the level of participation and role of village institutions, as well as environmental and social sustainability challenges (Fachry, 2025). The results of this research are expected to make a theoretical contribution in enriching the concept of CBT in the context of rural Indonesia, as well as practical recommendations for local governments, BUMDes, and local communities in building inclusive, participatory, and sustainable tourism governance (Rahayu et al., 2023).

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach with the constructivist interpretivism paradigm, which emphasizes an in-depth understanding of the meaning, experience, and perception of local communities in the context of community-based tourism development, as supported by the approach used by Marsuki et al., (2025) in exploring sustainable CBT practices in Eastern Indonesia. This approach was chosen because it is suitable for exploring complex and contextual social phenomena such as economic empowerment, community participation, and community resilience (Buchari et al., 2024), where community voices and narratives become central to understanding development outcomes.

Researchers play the role of the main instrument (human instrument) that is directly involved in the process of data collection and interpretation, guided by the principles of flexibility, reflexivity, and triangulation of sources an approach that aligns with qualitative best practices in tourism village research (Simanihuruk et al., 2024). The research was carried out in Lejja Tourism Village, Marioria District, Soppeng Regency, South Sulawesi Province. This location was chosen purposively because it has distinctive characteristics as a hot spring-based natural tourism destination managed through synergy between local governments, BUMDes, and local communities, similar to the community-based governance models highlighted in the study by Fachry, (2025).

This study employs both primary and secondary data sources to ensure a comprehensive analysis, following methodological practices in tourism village research as outlined by Marsuki et al., (2025) in their study of community-based tourism in Gowa Regency, Indonesia. Primary data were collected through in-depth interviews with key informants, participatory observation, and field documentation, an approach widely used in qualitative studies on local tourism governance (Buchari et al., 2024). The key informants included the Head of Bulue Village, management representatives from BUMDes Bulue, actors from the culinary, homestay, and handicraft sectors, officials from the Soppeng Regency Tourism Office, as well as local community leaders and youth involved in the karang taruna organization. Additionally, secondary data were gathered from various local government documents, financial statements from BUMDes, village profiles, and official publications pertaining to tourism development in Soppeng Regency, consistent with document-based approaches used in sustainable tourism research (Fachry, 2025; Simanihuruk et al., 2024). This dual approach to data collection aims to enrich the study's findings by incorporating diverse perspectives and relevant contextual information, as emphasized by Rahayu et al., (2023) in their analysis of social capital and sustainable rural institutions.

The data collection techniques employed in this study are structured into three principal stages, following the qualitative framework used in several Indonesian tourism village studies (Pramono, 2019). First, in-depth interviews are conducted in a semi-structured format, utilizing open guidelines that facilitate informants in articulating their perspectives and experiences without constraint (Sukmi et al., 2022). To identify relevant additional informants, a snowball sampling technique is implemented, which allows for a broader reach within the community (Menggo et al., 2024). Second, participatory observation is undertaken, wherein the researcher engages in direct observation of economic activities, social interactions, and the processes involved in tourism management (Saliman et al., 2021). This method is characterized by the researcher's active involvement in community activities, including homestay management and the promotion of culinary products, which provides valuable insights into local practices (Skolastika Syukur et al., 2024). Lastly, documentation serves as a supplementary method for data collection, encompassing a review of relevant materials such as statistics on tourist numbers, financial reports from BUMDes, and archives pertaining to tourism development policies (Damiasih & Ardiansyah, 2023; Fauly & Wiloso, 2021). By integrating these diverse techniques, the study aims to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter.

Data analysis for this study was conducted employing the open coding method as outlined by Strauss & Corbin, (1998), which encompasses three primary stages, a method frequently utilized in community-based tourism and sustainability research in Indonesia (Marsuki et al., 2025). The first stage, Open Coding, involves the identification of concepts and categories derived from interview transcripts and observation notes, a process similar to that applied in qualitative studies exploring social capital and empowerment within rural tourism contexts (Rahayu et al., 2023). This stage lays the groundwork for subsequent analyses by distilling essential themes from the gathered data. The second stage, Axial Coding, entails the organization of these categories to elucidate relationships among various themes, including economic impact, participation, and sustainability, a practice also demonstrated in research on sustainable tourism frameworks in Indonesian tourism villages (Simanihuruk et al., 2024). This relational mapping allows for a more nuanced understanding of how these themes intersect within the context of the study. The final stage, Selective Coding, focuses on the creation of a conceptual narrative that articulates the connections among the main variables, namely community-based tourism, inclusive growth, community resilience, and sustainable governance (Darmi & Mujtahid, 2024). Throughout this analysis, an iterative approach was utilized, enabling the researcher to systematically organize the data, identify emerging patterns, and enhance the reliability of the interpretations drawn from the findings (Buchari et al., 2024).

The validity of the data in this research is assured through the implementation of four criteria established by Lincoln & Guba, (1985), a standard that has been widely adopted in qualitative tourism research to enhance trustworthiness and rigor (Marsuki et al., 2025). First, credibility is achieved by triangulating various sources, including informants, methods such as interviews, observations, and documentation, as well as ensuring temporal consistency in data collection, an approach consistent with studies emphasizing triangulation in rural tourism contexts (Rahayu et al., 2023). Second, transferability is emphasized by ensuring that the research results can be understood and applied in contexts that share similar characteristics with the tourism villages studied, as illustrated by previous CBT research in Indonesia that examines contextual adaptability and community participation (Simanihuruk et al., 2024). Third, dependability is established through systematic documentation of the research process, which aids in maintaining consistency throughout the study, following good qualitative practice in sustainable tourism studies (Buchari et al., 2024). Lastly, confirmability is upheld by grounding the findings in empirical evidence, exemplified by direct quotes from informants and detailed field notes, which aligns with efforts to ensure researcher neutrality and data traceability (Fauly & Wiloso, 2021). In addition, this research adheres to several essential ethical principles governing social research. These include obtaining informed consent from all participants, guaranteeing the confidentiality of their identities, maintaining transparency regarding the research objectives and the intended use of data, and returning the research findings to the community, thereby providing feedback and facilitating benefit sharing (Damiasih & Ardiansyah, 2023). This commitment to ethical standards not only enhances the integrity of the research but also fosters a collaborative relationship with the community involved (Sukmi et al., 2022).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Results

This study provides a thorough analysis of the socio-economic and environmental impacts associated with the development of Lejja Tourism Village in Soppeng Regency. The research methodology employed open coding techniques to systematically evaluate data derived from in-depth interviews, field observations, and official documentation. Through this analytical process, four primary themes emerged that encapsulate the core findings of the study: firstly, the economic impact on the local society, which highlights how tourism development has influenced livelihoods and income levels; secondly, the growth of local businesses and the pivotal role played by village institutions in facilitating economic activity; thirdly, the significance of citizen participation and involvement in the development process, underscoring the importance of community engagement; and finally, the sustainability challenges faced by the community alongside their adaptive capacity in addressing these issues. Collectively, these themes provide a nuanced understanding of the multifaceted impacts of tourism development in the region, reflecting both the opportunities and challenges encountered by the local population.

Tourism in Lejja Village has a noteworthy and direct impact on enhancing community income levels. According to the village head, "families who are directly involved in tourism can get an additional 1-2 million rupiah per month" (lines 5–7). Furthermore, actors in the homestay business report earnings averaging "8–12 million rupiah per month depending on the season" (rows 8–10), while culinary business operators indicate daily earnings ranging from "2.5–3.5 million per day" on weekdays (rows 11–13). However, it is essential to recognize that the economic benefits resulting from tourism are not equitably distributed among the community members. An official pointed out that "the gap between those who benefit from tourism and those who do not get wider" (lines 15–17), highlighting a growing disparity. Additionally, neighboring villages located near tourist attractions express feelings of disadvantage, stating they are "less fortunate because the location is not strategic" (lines 18–20). Moreover, challenges related to accessing working capital remain significant, as "conventional banks find it difficult to provide credit due to the complicated collateral system" (lines 23–27). This multifaceted scenario underscores the complexities associated with the economic impacts of tourism, revealing both opportunities and inequities within Lejja Village.

The culinary sector in Lejja Village has emerged as the most developed form of local business, with the Village Head reporting that "there are now about 12 stalls along the road to TWA Lejja" (lines 33–35). These establishments cater to a significant customer base, serving "up to 300–400 customers" every weekend (lines 36–38). Observations from the field further support this observation, indicating the presence of "47 active traders in various market segments" (lines 39–40). In addition to the culinary sector, the handicraft industry has experienced a revival, epitomized by the Regent of Soppeng's statement that "the weaving industry that had been dead is now flooded with orders" (lines 42–44). This resurgence in the handicraft sector illustrates the adaptive capabilities of local entrepreneurs and the potential for economic diversification. Furthermore, the role of village institutions, specifically BUMDes, has been pivotal in this economic landscape. BUMDes reportedly generate profits of approximately "50 million rupiah from the tourism sector" (lines 50–52) and have effectively "managed homestays, guide services, and cultural tourism" (lines 53–55). Collectively, these developments depict a dynamic interplay between local entrepreneurship and institutional support, fostering a burgeoning economy within the village.

The role of the community in the operational aspects of local businesses is significant. According to the Village Head, "Perusda TWA Lejja employs 25 permanent people and 15 daily people" (lines 67–69), highlighting the employment opportunities generated within the village. Observational data further corroborate this, indicating that "127 workers were directly or indirectly involved" in this economic activity (lines 74–76). However, it is crucial to acknowledge that the community has not yet assumed a prominent role in decision-making processes. The management model has been characterized as "still top-down," as emphasized by representatives from the Marioriawa sub-district (lines 78–80). This sentiment was echoed by homestay business operators, who expressed that "our voice is not really heard in major decision-making" (lines 83–86), indicating a gap in participatory governance. Additionally, challenges pertaining to human resource capacity persist. A notable limitation involves language proficiency, as "English is still very limited" (lines 91–93), which may hinder broader engagement opportunities in an increasingly globalized context. Collectively, these observations suggest that while community involvement in operations is commendable, significant barriers still impede effective participation in decision-making processes.

Environmental issues have emerged as a critical concern in the context of increasing tourism activities. The Tourism Office has reported a significant escalation in solid waste generation, noting that "solid waste generation increased 450% since the tourism boom" (lines 123–125). Additionally, the Village Head indicated a troubling decline in hot water discharge, stating that "the hot water discharge decreased by 20–30 cm in the last two years" (lines 130–132). These observations highlight the pressing environmental pressures associated with tourism expansion. From a governance perspective, challenges persist among stakeholders within the homestay sector. Relevant actors have pointed out that "there is no formal mechanism for revenue sharing" (lines 138–140), which raises concerns regarding the equitable distribution of tourism-derived income. Furthermore, representatives from the Marioriawa Sub-district noted that "the transparency of tourism revenue is still limited to the elite" (lines 141–144), leading to questions about accountability and trust among local stakeholders. Compounding these issues are "policy inconsistencies between the center, provinces, and districts" (lines 149–152), which present significant barriers to effective policy synchronization. Collectively, these factors underscore the necessity for comprehensive approaches that address both environmental sustainability and governance challenges within the tourism sector.

Despite the various pressures encountered, the Lejja community has demonstrated notable resilience. Observational data indicate that "23 food business points remain operational during the crisis" (lines 160–162), which underscores the community's ability to maintain essential services amidst challenges. Furthermore, the emphasis on "community solidarity creating new economic opportunities" (lines 163–165) illustrates the proactive measures taken by community members to foster economic stability. Additionally, the establishment of a "Tourism Governance Committee that meets regularly every month" (lines 172–174) reflects an improvement in institutional coordination, suggesting that the community is taking steps to enhance collaborative governance in response to the evolving tourism landscape. This combination of grassroots efforts and institutional development exemplifies the Lejja people's commitment to resilience and adaptation in the face of adversity.

In the realm of qualitative research, data analysis plays a critical role in deriving meaningful insights from collected information. To ensure a structured approach to this process, researchers often rely on established methodologies. One such framework is articulated by Strauss and Corbin (1998), who propose a systematic three-phase analysis approach. This framework comprises open coding, axial coding, and selective coding, each of which serves a distinct purpose in the data analysis journey. By employing this method, researchers can systematically categorize and interpret qualitative data, ultimately leading to a deeper understanding of the phenomena under study.

3.1.1 Open Coding

At this stage, the data from interviews, observations, and documentation are analysed in depth to identify the main concepts that emerge from the experience of the Lejja Tourism Village community. Each piece of data is coded based on the meaning it contains. From the results of the initial coding process, several initial categories emerged, such as: An increase in family income, for example, an informant quote: "Since many tourists come, my stall can sell twice as much as before." Economic access is limited, for example: "We in the suburbs rarely get opportunities because we are far from the main tourist sites." The role of BUMDes in managing tourism, such as: "BUMDes are now the ones who take care of tickets, parking, and homestays, but not all residents are invited to meetings." Cooperation and social solidarity, for example: "We used to do community service every weekend to clean the bathing area." Environmental problems and waste, with the phrase: "In the busy season, there is a lot of garbage, and it is difficult to clean." From these categories, 15 open codes emerged which were then grouped into five main themes: economic impact, social participation, village institutions, the environment, and community resilience.

3.1.2 Axial Coding

At this stage, relationships between categories are identified to find broader patterns of interconnectedness. For example, the theme of economic impact is closely related to the role of village institutions and community participation. The categories of "increased income" and "limited economic access" are linked through the concept of disparity in economic benefits. The theme of community participation is associated with trust in BUMDes and decision-making patterns, which describes the extent to which residents feel involved in tourism management. Meanwhile, environmental themes are linked to tourism governance and citizens' collective awareness of sustainability, showing a gap between ecological awareness and effective management actions.

3.1.3 Selective Coding

The final stage is to construct a conceptual narrative that integrates all themes into one whole theoretical framework. The results of selective coding show the presence of four main interrelated conceptual variables: Community-Based Tourism (CBT) is a process of community empowerment that forms active participation and economic independence. Inclusive Growth, which explains the equitable distribution of economic benefits among villagers. Community Resilience, which describes the ability of people to adapt to social and economic changes. Sustainable Governance, which is the framework for collaborative governance between BUMDes, the government, and the community. The relationship between these variables forms a causal pattern: CBT → Inclusive Growth → Community Resilience → Sustainable Governance. This pattern shows that the active participation of the community through village institutions is the key to creating inclusive, resilient, and sustainable tourism.

3.1.4 Validity and Validity of Data

To ensure the reliability of the analysis results, the researcher applied four criteria for the validity of the data Lincoln & Guba, (1985) Credibility is obtained through triangulation of data sources (communities, BUMDes, local governments), triangulation of methods (interviews, observations, documentation), and triangulation of time (repeated visits to the field in different periods). Transferability is maintained by providing a rich contextual description of the socio-economic conditions of Lejja Village so that the findings can be applied to the context of other tourist villages with similar characteristics. Dependability is ensured with complete documentation of the analysis process starting from raw transcripts, code lists, to categorization results. Confirmability is obtained by including direct quotes from informants and visual evidence in the field to support the interpretation of the analysis results.

3.2 Discussion

3.2.1 Economic Impact and Equitable Distribution of Benefits

The results of the study show that tourism in Lejja Village has become a source of economic diversification of the community. However, the economic benefits have not been evenly distributed. These findings illustrate the phenomenon of growth

without equity in the tourism sector (Scheyvens, 2007). Similar patterns are observed in Labuan Bajo and Banyuwangi, where tourism development generated aggregate growth but failed to reach marginalized groups (Kuahaty et al., 2024; Sri Widowati et al., 2025). From a theoretical perspective, this condition aligns with Community-Based Tourism (CBT) theory, which promotes community ownership and equitable benefit sharing. However, neoliberal tourism economics argues that market competition can accelerate efficiency, albeit with short-term inequality (Dede Rusmana et al., 2024). The study presents notable strengths by effectively capturing the dynamics of real inequality and advocating for the implementation of redistribution policies and microfinance mechanisms. However, it also exhibits certain weaknesses, as its analysis remains largely descriptive and fails to incorporate quantitative measurements of income disparity and multiplier effects. This limitation may hinder a comprehensive understanding of the underlying issues and the potential impact of the proposed solutions.

3.2.2 Strengthening Local Businesses and Village Institutions

The growth of the culinary and handicraft sectors in Lejja Village indicates a local economic multiplier effect. These findings support the CBT model, emphasizing that village-owned enterprises (BUMDes) play a central role in integrating tourism and community welfare (Tio Hardika & Riyadh, 2024). This finding is consistent with studies in Gununggajah and Tlocor Villages, where BUMDes successfully reduced economic leakage by managing local assets collectively (Pangesti & Mu'arifuddin, 2024). However, critics argue that local enterprises without adequate digital capacity and governance systems risk stagnation and inefficiency (Ernawati et al., 2019). The analysis of BUMDes reveals notable strengths, particularly in how it demonstrates local ownership and empowerment within communities. This initiative fosters a sense of agency among local populations, promoting self-reliance and community development. However, it is important to also consider the weaknesses present in this model. Specifically, the limited innovation and weak institutional accountability associated with BUMDes pose significant challenges to its scalability. Without addressing these shortcomings, the potential for broader implementation and impact may be constrained. Therefore, while the strengths of BUMDes are commendable, the identified weaknesses must be critically examined to ensure sustainable growth and effectiveness.

3.2.3 Community Participation and Human Resource Capacity

Community participation in Lejja Village remains largely implemented rather than deliberative, where local actors are positioned within the “tokenism” level. This pattern is consistent with research in Toba's Meat Tourism Village, where participation is limited to operational rather than strategic involvement (Pasaribu et al., 2025). The Penta Helix collaboration model integrating government, academia, business, community, and media offer a theoretical solution for capacity-building and joint decision-making (Subair et al., 2025). The analysis of the participatory tourism framework reveals important strengths and weaknesses. On one hand, it effectively highlights the structural barriers that exist within this sector, shedding light on critical issues that inhibit full participation. This aspect is essential for understanding and addressing the challenges faced by communities involved in tourism. On the other hand, the framework exhibits a notable weakness in its lack of empirical assessment regarding the outcomes of training initiatives and access to education. This gap in empirical evidence raises concerns about the overall effectiveness of the proposed solutions and their implementation. Consequently, while the framework's focus on structural barriers is commendable, it is equally important to incorporate rigorous assessment mechanisms to better evaluate and enhance the impact of participatory tourism initiatives.

3.2.4 Sustainability Issues and Collaborative Governance

Environmental pressures such as waste accumulation and declining hot spring flow in Lejja Village reflect the need for the Triple Bottom Line balancing economic, social, and ecological goals. The study confirms that weak coordination and unclear benefit-sharing mechanisms undermine governance effectiveness. Comparable findings were reported in Pangandaran, where overlapping stakeholder authority reduced transparency and environmental accountability (Prawira & Prawira, 2025). The concept of Collaborative Governance offers a model for participatory problem-solving across government, community, and private sectors. Yet, critics argue that collaboration often falters without clear legal mandates or incentives (Gai et al., 2025). The framework presents notable strengths, particularly its emphasis on the importance of governance synergy and ecological accountability, which are critical for fostering sustainable practices within various sectors. However, it also exhibits significant weaknesses, particularly in its failure to adequately assess the institutional mechanisms necessary for effective policy enforcement and coordination. This gap undermines the overall robustness of the framework, as understanding these mechanisms is essential for translating theoretical principles into actionable outcomes. Therefore, while the framework contributes valuable insights into governance and accountability, addressing its shortcomings in evaluating enforcement strategies and coordination will enhance its applicability and effectiveness in practical settings.

3.2.5 Community Resilience and Adaptation

The community of Lejja exhibits strong adaptive capacity and social solidarity, key pillars of resilience in tourism-dependent areas. These findings correspond with the Resilient Tourism Systems Theory, emphasizing innovation and collaboration under environmental and market pressures. Empirical studies in Bengkulu and Bromo-Tengger-Semeru similarly highlight institutional resilience as the foundation of sustainable village tourism (Darmi & Mujtahid, 2024; Khusaini et al., 2022). The framework presents notable strengths, particularly in its ability to demonstrate community innovation and foster adaptive collaboration among stakeholders. These attributes highlight the potential for collective problem-solving and resilience within communities. However, it also reveals certain weaknesses; specifically, there is a pressing need for a deeper exploration of resilience metrics and the incorporation of longitudinal evidence. This gap diminishes the framework's capacity to provide a comprehensive understanding of resilience over time. Therefore, while the strengths of community innovation and adaptive collaboration are commendable, addressing the identified weaknesses will enhance the framework's overall robustness and applicability in academic and practical contexts.

4. CONCLUSION

This research investigates the dynamics of community economic development through the lens of the Lejja Tourism Village in Soppeng Regency. The findings indicate that while tourism development has generated positive economic impacts—particularly in increasing incomes via the culinary sector, homestays, and tourism services—these benefits are not equitably distributed across the community. Certain areas, particularly those located in less strategic positions, have not experienced similar economic uplifts, and barriers such as limited access to capital severely affect small business operators. This highlights a critical need for targeted financial support to ensure that tourism development benefits are shared more equitably among all community members. The role of village-owned enterprises (BUMDes) has emerged as a key driver in fostering local business growth within the culinary and handicraft sectors, propelled by tourism activities. Nevertheless, the research underscores weaknesses in institutional capacity and managerial professionalism within BUMDes, which impede the long-term sustainability of these initiatives. Furthermore, while community participation in the operational aspects of tourism management is commendably high, involvement in strategic decision-making processes remains limited. This scenario calls for a transformative shift from a predominantly top-down governance model toward a more inclusive, participatory framework that empowers community members in planning and policymaking.

Additionally, the study reveals significant challenges concerning sustainability and environmental governance. The increase in tourist activity has precipitated environmental concerns, notably an upsurge in waste and strained natural resources. The absence of transparent revenue-sharing mechanisms and overlapping governmental policies exacerbate these issues, emphasizing the urgent need for adopting a holistic approach to sustainable tourism that adheres to the triple bottom line principle striking a balance between economic, social, and ecological factors. The resilience demonstrated by the Lejja community in adapting to these challenges, alongside the establishment of a Tourism Governance Committee, signifies a positive trajectory towards fostering collaborative governance that is both responsive and sustainable. Overall, these findings affirm the potential of tourism as a catalyst for inclusive local economic development, contingent upon effective management strategies that prioritize participatory engagement, robust institutional frameworks, and sustainable environmental practices.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the study findings, it is recommended that future tourism development in Lejja Village prioritize inclusive economic policies to ensure fair benefit distribution across community groups. Strengthening BUMDes capacity through digital innovation and inter-village collaboration can further enhance local economic independence. Additionally, implementing collaborative governance and sustainable environmental management will be essential to maintain tourism resilience and long-term community welfare.

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AUTHOR'S CONTRIBUTIONS

All authors discussed the results and contributed to from the start to final manuscript.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

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