

What matters most? The Role of Local Leadership in Tourism Village Development in Bali

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Abstract

Purpose of the study: The purpose of this study is to examine the extent to which local leadership plays a crucial role in the development of tourism villages in Bali, Indonesia. Specifically, the study focuses on eleven villages located in the Gianyar regency, where the management of tourist villages will be scrutinized in order to identify the key factors that contribute to successful tourism development.

Methodology: The present research employed a descriptive research method to gather data for analysis. In addition to this, various data collection techniques such as interviews, questionnaires, observations, and Focus Group Discussions (FGD) were employed to ensure the reliability and validity of the findings.

Main Findings: The study found that various factors including budget, quality of human resources, uniqueness and innovation, village leadership, promotion, networking, and momentum have significant contributions towards the success of the tourism development program in Bali. Moreover, the study highlights the significance of local leadership in ensuring the success of tourism communities, emphasizing the role of village leaders in promoting the development of sustainable tourism initiatives.

Applications of the study: The study has significant implications for policymakers and practitioners working towards sustainable tourism development in rural traditional villages.

Novelty/Originality of the study: This study is filling the knowledge gap on the crucial role of local leadership in promoting successful tourism initiatives.

INTRODUCTION

The development of tourist villages has become increasingly common in Bali and Gianyar Regency. During the development process, various obstacles, such as low human resources, lack of promotion, lack of initiative, innovation, and creativity, lack of budget, and little commitment and partisanship from village leadership (Anggraheni et al., 2018). Previous research has shown that a lack of funding and commitment from local leaders, especially Village leaders, has hindered the development of tourist villages (Arida & Sukma, 2017).

As the village leader, it is essential to incorporate as many tourism stakeholders as possible in the development of tourist villages. To be successful, village leaders must build relationships with a variety of stakeholders, including the government, the village community, academia, the private sector, and the media. This kind of cooperation involving five parties is known as the Pentahelix model. Another vital factor to consider when developing a tourist village is the budget.

In Indonesia, it has been widely debated since the Village Fund was introduced through the Village Law No. 6/2014, funds have been protected to support development programs. The Ministry of Villages, Development of Disadvantaged Regions, and Transmigration released Regulation Number 19 of 2017 was created to regulate village funds used for tourism. This regulation outlines the priority areas for using village funds with a focus on tourism. According to the law, village funds can be used to construct or improve infrastructure, hold cultural arts activities, and community empowerment.

Construction and improvement of infrastructure facilities can include village roads between settlements and tourist attractions, procurement of tourist transportation, cultural arts stages, souvenir stalls, and recreational parks. Additionally, the funds can also be used to purchase art studios and supplies, and create works of art such as documentaries. Domestic tourism development can be beneficial for local governments to increase tourism potential.

It is unclear if the Village Leader is fully committed to using the funds to support the development of tourist villages. In many cases, the use of these funds is still limited to physical development, such as road construction and alley paving. In Gianyar Regency, the amount of village funds allocated to develop tourism villages varies greatly.

Therefore, this research is aimed to determine *The Role of Local Leadership in Tourism Village in Bali*. In so doing, there will be the main objectives of this research. First, it will look into the constraints of tourism village management. The second part of this article will examine the typology of local leadership. Third, this article will explore the role of local leadership in developing tourism villages.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Tourist Village

There are a variety of terms used in the tourism industry, such as sustainable tourism development, rural tourism, and ecotourism, which ensure that tourism takes place in non-urban areas without damaging the environment or disturbing the local community. One of the approaches to developing alternative tourism is village tourism for sustainable rural development. A tourist village is a home to many traditional cultures and customs that has been designed to become a tourist destination. Additionally, factors such as local cuisine, agriculture, and social structures help to give this area its unique character. The pristine and preserved environment are some of the appealing factors of any tourist destination.

Village tourism has the potential to provide many benefits to local communities by developing their resources (Arida & Sukma, 2017). An area could draw in tourists looking for authentic experiences while also providing opportunities for the local community to earn additional income through tourism. The development of tourist villages can offer the opportunity to grow local entrepreneurial potential, diversify tourism products, support the local community's economy, and revitalize local culture. The development of these villages is said to help overcome the challenge of urbanization and encourage rural economies. Additionally, rural tourism can help improve the quality of life for rural communities. Village tourism supports sustainable environmental development by providing an alternative form of tourism (Pesonen & Komppula, 2010; Yang & Xu, 2022).

Village tourism development should adopt a 'new rural paradigm' to realize this goal. This paradigm is a perspective that promotes integrated rural development by prioritizing cross-sectoral coordination across government levels and between public and private actors (Neumeier & Pollermann, 2014). Village tourism is a form of integration between attractions, accommodations, and supporting facilities that are presented in a respectful way of local procedures and traditions. Village tourism involves a small group of tourists who live in or close to a traditional setting, often in remote villages, and learn about rural life and the local environment (Inskeep, 1991). Alternative tourism focuses on local traditions and cultural values. It is often seen as a way to promote sustainable tourism practices and supports local economies (Pitanatri, 2016). Therefore, A tourist village is an area rich in natural beauty, cultural arts, and the daily habits of its people. Tourists can come and experience the village life firsthand, making it a truly unique and memorable experience.

According to Arida and Pujani (2017), a successful tourist village should have destination attractions and objects nearby. There should also be physical access to the site, the potential for partnership with the community, motivation, and enthusiasm from the community, and minimal public facilities available. The basics of tourism development include tourist attractions, accommodation facilities, and other services (Lee & Jan, 2019). Other facilities and services that could be provided are travel operations, tourism information, restaurants, retail shopping, banks, money changers, medical care, public safety, and postal services. Social amenities and infrastructure, including water and electricity, waste disposal, and telecommunications, are essential for tourist villages. It also covers education and training, laws and regulations, investment policies, private and public sector organizations, and socio-economic and environmental programs.

Pearce (1995) defined village tourism development as a process that emphasizes ways to develop or advance. More specifically, it refers to the construction and improvement of facilities to accommodate the needs of tourists. Local communities are vital to the development of tourist villages (Pitanatri & Pitana, 2019). The resources and unique traditions and culture found in these communities are the main driving elements of tourism village activities. The success of developing a tourist village depends on the level of acceptance and support from the local communities. The locals play an essential role in developing tourist villages, from the planning and monitoring stages to the implementation phase. However, the development of tourist villages can have negative impacts, as was the case in Turkey (Yozukmaz et al., 2014).

Tourist Village Typology

Imran et al. (2020) stated that tourist villages help the community realize their potential in the management and development of tourism villages. The tourist villages can be broadly classified into 4 categories based on the type of resources and uniqueness they offer (Yogyakarta, 2014). First, tourist villages are founded on the uniqueness of local cultural resources, such as traditional community life and cultural artifacts. These rural areas have various traditional artifacts founded on people's way of life, religion, and other forms of activity. Second, tourist villages are founded on natural attractions like mountains, gardens, farms, and beaches. Valleys, beaches, rivers, lakes, and other scenic landscapes are incredible in attracting tourists. Third, tourist villages offer a combination of unique cultures and natural resources. These areas are rich in traditional customs and patterns of community life and nature, making them a perfect destination for those looking to experience something new. Finally, tourism villages founded on creative economic activities, such as the handicraft industry, are attractive to tourists. These areas grow and develop from the home industry activities of the local community, both in the form of crafts as well as distinctive artistic activities.

Village Leaders as Local Leaders in Tourism Village Development

Imran et al. (2020) stated that tourist villages help the community realize their potential in the management and development of tourism villages. This collaboration eventually creates a forum for a community or organization to work together to realize a common goal. Several institutions play a role in developing tourist villages, such as service villages, traditional villages, Banjar, and tourism awareness groups. To ensure an organization or community runs smoothly and

achieves its goals, a leader must direct and guide its members. A local leader understands the potential of their community and takes action to improve the welfare of those living there.

The Village Leader is a local leader elected democratically or traditionally by the residents. They represent the community and are responsible for regulating, maintaining, and motivating their citizens in the village development process. The leader of the village has a lot of influence on the village's development and growth, which can be seen from the leadership style ([Asshiddiqie, 2010](#)).

Articles 26-30 of Law Number 6 of 2014 state that the village government consists of the village leaders and representatives. Article 31 of the Government Regulation states that the Village Leader is directly elected by the village residents from eligible candidates. Its administration is carried out by the village government and the Village Consultative Body (BPD), whose function is to establish regulations. The village leader's term of office is 6 years, starting from the appointment date. A village leader may only serve for two terms. Village officials assist the village leader in carrying out their duties and authority.

Local Leadership Role

The success of rural tourism hinges upon effective leadership for coordinating activities between rural tourism businesses and taking calculated risks that will benefit the destination while also strengthening ties between different sectors of the rural economy. However, leaders need to promote the concept of followership in the long term so that rural tourism destinations can sustain their economy through their efforts. Proactive, not passive, followership is therefore crucial to ensuring this is achieved. A transformative leadership approach is vital to developing rural businesses and promoting rural tourism. ([Bramwell & Lane, 2000](#)). In addition, transformational leadership guarantees increased welfare for villagers.

The need for national and local leaders to increase their role in tourism policy and planning forms one of the ten most crucial world tourism issues for 2012 ([Edgell, 2018](#)). Leadership is essential for rural tourism development and ensuring community involvement in the process. Calculated risks are essential for destination development, as is the ability to form effective collaborations and partnerships with other stakeholders in the system ([George & Wanda, 2009](#)).

In rural communities, local leadership is critical to the success of endogenous development organizations and activities. Leaders can play either a transactional or transformational role in communities. Transactional leadership refers to the relationship between a leader and follower to pursue a common goal, while transformational leadership encompasses a more holistic approach that inspires and motivates followers to create positive change ([Burns, 2016](#); [Davies, 2011](#)).

Transformational leadership changes and transforms people by influencing followers to achieve more than they expected, noting that transformational leaders engage and create connections with followers, increasing motivation levels ([Northouse, 2021](#)). This type of leader also pays attention to followers' needs and motives, attempting to help them reach their full potential. Consequently, Burns defines transformational leaders as those who seek to change existing thinking, techniques, and goals to achieve better results and the greater good. Burns further describes transformational leaders as those who focus on the essential needs of followers ([Burns, 2016](#)).

The transformational approach to leadership requires leaders to become social architects, engaging themselves in the organizational culture to help shape its meaning. Furthermore, they should build trust and encourage collaboration with other people or parties ([Northouse, 2021](#)). Transformational leaders provide robust, effective, and positive role modeling for their followers and create and communicate a vision for their organization that encourages and empowers employees to meet higher standards. This approach to leadership expands its role to include the development of followers who contribute to the greater good. Although leadership is often thought of from an organizational perspective, the underlying concept can be applied to rural tourism destinations. This is because certain organizations and communities play an important role in developing destination culture and shaping rural tourism through networking and collaboration.

Typology of Local Leadership

Local leaders play an important role in mobilizing communities and driving village development and tourism management. The involvement of traditional leaders is critical to ensuring that communities can share their input and contribute to development plans. Traditional leaders play an essential role in providing a solid foundation for tourism development ([Abidin & Hidayat, 2021](#); [Teguh, 2015](#)). The involvement of indigenous peoples is essential to the development of a tourist village, and this should be supported by a local leader who can uphold traditional customs. It is also necessary to involve other non-governmental, customary institutions, and indigenous people in dealing with tourism challenges, as they better understand society. This would lead to a more integrated approach to solving community tourism issues ([Abidin & Hidayat, 2021](#)). The presence of local values in tourist villages can take physical and intangible forms, both of which require protection and wise use of resources for the benefit of the local community.

Traditional leadership has always played an essential role in preserving culture and customs. As the tourism industry becomes increasingly essential, transformational leaders must respond to various phenomena and develop customs and culture carefully to package them into appealing tourism commodities. Transformational leadership emphasizes the basic need to satisfy and fulfill higher desires and inspire the people they lead to find progressive solutions to create a better workplace. Furthermore, transformational leadership has a charismatic component that motivates followers. This

leadership model highlights the strategic role that followers have in improving attitudes, values, and effectiveness to achieve change (Ghasabeh & Provitera, 2017).

METHODOLOGY

This research adopted a qualitative descriptive design through conducting observations, a literature review, Focus Group Discussion, and interviews. The descriptive model was used to explain and summarize various conditions and variables in the community, which informed the formulation of the research objective. Conclusions were drawn from the identified constraints and variables to aid informed decision-making (Creswell, 2013, 2019).

Several sources were explored to determine the objectives for developing and managing tourist villages and gain insight into the current environmental conditions. These sources were obtained from various traditional village leaders and the management of the Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis) from several tourist villages in Gianyar, including Sayan, Kerta, Singapadu Tengah, Lodtunduh, Mas, Batubulan, Keramas, More, Singapadu, Singapadu Kaler, and Pejeng Kangin Village.

FINDINGS / RESULTS

Tourism Village Management Constraints

The development of a tourist village in Bali has shown a unique relationship between customary and official villages. When examining the practice of managing tourist villages, it is interesting to consider the way this aligns with the reality of village dualism. Several official villages in the area showed challenges in managing village assets (which are owned by customary villages) into tourist attractions. Most of the land is still owned by the customary village as *duwedesa* (customary land controlled by the customary village). Therefore, if there is no communication and cooperation between the official village leader and the customary village, the development of tourist villages will be hindered. According to the Village Leader of Lod Peken Village (not the actual name) in Ubud Sub-District, the party failed to gain permission from the customary village leader to construct tourist village facilities on local customary land. Bendesa (customary village leader) argued that because the land belongs to the community, they should have a say in how it is used.

The Leader of Mas Village has identified inadequate human resources as the main obstacle to developing a tourist village. Many local people are still unwilling to become volunteers and devote themselves because of the excessive materialistic mindset (time is money). Furthermore, there is a lack of cooperation between the customary and official villages. The government has continually encouraged the community to cooperate, but people think this will only benefit the village. The Perbekel (village leader) of Mas Village said that the major obstacle in the community is many "hit and run," meaning that once the community challenges the government, they run away.

The contrary was reported in Lebih and Gianyar Villages, where the customary village party gave the village government (Village Leader) 10 hectares of land near the coast for tourist attraction development. The harmonious relationship between the official and customary villages in the Lebih village is inseparable. The village leader played an important role in communicating with the customary village leaders, demonstrating excellent communication skills.

The cooperation between the official and customary villages in Kerta Village, Payangan Sub-District, is well established. The village or *banjaradat* allows the official village to use the customary village land as a camping area (the Bukit Sari Campground). The villagers reasoned that the land should be used for the common good and thus decided to allow its development. The customary village also permitted the use of temples in which there are ancient relics of the sarcophagus as one of the destinations for visiting tourists by following the applicable rules to maintain the sanctity.

In Padang Tegal Village, Ubud, the *WanaraWana* (monkey forest) tourist attraction has long been managed by the customary village. However, the management of the monkey forest is carried out professionally, and has provided economic benefits to all residents. In Padang Tegal, the customary village can take care of modern things, including tourism. The innovations implemented by the village of Padang Tegal can help solve the problems of Ubud tourist destinations, such as reducing congestion in the monkey forest area by building a central parking lot.

Typology of Local Leadership

The levels of tourism village development are summarized into three major groups based on the level of development that each village has attained. The title of each level of development is deliberately formulated in a metaphorical phrase to provide a symbol for each type, as follows:

a. Type '*Kerbau Mandi dalam Kubangan Lumpur*' (labelling)(Buffaloes Bathe in Mud)

Most villages included in this typology are still limited in understanding Law Number 6 of 2014. This law is complex, and many villages still struggle to comprehend its full implications. The village leader is still stuck in the old mindset that the village is an institution beneath the sub-district and regency hierarchically and therefore does not have the authority to regulate itself. The leader conducts routine government affairs but cannot affect breakthrough programs or innovations offered in the Musrenbang. Such village leaders in comprehending and conveying the regulations outlined in the Act to which most tourist villages in Gianyar belong.

It is critical to convince and lobby the Community Representative Institution (LPM) when proposing new village programs, as they act as representatives of the community's interests. Having open communication and a shared

understanding of the program will help ensure its success. Though the ability of this lobby is less visible by the representatives (village leaders), open communication will help ensure the success of the program.

Several tourist villages in Gianyar are still included in this typology. One village, for example, has become a tourist village since 2017, but the village funds allocated for the program are still very low, around 30 million (in 2018). Pokdarwis, which was formed during the previous leadership period, has experienced ups and downs in management because its members' determination was based on appointments, not on their interests and enthusiasm. Consequently, this institution has only become a nameplate institution, meaning that it exists but practically cannot formulate programs and implement them. Instead of using the existence and status of a tourist village to advance the village's potential, it is only used as an instrument to obtain grant assistance from the district, provincial, and central government and pursue CSR funds.

b. Type 'Kerbau Mandi di Pancuran' (business as usual)(Buffaloes Bathe in Showers)

The term 'mandi di pancuran' or bathing in the shower, is used as a metaphor for the conditions in which villages that have been held hostage for a long time in the comfort zone of 'just doing routine work' are starting to realize the importance of developing their potential by developing tourist villages. This awareness arose partly due to interacting with outside parties including successful tourist villages or tourism campuses that often carry out service activities to tourist villages. Usually, the initiation is driven by young people involved in the world of tourism.

In Lebih Village, Gianyar Sub-District, development was started by young people who gathered themselves or so-called the Tourism Village Volunteer group. The village leader then responded to their activities by involving them in broader village development meetings.

c. Type 'Berpacu di Padang Rumput' (Visionary) (Gallop in Meadows)

The tourism village program in Bali has been in operation for a long time even before the government declared it a formal tourism destination. However, only a small number of villages have made breakthroughs by adopting strategic steps in developing village tourism. These villages have demonstrated that they have far-sighted leadership, which is not driven by short-term interests or goals. Village leaders in these communities have played a crucial role in developing tourism in their respective villages. Their leadership skills and vision have helped their communities to become successful in the tourism industry.

This condition can be realized because the role of the village head is also supported by the presence of an actor who consistently fights for the success of the tourism village program. This actor can be part of the village government infrastructure or can be an ordinary citizen but with the character of a Community organizer, which includes being full of ideas, innovative, persistent, and "crazy." They continue to work with their team to fight for the idealism of developing the tourism village program, even though other villagers are pessimistic that the program will fail. The success of the tourism village program is not only dependent on the role of the village head but also on the presence of a consistent actor who is committed to the program's success. This actor can either be part of the village government infrastructure or a regular citizen with the character of a Community organizer. The Community organizer is known for their perseverance, innovative ideas, and ability to push through despite any obstacles. Wayan Wardika, the owner of Dukuh Camp in Taro Village, Nyoman sadrain Tenganan Pegringsingan Village, and Mangku Kandya in Mas Village Ubud are examples of successful actors who have helped to develop the tourism village program in their respective areas. Despite the pessimism of some villagers, these individuals have continued to work towards the idealism of developing sustainable tourism in their villages.

The Role of Local Leadership in Developing Tourism Villages

This part focuses on the role of local leadership in starting and advancing village tourism. The village leader and customary village leader play an important role in making tourism villages successful. The local leaders play three significant roles in the development of tourist villages, as follows:

a. The Role of Facilitator and Articulator

The village leader is responsible for mediating different ideas and plans for developing tourist villages. These plans should be discussed in the village Musrenbang (Development Planning Conference) and executed through a series of programs.

b. The Role of the Innovator

Differentiating factors such as the potential of a village can make it a more appealing destination. To make these products have a unique value, the village leader must be innovative and develop new ideas for programs. The development of unique tourism products is essential to attracting tourist visits.

c. The Managerial Role

After creating a superior and unique product, it is important to have a solid team working together for a common goal. A leader must be strategic in selecting members for their Pokdarwis team and consider the interests and passions of potential team members to ensure a cohesive and effective group. The village leader should start the

project by placing the right people who are able to work without pay (volunteerism working group). In addition, the team should be controlled by the main tasks and functions to ensure they remain on track.

CONCLUSION

Overall, there are several obstacles to developing tourist villages in Bali, including a lack of human resources, budget constraints, village dualism, and the poor leadership ability of the village leader. Additionally, the typology of tourism village management consists of three components; "*kerbau Mandi dalam lumpur*" (buffaloes bathe in mud), "*kerbau mandi di pancuran*" (buffaloes bathe in showers), and "*berpacu di padang rumput*" (gallop in meadows). The key to developing a thriving tourist village in Bali lies in the ability of the local leadership. Finally, the village leader is responsible for facilitating people's needs and innovating new ways of managing resources.

LIMITATION AND STUDY FORWARD

One potential limitation of this study is that it focuses only on tourism development in Bali, specifically in eleven villages within Gianyar Regency. Therefore, the generalizability of the findings to other regions and contexts may be limited. Additionally, while the study identifies various factors that contribute to the success of tourism development, it does not provide a detailed analysis of the interrelationships between these factors. Further research is needed to explore the complex relationships between budget, human resources, innovation, leadership, promotion, networking, and momentum in the context of tourism development. Finally, the study does not examine the potential negative impacts of tourism development on local communities, such as cultural or environmental degradation, which should be addressed in future research.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND ETHICAL STANDARDS

There exists no conflict of interest with the current organization and no unethical practices followed during the study.

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AUTHOR'S CONTRIBUTION

The first author's contribution to the article includes writing the paper, conducting research on the impact, and offering practical recommendations for tourism businesses and organizations.

The second author's contribution is to co-writing the paper and co-analyzes data related to the outcome of the study.

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