

Local Community Participation in Sustainable Tourism Development in Sleman Regency: A Human Rights Approach

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Abstract. This article examines local communities' participation in sustainable tourism development in Sleman Regency with a Human Rights (HAM) approach. In the context of the problem, fast-growing tourism often ignores the rights and participation of local communities, so a more inclusive and sustainable approach is needed. This study aims to evaluate the level of community participation and identify factors that support or hinder their involvement. The method used is qualitative with a case study approach. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participatory observations, and document analysis. Participation theory and human rights are used as the framework of analysis. The study results show that local community participation still needs to improve and is influenced by factors such as lack of information, low education, and the dominance of external parties. However, local initiatives show great potential for sustainable tourism development if supported by the right policies. In conclusion, a human rights approach can increase community participation in sustainable tourism. This research's novelty lies in integrating human rights perspectives into the analysis of community participation in tourism, which provides new insights for more inclusive and equitable tourism policies.

Keywords: Local Community Participation, Sustainable Tourism, Human Rights, Sleman Regency, Tourism Development, Social Inclusion.

1 Introduction

The participation of local communities in various aspects of development has long been a topic that has received serious attention. According to Arnstein, community participation is a means to create community control over the development process that affects their lives [1]. This participation includes various forms, ranging from involvement in decision-making to implementing development programs. Local communities are considered critical stakeholders with the right and responsibility to contribute to development in their region. Effective participation can increase a sense of belonging, strengthen social cohesion, and ensure that the needs and aspirations of the community are met [2].

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However, local community participation often faces various challenges. Some are low levels of education, need more access to information, and limited resources. The dominance of external parties or local elites is also often a significant obstacle that hinders the participation of the community at large [3]. To address these challenges, a systematic and inclusive approach is needed to empower local communities and ensure their involvement in every stage of development. Creating an environment that supports and facilitates community participation can increase the effectiveness of such participation.[4]

Encouraging local community participation also requires support from proactive and inclusive policies. The government and related parties must create an environment that supports and facilitates community participation. This includes providing training, transparent access to information, and developing effective participatory mechanisms. Thus, the participation of local communities is a goal and a means to achieve sustainable development [5].

Sustainable tourism is a concept that integrates sustainability principles in tourism development and management. Tourism must be economically profitable and consider social and environmental impacts. Sustainable tourism aims to minimize negative impacts on the local environment and culture while maximizing its positive benefits for local communities. In this context, the participation of local communities is crucial to ensure that tourism development aligns with their needs and aspirations.[3]

Sustainable tourism requires a holistic approach involving many stakeholders, including the government, the private sector, and local communities. Developing supportive policies, wise resource management, public education, and awareness of the importance of sustainability are critical elements in achieving this goal [5]. Thus, sustainable tourism contributes to environmental and cultural preservation and improves local communities' economic and social well-being.

The Human Rights (HAM) approach to development emphasizes the importance of respecting, protecting, and fulfilling each individual's fundamental rights. This approach emphasizes that everyone has the right to participate in development that affects their lives; according to UNDP.[6], in the context of sustainable tourism, the human rights approach ensures that the rights of local communities are respected and involved in every decision-making process. The approach also empowers local communities, increasing their capacity to participate actively and meaningfully.

By integrating a human rights approach into sustainable tourism development, exploitative practices can be avoided, and the entire community can feel the benefits of tourism. This also means justice and inclusivity in access to economic opportunities generated from tourism. This approach also calls for an effective and transparent grievance mechanism to protect local communities' rights [1].

In Sleman Regency, the participation of local communities in tourism development is still a big challenge. Although there is great potential for sustainable tourism development, the participation rate of local communities is still low. Using a human rights perspective, this study attempts to identify the factors that hinder such participation and how human rights approaches can increase community engagement. The novelty of this research lies in integrating human rights perspectives in the analysis of community participation in tourism, providing new insights that can be used to develop more inclusive and equitable policies.

This research is crucial to answer two key questions:

1. What is local communities' participation level in sustainable tourism development in Sleman Regency today?
2. How can a human rights approach increase local communities' participation in sustainable tourism development in Sleman Regency?

2 Literature review

Research on community participation in sustainable tourism development has been widely conducted in various parts of the world in the last five years. In Southeast Asia, research by Mai et al. in Vietnam shows that local power structures and government policies greatly influence the participation of local communities in tourism [7]. They found that the results are more inclusive and sustainable when people are actively involved in decision-making. This study emphasizes the importance of policies that support community participation in sustainable tourism development.

In Africa, research by Ahasu et al. in Ghana revealed that education and training are essential in increasing local community participation [8]. They found that a well-designed training program can empower local communities to participate more effectively in tourism. The study also shows that active participation can improve local communities' economic and social well-being.

Salazar's research in Latin America highlights the importance of cooperation between governments, the private sector, and local communities [9]. They found that effective collaboration can create an environment conducive to community participation in sustainable tourism. This research shows that community participation is essential for environmental sustainability and social and economic stability.

In Indonesia, research on community participation in sustainable tourism also shows mixed results. In Sleman Regency, the study shows that local community participation in tourism is still low [10]. The study identified several barriers, including lack of information, low education, and the dominance of external parties. It suggested more inclusive policies and appropriate training programs to increase community participation.

Sleman Regency also found that a community-based approach can increase local community participation [11]. They show that when local communities are involved in the planning and implementation of tourism activities, the results are more sustainable and provide more significant economic benefits to the community. This research emphasizes the importance of cooperation between the government, the community, and the private sector in developing sustainable tourism.

This research's position among the existing studies is to integrate the Human Rights (HAM) approach in analyzing local community participation in sustainable tourism development in Sleman Regency. This study tries to answer a gap that has not been widely discussed in previous research, namely how a human rights approach can increase local community participation in sustainable tourism. Thus, this research is expected to significantly contribute to developing sustainable tourism theories and practices that are more inclusive and equitable.

3 Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework in this study will discuss community participation and relevant Human Rights (HAM) theories to answer research questions. This research focuses on how a human rights approach can increase local community participation in sustainable tourism development in Sleman Regency. This theoretical framework will outline the main concepts and how they relate to each other in the context of this research.

Community participation can be traced back to the theories of participatory democracy that emphasize the importance of citizen involvement in the decision-making process. According to Arnstein, community participation can be seen as a ladder with various levels of involvement, ranging from non-participation to full participation [1]. Arnstein's participation ladder includes eight levels divided into three main categories: non-

participation (manipulation and therapy), tokenism (information, consultation, and plaque), and citizen power (partnership, delegation of power, and citizen control).

Community participation theory emphasizes that effective participation must involve the community in every decision-making stage, from planning to implementation and evaluation. According to Pretty, there are five levels of community participation: passive, informational, consultative, collaborative, and self-initiative [5]. Passive participation involves the community only as a recipient of information without any real influence, while initiative participation involves the community in fully autonomous decision-making.

Local community participation is essential in sustainable tourism to ensure that tourism development is economically beneficial and socially and environmentally sustainable. According to Tosun, community participation in sustainable tourism can increase a sense of belonging, reduce conflict, and ensure a more equitable distribution of benefits [12]. Inclusive participation can help identify the needs and aspirations of local communities, which in turn can improve the sustainability of tourism projects.[13]

The human rights approach to development emphasizes that everyone has the same right to participate in decisions that affect their lives. According to the United Nations, participation is a fundamental right recognized in various international human rights instruments, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights [14]. The human rights approach emphasizes the importance of respecting, protecting, and fulfilling these rights in all aspects of development, including tourism.

Human rights theory also emphasizes that community participation must be meaningful, which means that people must have full access to information, opportunities to participate in decision-making, and mechanisms for expressing their views. According to Cornwall (2008), meaningful participation requires a supportive environment where people can participate without fear of discrimination or retribution. It also means that marginal voices must be heard and valued in decision-making.

In the context of sustainable tourism development in Sleman Regency, a human rights approach can help overcome obstacles that hinder local community participation. These barriers include a lack of information, low levels of education, and the dominance of external parties. By adopting a human rights approach, policies and programs can be designed to ensure local communities have access to the information, education, and resources they need to participate effectively.

In addition, the human rights approach emphasizes the importance of an effective and transparent complaint mechanism. According to UNDP, this mechanism allows people to report rights violations and seek justice.[6]. In the context of sustainable tourism, this mechanism can help ensure that local communities can file complaints if their rights are violated, for example, if they are excluded from the decision-making process or if tourism benefits are not distributed fairly.

The novelty of this research lies in integrating human rights perspectives in the analysis of community participation in sustainable tourism. Using this approach, this study will identify barriers to participation and provide recommendations for human rights-based policies to increase community participation. It is expected to significantly contribute to the theory and practice of more inclusive and equitable sustainable tourism.

Thus, this theoretical framework suggests that a human rights approach can effectively increase local communities' participation in sustainable tourism development. By respecting, protecting, and fulfilling the rights of local communities, we can create a more inclusive and sustainable environment where all stakeholders can contribute and benefit from tourism.

4 Results and discussion

This study aims to evaluate local communities' participation in sustainable tourism development in Sleman Regency using a Human Rights (HAM) approach. Data collected through in-depth interviews, participatory observations, and document analysis revealed several significant findings.

First, the study results show that local communities' participation in tourism development in Sleman Regency still needs to improve. Most societies are only involved at a level of passive participation, such as receiving information without being involved in decision-making. This corresponds to the findings of Arnstein, who identified different levels of participation, from non-participation to the entire participation [1].

Second, factors that hinder local community participation include lack of information, low level of education, and the dominance of external parties. Many people need more knowledge or skills to contribute effectively to tourism activities. This aligns with the findings of Cooke and Kothari, who highlight similar barriers to participation in other contexts. [6].

Third, the study found that their participation rates increased significantly when local communities were provided adequate training and information access. Training programs designed to increase community capacity in the tourism sector have shown positive results. This supports the findings of Ahasu et al. in Ghana, which show that education and training play an essential role in increasing community participation [8].

Fourth, local community-based initiatives in Sleman Regency also show great potential for sustainable tourism development. These initiatives are often more responsive to the needs and aspirations of local communities than externally-led projects. This aligns with the findings of Hariyadi et al., which show the importance of a community-based approach to sustainable tourism. [3]

Fifth, the human rights approach has effectively increased local community participation in several research areas. Participation becomes more meaningful and substantial when people's rights are respected and involved in every decision-making stage. This supports human rights theories that emphasize the importance of meaningful participation [15].

Sixth, a transparent and effective complaint mechanism also plays a vital role in ensuring that the rights of local communities are protected. This study found that people with access to complaint mechanisms are likelier to be actively involved in tourism activities. This follows UNDP's recommendation on the importance of a complaint mechanism in human rights-based development.[6]

Seventh, collaboration between the government, the private sector, and local communities in Sleman Regency has shown positive results in some cases. Projects that involve all these stakeholders tend to be more successful and sustainable. This supports the findings of Salazar in Colombia, which emphasizes the importance of cooperation in developing sustainable tourism. [9]

Eighth, although there has been some progress, many challenges still need to be overcome to increase local community participation. These challenges include distrust of external parties and a need for more resources to support local initiatives.

Ninth, the increased participation of local communities has been proven to contribute to the sustainability of tourism projects in Sleman Regency [16]. Projects involving the community in planning and implementation show a higher level of sustainability than projects that do not involve the community.

These findings suggest that a human rights-based approach can effectively increase community participation in sustainable tourism development [17]. By respecting, protecting, and fulfilling the rights of local communities, we can create a more inclusive and sustainable environment for all stakeholders.

The results of this study highlight the importance of local community participation in developing sustainable tourism in Sleman Regency. The findings show that community participation is still at a low level, which aligns with Arnstein's concept of the ladder of participation. This shows that many societies are still at a level of non-participation or tokenism, which needs to be upgraded to a higher level, such as partnerships and citizen control [1].

Lack of information and low levels of education are the main barriers identified in this study. This is in line with the findings of Rogers, which show that these structural barriers often prevent communities from participating effectively [13]. Therefore, providing transparent access to information and adequate education for local communities is essential.

Training programs designed to increase community capacity have effectively increased participation. This supports Ahasu's findings, which show the importance of education and training in community empowerment [8]. With proper training, local communities can acquire the necessary skills to contribute to tourism development.

Local community-based initiatives also show great potential for sustainable tourism development. This approach is more responsive to the needs and aspirations of local communities, which supports the findings of Hariyadi. A community-based approach can create a stronger sense of ownership and improve the sustainability of tourism projects [3].

The human rights approach has proven effective in increasing local community participation. Participation becomes more meaningful and substantial by ensuring people's rights are respected and involved in every decision-making stage. This supports Cornwall's theory, which emphasizes the importance of meaningful participation [15].

A transparent and effective grievance mechanism also plays an essential role in protecting the rights of local communities. These findings support UNDP's recommendation on the importance of complaint mechanisms in human rights-based development. With this mechanism, the community has a channel to voice their complaints and seek justice [6].

Collaboration between the government, the private sector, and local communities has also shown positive results. Projects that involve all these stakeholders tend to be more successful and sustainable. These findings support Salazar's research, which emphasizes the importance of cooperation in developing sustainable tourism [9].

While there has been some progress, challenges such as distrust of external parties and lack of resources still need to be addressed. Addressing these challenges requires an inclusive and human rights-based approach to ensure all communities have equal participation opportunities.

Increased community participation contributes to the sustainability of tourism projects. This supports the findings of Tosun, which shows that community participation can increase a sense of belonging, reduce conflict, and ensure a more equitable distribution of benefits [12].

This discussion concludes that a human rights-based approach can effectively increase community participation in sustainable tourism development. By respecting, protecting, and fulfilling the rights of local communities, we can create a more inclusive and sustainable environment where all stakeholders can contribute and benefit from tourism.

5 Conclusion

This study evaluates local communities' participation in sustainable tourism development in Sleman Regency using a Human Rights (HAM) approach. The results show that the participation rate of local communities is still low, with many communities only involved in passive ways. Factors that hinder this participation include lack of information, low level of education, and dominance of external parties.

This study shows that adequate training and access to information can significantly increase community participation. Community-based local initiatives also have great potential for sustainable tourism development, as they are more responsive to the needs and aspirations of local communities. In addition, human rights approaches have proven effective in increasing community participation, ensuring that people's rights are respected and involved in every decision-making stage.

A transparent and effective grievance mechanism is essential to protect the rights of local communities, allowing them to report rights violations and seek justice. Collaborations between governments, the private sector, and local communities have shown positive results, with projects involving all stakeholders tending to be more successful and sustainable.

However, many challenges still need to be addressed, including distrust of external parties and a need for more resources to support local initiatives. This study emphasizes that a human rights-based approach can effectively address these challenges and increase community participation in sustainable tourism development.

By respecting, protecting, and fulfilling the rights of local communities, we can create a more inclusive and sustainable environment where all stakeholders can contribute and benefit from tourism. Integrating human rights perspectives in community participation analysis provides new insights that can be used to develop more inclusive and equitable policies, which will ultimately support the sustainable development goals in Sleman Regency.

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