

Towards Sustainable Tourism: Integration Strategy in Rural Tourism and Coffee Agro-Tourism in Batang

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ABSTRAK *This study adopts grounded theory based on Strauss and Corbin's (1998) approach, integrated with a literature review to address gaps in research on sustainable management and coffee agrotourism in Batang Regency. The initial sample was purposively selected, involving in-depth interviews with various stakeholders such as farmers, traders, SME owners, and local government officials. Data were collected through semi-structured individual interviews and field observations in February, followed by telephone or Zoom interviews for time efficiency. This approach facilitated theory building from comprehensive data, identifying key themes and applying focused discussion guidelines.*

The research findings indicate that agrotourism development in Batang holds significant potential to enhance local economy, preserve the environment, and promote cultural diversity. Managerial implications from this study include the need for improved coordination among local government, private sector, and community stakeholders in designing policies that support sustainable tourism development.

Kata kunci: *coffee agrotourism; sustainable tourism development; village tourism.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Agrotourism is a type of rural tourism that not only creates new income for local businesses but also involves locals in protecting the natural and cultural resources of their area (Husanboev, 2023). A key challenge of agro-tourism is to reconcile tourists' desire to experience cultural heritage with the need for sustainable resource management. The success of sustainable agro-tourism depends on the commitment of communities to keep up with consumer demand in new ways, while understanding and implementing sustainable business practices. (Puji Wicaksono et al., 2024), and avoiding an overly localized outlook (Ridla et al., 2024). The concept of sustainable tourism development includes three main pillars: environmental, economic, and socio-cultural, as outlined by Latip et al. (Kasemsap, 2020). Therefore, in order to achieve sustainability, it is important to consider all these aspects in designing agro-tourism management strategies, with the aim of protecting the environment and preventing unnecessary exploitation of local cultures (Djuwendah et al., 2023).

The implementation of regional development that is more focused on economic growth has now become an effort to utilize the potential of regional resources effectively and efficiently, while trying to realize regional competitiveness (Wardhani et al., 2022). Utilizing local resource potential in accordance with regional characteristics is a rational policy choice and the right direction in regional development. One important aspect in utilizing resource potential is to focus on resource determinants such as the agricultural

sector. The potential of natural resources in agricultural land, water, livestock, and human resources is sufficient to support agribusiness development. Rural agricultural development plays an important role in the environmental and economic sustainability of communities. Agriculture provides oxygen and food, sources of livelihood, socio-political factors, industrial raw materials, tourism industry, and spiritual health. Some countries in the world utilize the potential of agriculture in rural areas through the integration of agriculture and tourism so that it becomes an alternative attraction for agro-based tourism (Godfrey et al., 2023).

Various agricultural activities such as tilling the soil, planting and harvesting vegetables, raising livestock, milking cows, and fishing provide interesting knowledge and experiences for tourists outside the countryside. In Europe, agritourism is considered part of a model of changing agricultural development from productive to multifunctional and sustainable (Gajić et al., 2024). Agritourism successfully promotes rural development and environmental protection as it develops more sustainable techniques that positively impact the conservation of biodiversity, landscapes and natural resources.

Agritourism as a rural economic diversification strategy has been applied in several countries such as South Africa, Uganda (Rosemary, 2023), and Botswana (Chikuta & Phuduhudu, 2023; Kolawole et al., 2023), and has also grown rapidly in Asia (Susila et al., 2024) and North America (Togaymurodov et al., 2023). Agritourism, ecotourism, and rural tourism have great potential to be developed in Indonesia, which is known as an agricultural country with beautiful natural conditions and cultural diversity of its people. The development of agriculture-based rural tourism into agritourism destinations in Indonesia was recorded in the data of the Directorate General of Tourism in 1994/1995. Eight provinces have agritourism destinations: North Sumatra, Riau, West Java, Central Java, Yogyakarta, East Java, West Nusa Tenggara, Central Kalimantan, and West Kalimantan. At that time, the agritourism objects developed were generally agricultural business areas of large companies managed by adopting Western cultural management, capital-based, object-oriented by prioritizing natural beauty, and had not explored the uniqueness and characteristics of local communities (Nono et al., 2024).

However, the potential of agritourism and ecotourism in Indonesia has not been optimally managed (Djuwendah et al., 2023; Nono et al., 2024). There is a decrease in the number of tourist visits, a decrease in land carrying capacity, environmental pollution in agritourism areas, and relatively low agritourism competitiveness. Government participation has not been optimal, the contribution to local community income is low, and knowledge about biodiversity in ecotourism development is still limited, which has an impact on the damage and decline of biodiversity and the global environment. As a result, the contribution of ecotourism to conservation and sustainable development is relatively low.

The agribusiness potential in Batang Regency reflects a rural community whose main income comes from coffee cultivation. The agribusiness potential in Batang Regency reflects a rural community that relies on coffee cultivation as their main source of income. The region is known for its geographical conditions that support the growth of quality coffee, utilizing fertile soil and a suitable climate. The practice of coffee cultivation here is not only the main livelihood, but also an integral part of the identity and daily life of the local community. The presence of coffee agribusiness in Batang not only creates direct employment in agricultural activities, but also has the potential to be further

developed through agro-tourism and the development of value-added coffee-derived products, such as specialty coffee and processed coffee products. By utilizing the uniqueness and diversity of local coffee products, Batang can become an attractive destination for tourists interested in natural beauty and rural life, as well as coffee enthusiasts from various parts of the world.

As stated by (Pratiwi et al., 2022; Wardhani et al., 2023) community institution participation and empowerment play a crucial role in supporting sustainable tourism principles, as well as in the context of coffee agro-tourism in Batang. This research highlights that the lack of infrastructure development and government support are key barriers to establishing a sustainable agro-tourism enterprise in the region. Therefore, the government's role is crucial in creating an enabling environment, which includes a comprehensive strategy to build entrepreneurial capacity among local communities.

This research aims to accomplish three things. First, to identify the challenges faced in the transition towards an integrated agro-tourism management system in Batang Regency. Second, to explore how the region is transforming its identity by integrating sustainability into its business framework. And third, present a conceptual framework that describes the complex interactions of local ecosystems and highlights the important role of community participation in developing sustainable agro-tourism sites. This research aims to answer two main questions: (1) what is the potential for agrotourism development in Batang Regency; and (2) what is the development model of sustainability-agro-tourism integrated with the surrounding supporting tourism areas and in Batang Regency?

2. METHOD

This study uses theories based on grounded theory in accordance with Strauss and Corbin (1998). Grounded theory methodology was combined with a literature review to identify gaps in existing research on sustainable management and agro-tourism. Grounded theory techniques were used to understand the phenomenon of agro-tourism development in Batang in depth, as well as to reveal variable interactions and stakeholder engagement. The initial sample was purposive, with in-depth interviews involving the local community, including farmers, traders, MSME owners, and local government officials.

Data collection was conducted through semi-structured individual interviews and field observations in February through face-to-face interactions, and later with phone/zoom interviews for time effectiveness. This methodology allowed for comprehensive theory building from the data, with the identification of key themes and the application of a focused discussion guide.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Development of Agritourism in Indonesia

The role of family farming-based farming communities is crucial to develop as a model in supporting the agritourism industry. In Indonesia, farming families join their communities based on family relationships with their ancestors. Each farming family has unique tasks within their community, such as production, marketing, and promotion. On

the production scale, they will produce products based on the situation, such as the religious need to produce flowers on religious days. Farming families will expand their products outside the community through marketing and promotion.

This very high potential of agritourism has not been fully developed and optimally utilized. Some regulations and support from the government are still not fully revealed. The direction and coordination between the central and local governments in implementing the rules often do not fully involve parties at the lower level, such as the community. Sometimes, they fail to consider the local culture of farming families, where some regulations or novelties are not allowed to be implemented in their communities. Therefore, it is necessary to formulate concrete and operational policy measures to achieve stable agritourism management in the era of globalization and regional autonomy. Following the location-specific wealth possessed, each region and each agritourism object requires synergistic cooperation between the actors involved in agritourism management, namely the community, the private sector, and the government. Agritourism development in general includes the development of human resources, natural resources, promotion, facilities, and institutional support (Xyrus Godfrey B. Capiña and Deden Matra).

3.2 Agrotourism Development Challenges

The main challenge in developing agro-tourism in rural Indonesia is the level of awareness and involvement of local communities. Stanovcic et al. (2018) found that an entrepreneurial culture is still developing in some areas, with a limited understanding of the importance of hospitality—a concept Winter (2003) refers to as “defensive localism”. Issues such as lack of investment, underdeveloped infrastructure, and insufficient government support also hinder the establishment of prosperous and sustainable agro-tourism enterprises. Stanovcic et al. (2018) argue that the government should adopt a supportive strategy, empowering farmers through incentives, training, and support to tap into their entrepreneurial potential.

The economic benefits that arise with the development of agritourism, including job creation and income diversification for rural communities, have also emerged as significant drivers for its development. Agritourism not only serves as a tool for rural development but also contributes to the broader economic resilience of rural areas. The emphasis on economic benefits suggests that stakeholders see the development of the tourism sector in rural areas as a new source of economic income.

Quaranta et al. (2016) propose to reduce the gap between production and consumption by targeting consumers who value traditional products. They emphasize the need for consistent synergies between supply and demand for local products and services, requiring better coherence between rural and urban sectors and engaging various stakeholders to build social capital in rural communities. Agro-tourism also has the potential to improve quality of life by creating jobs and increasing socio-economic opportunities, contributing to sustainable rural development (Wyporska & Mosiej, 2010). Evgrafova et al. (2020) highlight the relevance of agro-tourism development in areas of low socio-economic progress in rural areas. They point out that the migration of people from villages and the challenges faced by small businesses in modernizing or diversifying their activities, point to the need for this development. Geographic isolation, limited domestic tourism, and the demand for affordable vacation options confirm the importance of agro-tourism. Evgrafova et al. (2020) advocate a diverse approach tailored

to local conditions and objectives rather than a single model, including regional networks, cultural restoration, specially designed agro-tourism facilities, and agricultural parks.

However, Budiasa and Ambarwati (2014) identify various barriers that hinder the development of community-based agro-tourism, such as limited local knowledge, limited budget for facilities, inadequate promotion, and lack of large agro-tourism zones. Bramwell (2015) discuss four perspectives on sustainable tourism: political ecology, mobility, transition pathways, and behavioral and systemic change. These perspectives explain how people's interactions with nature, mobility patterns, transitional pathways in tourism, and behavioral change can influence sustainable tourism practices.

Adedoyin et al. (2022) emphasize the role of government and institutional frameworks in shaping the tourism environment, while Tecel et al. (2020) showing the economic impact of volume tourism in Mediterranean countries. However, studies in Latin America, such as Dossou et al. (2023), highlighted how tourism can exacerbate economic inequality, emphasizing the need for inclusive community engagement to mitigate unintended impacts.

However, Bramwell (2015) said that sustainable tourism requires further validation through empirical research, showing how these four perspectives can be effectively combined in a more systematic way to promote sustainable tourism. Research in the field of sustainable tourism is particularly important in the run-up to 2030, when discussions are focused on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Bramwell et al., 2016). Previous research has developed a conceptual framework for integrated rural tourism, which involves linking networks to jointly utilize resources. This conceptualization emphasizes that integrated rural tourism entails collaborative networking among local and external stakeholders, thereby enabling synergistic mobilization of resources to enhance the assets and capabilities of rural communities. However, this study also reveals the complex nature of network development in rural tourism, emphasizing the need for comprehensive strategies and strong marketing policies to support the success of integrated rural tourism (Saxena & Ilbery, 2008).

3.3 Development Model of Sustainability-agro-tourism Integrated with Supporting Tourism Areas in the Vicinity and in Batang Regency

A sustainable agro-tourism development approach integrated with supporting tourism areas around and in Batang Regency offers great potential to improve the local economy, protect the environment, and promote cultural diversity in a holistic manner. The sustainability-agro-tourism model becomes a strategic foundation that connects various aspects of development, including sustainable utilization of natural resources, development of environmentally friendly tourism infrastructure, and strengthening the capacity of local communities. By integrating agritourism that focuses on traditional agriculture and local wisdom with existing tourism areas, Batang Regency can create a mutually beneficial synergy between economic development and cultural and environmental preservation. This not only strengthens the attractiveness of tourism destinations, but also creates a sustainable development model that can be adopted and applied in other areas with similar characteristics.

The following is a SWOT analysis for the Potential Development of Agrotourism in Batang Regency:

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1. Strengths:
 - a) Outstanding natural tourism potential. Villages such as Adinuso have interesting and diverse natural beauty, such as mountains, plantations, and stunning natural scenery.
 - b) Rich culture and traditions. Each village has unique characteristics in agritourism development, focusing on traditional agriculture and local wisdom such as traditional food processing, handicrafts, and local festivals.
 - c) Increased infrastructure support. Infrastructure development plans such as the development of a subterminal and the structuring of the Adinuso tourism area demonstrate the local government's commitment to improving accessibility and tourism support facilities.
2. Weaknesses :
 - a) Limited Human Resources. The lack of HR competencies in the tourism industry is a major challenge in managing and promoting agritourism destinations effectively.
 - b) Limited capital and access to capital. Capital investment required to develop tourism infrastructure such as homestays, supporting facilities, and promotion is still limited, hampering the maximum development of tourism potential.
 - c) Suboptimal institutional coordination. Lack of coordination between local governments, tourism business entities, and local communities can hinder quick and effective decision-making in agritourism management.
3. Opportunities :
 - a) Increased interest in rural tourism. The global trend towards responsible and sustainable tourism provides an opportunity to develop agritourism as a leading destination.
 - b) Development of integrated tourism areas. The planned development of the Adinuso tourism clusters can increase the attractiveness of the destination by connecting several villages as one integrated tourist destination.
 - c) Government policy support. The existence of RTRW regulations that support the development of new tourism-based growth centers offers an opportunity to strengthen infrastructure and accessibility.
4. Threats :
 - a) Negative impact of infrastructure. The impact of infrastructure development on the environment and security can reduce the attractiveness of agritourism destinations if not managed properly.
 - b) Limited local understanding. Not all new regulations or innovations can be well received by local communities who tend to maintain their traditions and local wisdom.
 - c) Competition from other destinations. Competition with other tourism destinations both at home and abroad is also a threat that needs to be faced to attract an adequate number of tourists.

The development of Agrotourism in Batang Regency has great potential to become a leading tourism destination that is sustainable and provides significant economic benefits for local communities.

Table 1. SWOT Analysis Matrix

Internal/ External	Strength	Weaknesses
	a) Outstanding natural tourism potential.	a) Limited human resources.
	b) Rich culture and tradition.	b) Limited capital and access to capital.
	c) Improved infrastructure support.	c) Suboptimal institutional coordination.
Opportunities	Strengths + Opportunities	Weaknesses + Opportunities

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Increased interest in rural tourism. b) Development of integrated tourism areas. c) Government policy support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Develop tour packages that focus on natural beauty and local wisdom. b) Increase the promotion of agro-tourism destinations digitally to attract tourists. c) Integrate the richness of local culture and traditions into the tourist experience to increase the attractiveness of the destination. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Conduct training and capacity building of local human resources in the tourism industry to improve skills in tourism destination management. b) Seek funding and investment sources that can support the development of tourism infrastructure, such as homestays and other supporting facilities. c) Building strategic partnerships with financial institutions or investors to facilitate access to the necessary capital.
<p style="text-align: center;">Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Negative influence of infrastructure. b) Limited local understanding. c) Competition from other destinations 	<p style="text-align: center;">Strengths + Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Ensure that infrastructure development is carried out with environmental and security impacts in mind, and take necessary mitigation measures. b) Promote the use of technology and innovation to improve the safety and comfort of tourists in exploring agritourism destinations. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Weaknesses + Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Build coalitions or discussion forums between local governments, tourism enterprises, and local communities to design policies that consider local wisdom and minimize the negative impact of changes or new regulations. b) Strengthen existing institutions to improve coordination and collaboration in managing agritourism, and overcome bureaucratic obstacles that may arise.

From the SWOT analysis that has been carried out, the following is a summary of the strategies that can be taken from each SWOT combination:

- a) Utilization of potential by mitigating environmental and social impacts. This utilization can be done by developing tour packages that highlight natural beauty and local wisdom to maximize the extraordinary natural potential.
- b) Development of tourism human resource capabilities, including by prioritizing the use of Village funds to organize training and capacity building of local human resources in the tourism industry to improve destination management skills.
- c) Improved infrastructure and security by ensuring that infrastructure development considers environmental and security impacts by applying technology and innovation to improve traveler experience and safety.
- d) Increased community and government support by forming coalitions or discussion forums between local governments, tourism enterprises, and local communities to design policies that mitigate the negative impacts of changes or new regulations.

Each of these strategies is directed at optimizing existing opportunities and overcoming challenges faced in the development of Agrotourism in Batang Regency. With the implementation of these strategies, it is expected to increase the success and sustainability of the development of these rural tourism destinations.

4. CONCLUSION

The confirmation of several factors as critical elements in agritourism development has direct implications for tourism policy makers and planners. The results of the analysis

indicate that effective strategies should focus on increasing community and government support, developing the capabilities of tourism human resources, utilizing the potential accompanied by mitigating environmental and social impacts, and improving infrastructure and security.

The results of this study indicate that the development of agritourism in the Batang Regency, has great potential to improve the local economy and preserve the environment and local culture. Among the potentials are the extraordinary natural beauty of the Adinuso tourism villages as well as local wisdom in coffee management, traditional agriculture and local products such as spices and typical fruits.

However, there are several challenges that need to be overcome to optimize the development of agritourism. These challenges include the lack of human resource competencies in the tourism industry, limited access to capital for tourism infrastructure development, and the expansion of institutional support for better coordination between local governments, tourism businesses, and local communities. In addition, it is also necessary to pay attention to environmental and safety impacts in tourism infrastructure development in order to remain sustainable and safe for tourists.

In the face of these challenges, recommended strategies include capacity building of local human resources through training and education, sourcing adequate funding for infrastructure, applying technology and innovation to improve safety and tourist experience, and forming a coalition to design policies that support the sustainable growth of the agritourism sector in Dapurkuwat Region.

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