

INTEGRATING ECOTOURISM AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT: A CASE STUDY OF GIRPASANG VILLAGE, CENTRAL JAVA, INDONESIA

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Abstract

Girpasang is an area that has been significantly impacted by the transformation of the Girpasang Bridge region into a tourist destination. This development has prompted a shift in the socio-cultural activities of the community, leading to changes in the natural environment, cultural practices, and economic activities in the area. The objective of this research is to create guidelines for a sustainable eco-tourism approach that draws upon rural elements. This goal was achieved through a qualitative approach employing analytical techniques grounded in sustainable tourism development, eco-tourism, village tourism, and functional structure. The fieldwork was carried out between February and March 2024 in Girpasang, where data were collected through systematic observations and a series of in-depth interviews with three key community leaders and policymakers who possess extensive knowledge and direct involvement in local tourism practices. The findings reveal the importance of strengthening six key sectors of rural tourism: institutions, human resources, tourism packaging, visitor management, marketing, and partnerships. These components are elaborated in a strategy aimed at enhancing the elements of rural tourism. The outcomes of this research can be used as a conceptual framework that sustainable village tourism needs to be linked to institutional, management, and networking functions, with an emphasis on a functional structure approach. In addition to empirically providing guidelines and a framework for the development of sustainable tourism villages.

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INTRODUCTION

Sustainable tourism has become a key framework in contemporary tourism development, emphasizing the balance between environmental conservation, social inclusion, and economic growth (UNWTO, 2013). This approach ensures that tourism development not only provides economic benefits but also safeguards natural resources and cultural heritage for future generations. Sustainable tourism practices encourage responsible behavior among tourists, local communities, and stakeholders to maintain the integrity of destinations. Furthermore, the sustainable tourism framework highlights the importance of local participation and empowerment. Community-based tourism and ecotourism are examples of approaches that align with sustainability principles by promoting local ownership, distribution of benefits, and respect for socio-cultural values (Lane & Kastenzholz, 2015). Such approaches strengthen the resilience of rural destinations and support long-term development goals.

Sustainable tourism is defined as an integrated, sustainable, and responsible approach to planning, as outlined in the Regulation of the Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy/Head of the Tourism and Creative Economy Agency of the Republic of Indonesia Number 9 of 2021, which provides guidelines for sustainable tourism destinations. This development model is characterized by its compatibility with local culture, social acceptability, a focus on local communities, non-discrimination, and environmental friendliness. Rural tourism is viewed as a catalyst for revitalizing and stimulating economic growth in Indonesia during the pandemic. The pandemic has also spurred the development of local tourism and enhanced the quality of tourism services in rural areas (Polukhina et al., 2021). According to Kemenparekraf (2021), rural tourism serves as a tool for empowering local communities, enabling them to harness their local potential and reap direct benefits from this development.

Rural tourism refers to activities conducted in rural areas that provide experiences related to local traditions, way of life, and regional products (Ahmed & Jahan, 2013; Bhadauria & Rastogi, 2012; Kumar et al., 2025; Lane, 1994; Poerwoningsih et al., 2016; Sanagustin-Fons et al., 2018; Tou et al., 2022). This definition is further emphasized by Prakoso (2021), who describes a tourist village as a rural area rich in natural resources and local culture, managed by the community to maximize benefits for both the community and the environment. Supporting this view, He et al. (2021) note that rural tourism typically has a positive impact on the development of village communities, both economically and socio-culturally. Several key elements are essential for the development of rural tourism. These include the rural setting, which creates the overall atmosphere, as well as the natural and cultural resources that serve as attractions. Furthermore, it is crucial for the local community to effectively manage its area to ensure that the advantages of tourism are maximized for the benefit of both the community and the environment. This approach forms the foundation for sustainable growth as a tourist destination.

Tourism development today should be viewed from two key perspectives: that of the local community and of the tourists. This approach helps create harmony between the demand from tourists and the supply from local communities. Ecotourism is one concept that fosters this harmony. According to Prakoso & Irawati (2018) and Sugiarto (2021), ecotourism is a nature-based tourism model managed directly by local communities. This concept brings multiple benefits, including environmental protection, cultural preservation,



economic development, and enhanced community pride. It also provides tourists with valuable natural and cultural educational experiences, leading to a high-quality travel experience. Stone & Nyaupane (2016) and Wood (2002) further emphasize that ecotourism's focus on conservation can deepen tourists' understanding of environmental preservation and the richness of local cultures. Additionally, López-Sanz et al. (2021) note that nature, culture, and society are the primary motivations driving tourists to visit tourist villages. The close interaction between tourists, nature, and local culture, as emphasized in the concept of tourist villages, allows for meaningful engagement, fulfilling these motivations and ultimately enhancing travel satisfaction.

The development of tourist villages is also not free from adverse impacts. Zhang (2021) explains in his study that the development of tourism villages often stems from government initiatives aimed at improving the welfare of local communities. However, the wrong policies and practices can lead to uncontrolled and misguided communities, which can be socially, culturally, and economically detrimental to the village area. These losses can take the form of urbanization, resulting in a decline in the village economy, as well as population decline and environmental damage (Xi et al., 2015; Yotsumoto et al., 2016; Zaei & Zaei, 2013). In terms of management, there is the impact of the emergence of new buildings as attractions, amenities and facilities as development of tourist needs (Prakoso, 2021; Susanti et al., 2018), in addition to the dependence of local communities on third parties and the potential takeover of tourism activities by outsiders (Dangi & Jamal, 2016; Mtapuri & Giampiccoli, 2016; Nair & Hamzah, 2015). Even Kolopaking (2015) in his research explained the marginalization of the poor in the village due to the arrival of tourists. Furthermore, the most important thing to avoid is the erosion of the village's authentic value due to improper management (Chang, 2017; Crăciun et al., 2022; Linderová et al., 2021; Ruiz-Ballesteros & González-Portillo, 2024). This condition confirms that managing tourism organizations in a tourist village for maximizing the benefits of tourism activities and utilizing rural resources effectively.

This research examines the relationship between community members in a local organization and their role in managing a village that has been transformed into a rural tourism area, from the perspective of rural sociology. The tourism aspect will be analyzed through both functional and structural lenses, recognizing that society operates as an interrelated system where the various components impact one another. Therefore, changes in one element will affect other parts of the system (Raho, 2021). Durkheim argued that each element within the system has a specific function that contributes to overall balance (Anto, 2018). From this perspective, transforming the village into a tourist area must be accompanied by the adaptation of all village elements—not just one—to function effectively within the rural tourism system. To establish a well-functioning social order, Parsons identifies four essential requirements known as AGIL: adaptation, goal attainment, integration, and latency (Prasetya et al., 2021; Rahmawati & Jayadi, 2019; Ritzer & Stepnisky, 2019). The AGIL theory is applied to analyze the social changes driven by the development of rural areas into tourist destinations, serving as a functional approach to societal change. These adjustments should yield positive outcomes for the community, promoting gradual self-adjustment to achieve balance and sustainability in their lives.

Research on ecotourism development in villages has highlighted the importance of community participation. Susanto et al. (2019) discussed how to foster community involvement in tourism development, while Endiyanti & Sarwadi (2021) analyzed the



impact of this involvement on the various stages of tourism development in rural areas. Additionally, Astutiningsih & Hasan (2022) focused on the design of ecotourism concepts through the formulation of Indonesia's tourism policy strategy. Previous studies underscore the crucial role that local communities play in shaping policies and strategies for ecotourism development. Building on this foundation, the present research aims to explore ecotourism from a new perspective, suggesting that it should act as a guideline for enhancing tourism elements within a village. This includes considerations for the setting, resources, management, and benefits of ecotourism. The primary objective of this research is to develop guidelines for promoting ecotourism sustainability in Girpasang, with an emphasis on rural elements. It is hoped that tourism development in the village can progress without compromising local values and sustainability. In particular, this study employs a functional-structural approach by applying Parsons' AGIL theory (Adaptation, Goal attainment, Integration, and Latency) to analyze the social changes driven by the transformation of rural areas into tourist destinations. By framing ecotourism through the AGIL functions, this research demonstrates how communities gradually self-adjust to achieve balance and sustainability in their socio-cultural, environmental, and economic lives. This application not only addresses the research gap in positioning ecotourism as a guideline for rural tourism enhancement but also contributes a theoretical innovation by integrating AGIL as a functional model for sustainable rural tourism development.

METHODOLOGY

This research utilized a qualitative case study method, incorporating both primary and secondary data, as outlined by Yin (2014). The study was conducted in February and March 2022 in Girpasang and Bringin Hamlets, located in Tegalmulyo Village, Kemalang District, Klaten Regency, Central Java Province. The research questions and interview protocol were developed based on four key variables of sustainable rural tourism, namely environmental, socio-cultural, economic, and organizational aspects. Each variable was elaborated into empirical indicators that guided the formulation of structured and open-ended interview questions. Primary data were collected through direct and participant observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation, including photos and videos. Three participants were involved in the interviews, consisting of the Head of Bringin Hamlet, a local community leader, and a representative from the Klaten Regency Tourism Office. Participants were recruited purposively based on their knowledge, leadership roles, and direct involvement in rural tourism development and policy implementation. Secondary data were gathered from relevant documents, studies, and articles concerning the research site.

The data analysis method focused on sustainable tourism development, ecotourism, tourist villages, and functional structures. These elements serve as the foundation for addressing the problem of how to strengthen rural tourism based on the ecotourism approach. The theory will be synthesized to identify applicable variables in the field, which will help determine the desired indicators. This will be accomplished using the data collection techniques outlined in Table 1.



Table 1. Theories, Variables, Indicators, and Data Collection Techniques

Theories			Functional Structural	Variables of Rural Tourism Elements	Indicators	Data Collection
Sustainable Tourism Destinations	Village Tourism	Eco-tourism				
Environmentally sustainable	Setting	Nature based Conservation		Environmental	- Natural potential and attraction - Conservation activity	- Observation - In-depth interview - Documentation
Culturally acceptable	Resources	Culture awareness	Adaptation	Socio-Cultural	- Cultural potential and attraction - Traditional custom	- Observation - In-depth interview - Documentation
Economically Viable	Benefit	Educational value Experience value Economic value	Goal Attainment Integration Latency	Economical	- Local benefit - Tourist benefit - Edu-attraction	- In-depth interview - Observation - Documents archive - Documentation
Organizationally resilience	Organization	Community engagement		Organizational	- Village managerial - Local organization and communities - Policy	- In-depth interview - Documents archive

Source: Analysis, 2024

The data will be identified based on the research variables and analyzed according to the guidelines and principles of ecotourism. The analysis will support the strengthening of elements and the structural functionalism approach in explaining how local actors or organizations interpret the village's status as a rural tourism destination. The analytical process was carried out through several stages: first, organizing and transcribing interview and observation data; second, conducting open and axial coding to categorize emerging themes; third, triangulating findings from interviews, observations, and secondary documents to ensure validity; and finally, synthesizing the results in relation to the principles of ecotourism and the structural functionalism approach (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). This step-by-step analysis enables a clearer explanation of how local actors and organizations interpret the village's status as a rural tourism destination and how the strengthening of rural tourism elements can be achieved.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The Phenomenon of Tourism Activity at Girpasang Bridge

Klaten Regency, located in Central Java Province, boasts remarkable natural resources and enjoys a strategic position between the major cities of Yogyakarta and Solo. This advantageous location has created excellent opportunities for tourism development. According to BPS Klaten, the region has 120 tourist attractions, primarily consisting of swimming pools and fishing sites, with 58 attractions in total. In 2020, these places attracted 1,399,167 domestic tourists and 22,199 foreign visitors (BPS Kabupaten Klaten, 2021). Girpasang Hamlet is a remote area that can be accessed via a steep path leading down a 150-meter-deep ravine, requiring visitors to navigate 1,001 steps to reach Bringin. The Girpasang Bridge was constructed to connect Girpasang with Bringin more efficiently, reducing the travel time from 30 minutes to just 3–5 minutes. In January 2022, the Chairman of the House of Representatives of the Republic of Indonesia inaugurated this suspension bridge, opening it to the public as a new tourist attraction. The opening of the bridge significantly boosted visitor numbers to the area, prompting the development of



tourism facilities such as cafes, food stalls, and other related businesses. Prior to the bridge's completion, Tegalmulyo Village received an average of only 300 tourists per day. However, following the bridge's inauguration, daily visits surged to approximately 5,000, with even higher numbers expected on weekends (TribunTravel.com, 2022). This bridge enhances access to Girpasang Hamlet, thus encouraging more tourist visits to the area. Supporting facilities available at the Girpasang Bridge tourist site are outlined in Table 2.

Table 2. Supporting Facilities of Girpasang Bridge

Supporting Facilities	Quantity	Location	Function	Manager (Community or private)
Parking Lot	2	Bringin	Parking 4 or more wheels	Pokdarwis Bringin
Parking Lot	2	Bringin	Parking 2 wheels	Pokdarwis Bringin
Parking Lot	3	Bringin	Parking 2 wheels	Private
Cafe	1	Bringin	Food and Beverage	Private
Stall	5	Bringin	Food and Beverage	Private
Gondola	1	Bringin	Attraction	Pokdarwis Bringin
vegetable and fruit Stall	9	Bringin	Food and Beverage	Private
Stall	4	Bringin	Food and Beverage	Private
Cafe	1	Girpasang	Food and Beverage	Pokdarwis Girpasang
Photo Spot	2	Girpasang	Landmark and Photo	Pokdarwis Girpasang
Community Center/ <i>Pendapa</i>	1	Girpasang	Function Area	Pokdarwis Girpasang
Homestay	2	Girpasang	Accommodation	Private

Source: Analysis, 2024

The development of Girpasang as a tourist destination must be carefully managed to preserve its natural environment and culture while benefiting the local community. According to interviews with the neighborhood leader (Ketua RT), approximately 300 to 400 tourists visit daily. This estimate is confirmed by direct observation in the field and documentation, which shows a high frequency of tourist arrivals, especially on weekends and holidays, reaching up to 5,000 tourists. These visits continue to increase, reaching 187,507 tourists in 2024 (Tyas & Deslia, 2025).

In response, local residents have begun to enhance tourism-related facilities, establishing food stalls, cafes, vegetable markets, and homestays. Currently, there are fifteen stalls and cafes in the hamlet, which has only twelve families and thirty-five residents. In 2024, Sari & Affianto (2024) estimated that these facilities generate an annual economic value of Rp2,352,570,404.52. While this growth in tourism activities can be beneficial, it also raises concerns about potential over-tourism, which could undermine the principles of sustainable tourism that should apply to such a destination.

The Analysis of Rural Tourism Elements

The Girpasang area is a popular tourist destination, primarily known for its impressive suspension bridge (see Figure 1). In addition to the bridge, visitors can enjoy a variety of complementary attractions, including stunning natural scenery, cafes, stalls, gondolas, photo spots, and shopping areas. This destination connects the two hamlets of Bringin and Girpasang and is situated at the foot of Mount Merapi.



Figure 1. The Girpasang Suspension Bridge

Source: Documentation, 2022



Bringin Hamlet is the area's entrance, featuring tourism support facilities such as gondolas, cafés, food stalls, and parking areas. Across the bridge is Girpasang Hamlet, which has a staging area, photo spots, cafés, food stalls, homestays and vegetable vendors. The condition of Girpasang is hilly and still retains its natural beauty, with several stalls selling to tourists (9 stalls). Some stalls utilize the front or terrace area of residential houses.



Figure 2. Gondola in Bringin and Photo Spots in Girpasang
Source: Documentation, 2022

Socio-Cultural Overview. Unlike Bringin, which has evolved into a tourist destination with its residents primarily reliant on tourism, Girpasang is a small hamlet consisting of 12 family heads and 35 residents. The village remains largely untouched by modernization, with the local economy still rooted in farming and gardening. This natural environment presents opportunities for cultivating crops that could be promoted as culinary or shopping attractions, including vegetables, coffee, flowers, and fruits. Additionally, there is potential for *Hadrah*—a form of Islamic art characterized by tambourine accompaniment while chanting verses in praise of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW)—as well as the development of local culinary specialties.

Economical Overview. The residents of Girpasang primarily engage in agriculture and produce trading. Currently, several stalls in Girpasang sell food and produce, including vegetables and fruit. Additionally, private homestays have been established to accommodate visitors. Girpasang Hamlet receives income from 5% of the gondola revenue managed by the tourism awareness group (Pokdarwis) of Bringin Hamlet. They also earn a small amount from tourists passing through the area. The Pokdarwis operates a café, which provides income for the hamlet and employment opportunities for the residents of Girpasang. Besides the café, other facilities in Girpasang Hamlet are managed privately.

Organizational. The tourism organization in Girpasang remains based on the local organizational system. *Rukun Tetangga* (RT) or Neighborhood Association is a local organization in Girpasang, with the Head of RT serving as its leader and also the coordinator of the Girpasang Hamlet Group's business unit in this area. This business unit is limited to managing one stall or café at the entrance to the village, as well as a homestay. Several stalls and cafés are still privately owned. They have not been integrated with the Hamlet business unit. An analysis of the tourism elements at the study sites is summarized in Table 3.

Table 3. Analysis of Conditions of Tourism Elements

Elements	Condition	Analysis
Environmental	a. The hamlet's setting area is about 1800 meters above sea level and at the foot of Mount Merapi, about 5 km from the top of the mountain. b. It has a beautiful and unique natural panorama. c. The area's condition is hilly and still retains a natural feel, with several stall buildings for selling to tourists (9 stalls); some stalls utilise the front or terrace area of residential houses.	The hamlet's condition still preserves its original landscape, featuring natural contours such as a moor and garden. This condition must be upheld to cultivate a rural atmosphere, the most suitable setting for rural tourism development.



Elements	Condition	Analysis
Socio-Cultural	a. It has 12 families with 35 residents who work as farmers and traders	The social relations of still-related people provide advantages in communication, and on a small scale, will also provide advantages in coordination. There are potential plantations, local cuisine, and daily culture that align with rural tourism resources, allowing tourists to gain new experiences from the uniqueness and authenticity of the village.
	b. Has the potential for crops that can be developed as a culinary or shopping attraction (vegetables, coffee, flowers, fruits)	
	c. There is potential for <i>Hadrah</i> , but it has not yet been packaged as a tourist attraction	
	d. The condition of the village, which is still natural, is a special attraction	
Economical	a. There is a sharing of gondola revenue with Pokdarwis Bringin, but still at a small percentage (5%).	Regarding economic benefits, Girpasang still needs to improve and not rely solely on profit sharing and the café. The business unit of the group needs to develop additional services, as well as a homestay business that can be integrated directly with the business group, utilizing a profit-sharing system with the owner.
	b. Revenue sharing from managing one <i>warung</i> or café	
	c. Personal income from business units (stalls, vegetable and fruit trading)	
	d. Homestay (privately owned) is still not operational	
Organizational	a. The Head of the RT coordinates with a local manager.	There is already an embryo in tourism management, and this manager needs assistance from outside parties in managing the tourism village. One-door management is necessary for managing tourism businesses in Girpasang and should be formally legalized.
	b. The limited business unit still manages one <i>warung</i> or café at the entrance of the village.	
	c. Homestays and some stalls/café are still privately owned and have not been integrated into the village management system	

Source: Analysis, 2024

Functional Structural Approach Analysis of Ecotourism Sustainability

Adaptation. In this process, the community must be able to meet the needs of the community itself, namely by changing the environment to meet their needs and survive the times. The adaptation process in Girpasang is necessary, and this is due to the sudden development of the area into a tourist attraction. An adaptation that occurs can be in the form of physical changes to the area (Setyaningsih, 2016; Xi et al., 2015; Zeisel, 1981), as well as its social, economic, and cultural activities (Ahimsa-Putra, 2013; Pamungkas & Mukhtali, 2015). Physically, there are changes in the function of buildings and land use, such as the emergence of changes in house terraces into stalls or moorlands that become tourist facilities. On the other hand, non-physical adaptation to the organization and its human resources occurred when the community organization (RT level) developed into a tourism organization (The Pokdarwis of Girpasang Hamlet). Residents changed their livelihoods from farmers and traders to hospitality workers, starting from being actors in tourism organizations and businesses as stall keepers, cooking, and serving guests/tourists. (Adesetiani et al., 2021; Luo et al., 2025) explained that institutions are one of the keys to tourism development, so improving and strengthening the institutions of tourism organizations is essential in this adaptation process. While this approach highlights adaptive capacity, it may overlook uneven adaptation across community segments, such as differences in access to resources or the willingness to shift from traditional livelihoods.

Goal Attainment. A system can determine its goals and strive to achieve those goals that have been agreed upon. The residents of Girpasang have agreed to respond to the development of tourism activities at Girpasang Bridge by opening a joint business managed by the group. They believe that tourism activities can provide additional benefits to residents. What needs to be considered is how the group can capture as much benefit as possible while maintaining environmental, socio-cultural, and economic sustainability. On the tourist side, the authenticity of the village in terms of nature and local culture is an experience sought after (Ahmed & Jahan, 2013; Damanik, 2013). A purely goal-oriented analysis may underplay emergent or unintended consequences, such as cultural commodification or environmental strain, which may not align with initial objectives



Integration. The community must regulate the relationship between its components or elements to function optimally. In realizing sustainable tourism, this relationship arrangement can be referred to as tourism management carried out by local tourism organizations. This management must be carried out with full planning and have the ability to maintain, control, protect, and develop potential (Carr et al., 2016; Mathieson & Wall, 1982). Therefore, this management depends on the capacity of tourism organizations and human resources in Girpasang. The structural functional approach may obscure conflicts or power imbalances within the community, such as whose voices drive decision-making in Pokdarwis or who benefits most from tourism activities.

Latency. A system always maintains its form of social interaction and corrects behavior that is considered deviant so that it can be accommodated into a new consensus that will always adapt. Habraken (1983) refers to this as cultural transformation, which is a change in the understanding and consensus of the community that emerges from a continuous evaluation process. Park et al. (2024) call this empowerment, representing communities' sense of control and ability to adapt to a changing environment. In this change process, the Girpasang community must complement, maintain and improve individual motivation and cultural patterns that create and sustain motivation in tourism activities. The role of organizations and community leaders is important at this stage. This phase may insufficiently account for cultural loss or dilution, especially when traditional values are repackaged for tourists, potentially undermining meaningful cultural continuity.

Comparisons with similar case studies in Indonesia reveal similar patterns. For example, rural communities in Bali and Sade Village, Lombok have also adapted their livelihoods and institutions to tourism, facing similar tensions between preserving cultural authenticity and responding to economic opportunities. Furthermore, conditions in the region indicate that rural tourism requires a balance between ecological preservation, cultural sustainability, and community well-being (Cohen, 2018; Cole, 2007; Rosalina et al., 2023). This comparison reinforces that while structural-functional analysis is valuable in describing systemic adaptation, sustainable rural tourism requires the integration of multiple perspectives to capture the complexity of socio-cultural transformation fully. Additionally, in Kampung Naga, West Java, the community has adapted to tourism while maintaining cultural integrity (Setiawan et al., 2025). This condition demonstrates that enhanced institutional governance and inclusive community engagement, particularly ensuring fair participation across the community, are key to long-term sustainability.

An analysis of the functional structural approach to the sustainability of rural ecotourism at the study sites is shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Elaboration of Ecotourism-Based Strengthening Strategies

Rural Tourism Elements	Eco-tourism	Functional Structural	Strategies	Sector
Environmental	Nature based	Adaptation	Maintaining the original condition of nature with small-scale development and following the landscape Has guidelines on nature-based tourism by utilizing the potential of the area (agriculture, plantations, and regional conditions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ VM ▪ VM ▪ Packaging
		Goal Attainment	Improve managerial skills and the quality of human resources as tourism business actors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Institutional ▪ HR
		Integration	Positioning tourism as a secondary activity by utilizing primary activities as resources Develop conservation-based attractions, such as agricultural activities, tree planting, and outbound.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ VM ▪ Packaging ▪ Packaging ▪ Marketing
	Conservation	Adaptation		



Rural Tourism Elements	Eco-tourism	Functional Structural	Strategies	Sector	
Socio-Cultural	Culture awareness	Goal Attainment	Packaging the community's daily activities as attractions so that they have added value and remain in the corridor of nature protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Packaging ▪ Marketing 	
		Integration	Conduct regular village clean-ups and natural regeneration activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ VM 	
		Latency	Implement quality tourism by focusing on spending and controlling the number of tourist visits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ VM 	
		Adaptation	Identify and develop local cultural potential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Packaging ▪ Marketing 	
		Goal Attainment	Upholding traditions and customs as guidelines for tourism development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ VM ▪ Packaging 	
		Integration	Prioritizing traditions and customs in tourism management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ VM ▪ Packaging ▪ Marketing ▪ Packaging ▪ Marketing 	
	Educational value		Latency	It is creating traditions and customs as tourist attractions while preserving their authenticity. This can be achieved through appropriate interpretation for both residents and tourists.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Packaging ▪ Marketing
			Adaptation	Developing educational value in each tourist attraction offered with the proper interpretation and packaging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Packaging ▪ Marketing
			Goal Attainment	Provide educational value to tourists through tourism activities and to local communities through their involvement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Packaging ▪ Marketing ▪ HR
			Integration	Developing the ability to package tourist attractions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ HR
			Latency	Strengthen the educational value of attractions and apply that value equally to local communities through gradual and regular evaluation and capacity building.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Packaging ▪ Institutional
			Adaptation	Highlighting the uniqueness and authenticity of Girpasang	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Packaging
Economical	Experience value	Goal Attainment	Prioritizing the satisfaction of the travel experience as one of the targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ HR ▪ Marketing ▪ Partnership 	
		Integration	Involve external parties in the identification and packaging of attractions to enhance their competitiveness and selling power.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ HR 	
		Latency	Improve and maintain product quality and service excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ HR 	
	Economic value		Adaptation	Develop tourist attractions based on daily activities and local culture so that tourism can be an added value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Packaging ▪ Marketing
			Goal Attainment	Developing tourism as a medium to improve the welfare of local communities and preserve the natural and cultural environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Institutional
			Integration	Controlling tourism with the principle of sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ VM ▪ Institutional ▪ VM
Organizational	Community engagement	Latency	Revitalize the potential that began to stagnate and tends to be damaged	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Institutional 	
		Adaptation	Establish business entities in the tourism sector to strengthen and enhance local communities by empowering them as owners, managers, and organizers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Institutional 	
		Goal Attainment	Local communities as tourism owners, managers, and organizers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Institutional ▪ HR 	
		Integration	Collaborate with external parties (academics, industry, and government) for mentoring and capacity building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Partnership ▪ HR 	
		Latency	Conduct a regeneration of rural tourism management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Institutional ▪ HR 	

Source: Analysis, 2024

From the results of the deepening of the elements and approaches described above, there are results of the strategies described in each element to strengthen the rural tourism elements to remain sustainable. From the strategies that have been produced in the analysis, six areas are the focus of strengthening (see Table 4), ie, (1). Institutional, which is a strategy for strengthening the capacity of local community organizations; (2) Human Resources (HR), which is a strategy for strengthening the capacity of local human resources; (3) Tourism Packaging, which is a strategy for developing tourist attractions; (4)



Visit Management (VM), which is a strategy to protect and control the carrying capacity of the area; (5) Marketing is a strategy to increase the marketing of tourism products offered to the targeted market segment; and (6) Partnership, is a strategy to increase stakeholder cooperation and collaboration in mentoring, training, and financing. This sector is in line with the Ministry of Tourism's guidelines for developing tourism villages, which focus on developing an ecosystem comprising attractions, amenities, accessibility, activities, and human resources (Wirdayanti et al., 2021). This study not only examines the components that have been developed within this ecosystem but also places greater emphasis on visitor management, packaging, institutional strengthening, and partnership formation as the primary drivers of sustainability in a rural context.

The Sustainable Ecotourism Strategy Framework based on rural elements is shown in Figure 3.

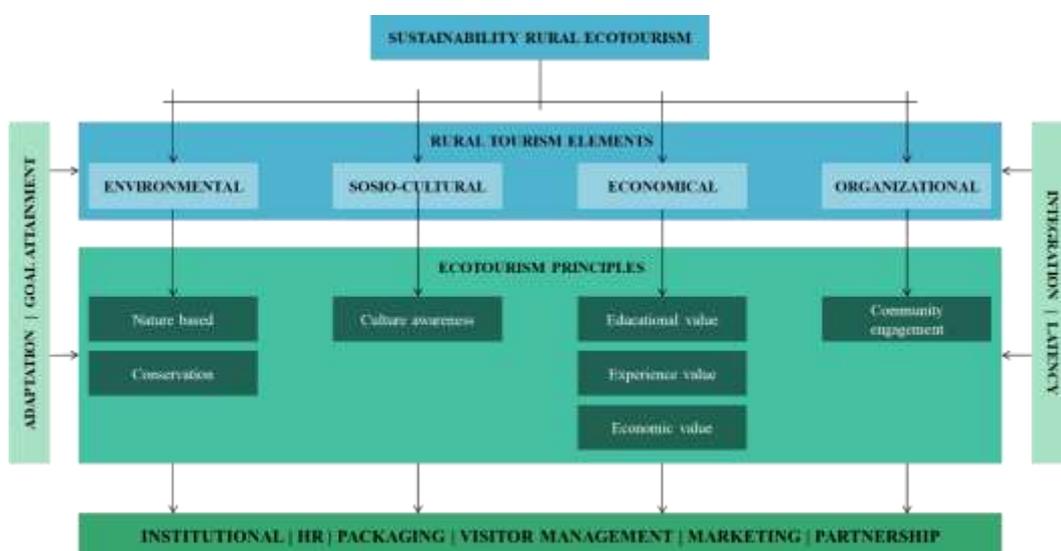


Figure 3. Strategy Framework for Sustainability Ecotourism- Based Rural Elements

Source: Analysis, 2024

To ensure effective implementation, stakeholder coordination mechanisms should include regular community forums facilitated by Pokdarwis, collaboration agreements with the government and private sectors, and monitoring groups involving local leaders, policymakers, and tourism practitioners. These mechanisms are expected to build trust and maintain accountability across stakeholders. In the development of tourism villages in Nglanggeran and Pentingsari, community forums and partnerships with universities and government agencies have played an important role in strengthening local capacity and ensuring sustainability, including structured collaboration between Pokdarwis, local households, and tourism operators (Hermawan, 2016; Purbasari & Asnawi, 2014; Rozzaq Rofiq & Prananta, 2021).

CONCLUSION

The development of tourism activities around the Girpasang Bridge has directly impacted Girpasang and Bringin Hamlets. As a rural area with the potential to be developed into a sustainable tourism village, it is essential to strengthen rural elements through six key strategies: institutions, human resources, tourism packaging, visit management,



marketing, and partnerships between local organizations and other stakeholders. Implementing these six strategies can be done in stages, with priority given to institutional strategies to strengthen the foundation of local organizations in Girpasang. To ensure effective implementation, stakeholder coordination mechanisms should include regular community forums facilitated by Pokdarwis.

In terms of timeline, the implementation phases can follow a stepwise progression: the short-term phase (1–2 years) should emphasize institutional strengthening and capacity building for human resources; the medium-term phase (3–5 years) can focus on tourism packaging, visit management, and initial marketing efforts; and the long-term phase (beyond 5 years) should expand partnerships and advanced marketing strategies while ensuring ongoing evaluation and adaptation. Practically, tourism managers can enhance tourism sustainability through small-scale, nature-based development combined with conservation and educational programs. Integrating local traditions and crafts into tourism helps maintain cultural authenticity while engaging visitors in meaningful experiences. Empowering local communities through training in product packaging, digital marketing, and service quality strengthens both economic and social impacts. Collaboration among local institutions, government, and private sectors, supported by digital promotion and thematic tour development, is essential for sustaining competitiveness and long-term growth.

This research aims to identify the elements of rural tourism and develop a macro strategy for ecotourism sustainability. To further refine the findings at the study site, future research can provide a detailed examination of the six strategies outlined. For instance, the institutional strategy can focus on the management organization and partnerships with other stakeholders. Additionally, marketing strategy research could explore promotional methods for developing Girpasang tourism, as well as segmentation studies and tourism products tailored for the area.

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