Vol. 01 No.01 August 2026, ISSN: 3163-2912

Opportunities and Challenges of Sustainable Development Communication in Tourism Villages: A Case Study of Aceh Province

Morissan[1]*, Masayu Indriaty Susanto[2], Marlinda Irwanti[3]

[1] *Communication Science, Universitas Sahid, Jakarta*
[2] *Communication Science, Universitas Sahid, Jakarta*
[3] *Communication Science, Institut Komunikasi dan Bisnis LSPR*

[*] *Corresponding author. Email: morissan@usahid.ac.id*

ABSTRACT

Tourism villages in Indonesia have begun to develop and need to be managed carefully. Opportunities and challenges must be identified well. Referring to the theory of development communication and diffusion of innovation, this research aims to identify opportunities and challenges for village community-based sustainable tourism development in three tourist villages in Aceh Province. This research uses interviews with stakeholders and observations of village communities and tourism assets owned by the three tourist villages. The research results show that the three tourist villages studied have excellent potential with diverse tourism assets as an opportunity to attract visiting tourists supported by supportive local government policies and the friendliness of the village community. However, the lack of trained human resources and inadequate management capacity are potential obstacles to the progress of tourism village development. Therefore, this article provides several recommendations for continuing the sustainable development of tourist villages in Aceh Province.

Keywords: *Aceh Province, community-based tourism, village tourism, communication, sustainable development*

1. INTRODUCTION

The global tourism industry has grown rapidly over the past few decades and has become one of the most profitable economic sectors [1], [2], [3]. However, since the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic, the tourism sector has been among the hardest hit, prompting various measures to support its recovery. One of the government's strategic responses has been to promote the development of tourism villages as a means of revitalizing local economies that were severely affected by the pandemic. In the current post-pandemic era, tourism is expected to continue its rapid growth trajectory.

A tourism village refers to a community consisting of residents within a defined geographical area who interact closely with one another under a shared management system, and who demonstrate collective awareness and responsibility in participating in tourism development [4]. The establishment of tourism villages is often driven by the community's desire to utilize their surrounding cultural and natural heritage to improve their standard of living [5], [6].

In many countries, both developing and developed, tourism serves as a key economic sector that supports local communities by generating income and employment opportunities. However, tourism can also have adverse impacts on cultural and natural heritage. When poorly planned and managed, tourism may threaten economic development and social well-being. In recent years, sustainability in tourism has become a central issue across many countries.

As a member of the United Nations, Indonesia has actively implemented tourism village development within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which comprise a set of global objectives established to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all [7]. In developing the travel and tourism sector, governments are required to implement strategies and policies that are environmentally and socially accountable. Long-term growth must be fostered through sustainable tourism

practices that maintain a balance between economic development, social equity, environmental protection, and the preservation of cultural heritage [8], [9], [10].

At the village level, tourism development is carried out through community-based tourism (CBT), commonly referred to in Indonesia as tourism villages. CBT aims to enhance the economic conditions and overall welfare of rural communities that possess tourism assets which can be offered to visitors as attractions. The exact number of tourism villages in Indonesia remains uncertain. However, during the "Indonesian Tourism Village Award 2022" organized by the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, a total of 3,419 tourism villages from across the country were registered, of which 50 were selected as the best in various categories [11].

Based on the above background, this study aims to achieve the following objectives. First, to evaluate the development of tourism villages in Aceh Province. Second, to examine the implementation of sustainable tourism village development in Aceh Province by identifying the opportunities and challenges encountered, using a case study approach. Third, to analyze the communication barriers that arise in the process. Fourth, based on the research findings, to propose a set of recommendations for the effective implementation of sustainable tourism village development.

1.1 Sustainable Tourism

The idea of sustainable development emerged in the 1970s, during a period marked by ongoing debates between those who prioritized economic growth and those concerned about environmental degradation caused by such development. This debate between proponents of economic growth and advocates of environmental conservation eventually led to a resolution adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on December 19, 1983, to establish the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED), chaired by Gro Harlem Brundtland [12].

Nearly four years after its establishment, the WCED completed its work in the form of a report widely known as the Brundtland Report. This report called for a new approach to balancing economic development with environmental protection through a concept termed "sustainable development" [13].

The definition of sustainable development outlined in the Brundtland Report, which continues to serve as a global reference, is "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" [12]. This report was further followed up in 1992 through the Earth Summit, also known as the Rio Conference. Today, sustainable development has become the dominant paradigm within the international community, functioning as a guiding concept for enhancing human and economic growth while maintaining the health of social and ecological systems essential to the economy [14].

The concept of sustainable tourism development, which seeks to achieve an appropriate balance among social, economic, and environmental components in tourism development, represents a progressive evolution of the broader concept of sustainable development. The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) defines sustainable tourism as "tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social, and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment, and host communities" [15]. Accordingly, sustainable tourism should: (1) make optimal use of environmental resources; (2) respect the socio-cultural authenticity of host communities; and (3) ensure viable, long-term economic operations that provide socio-economic benefits to all stakeholders [16].

Since the adoption of sustainable tourism development as a guiding framework, many countries have begun to incorporate sustainability principles into their policies at both national and local levels. However, the lack of robust, science-based evidence on the impacts of tourism highlights the need for greater transparency, monitoring, and information sharing regarding the consequences of tourism practices that do not adhere to sustainability principles [15].

1.2 Tourism Villages

Community-based tourism (CBT), which first emerged as an alternative development strategy in the 1970s, is widely regarded as one of the most effective approaches for promoting sustainable tourism, particularly in rural and non-urban areas [17], [18]. CBT promotes self-reliance, empowerment, autonomy, and sustainability [19], [20]. The concept of CBT, or tourism villages, has long been introduced as a development approach that fosters local economic growth while simultaneously preserving environmental and cultural resources. Conversely, poorly planned and managed tourism can undermine economic development and social well-being.

Numerous studies have been conducted and published to refine the concept of sustainable tourism village development. The significance of tourism villages in achieving sustainable development has been widely examined from various perspectives, particularly in response to the rapid growth of international tourism. Scholars have expanded the concept of sustainable tourism into multiple dimensions based on insights derived from previous studies. These developments have generated key findings and recommendations that contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of sustainable tourism village development, including the following aspects. First, the management and conservation of natural resources, as well as community welfare and satisfaction [21], [22], [23]. Second, institutional/political and technological dimensions [23], [24], [25], [26]. Third, an eight-step assessment framework covering environmental, economic, socio-

cultural, political impacts, ecosystem quality, environmental policy, management, and biodiversity [27].

Recent studies, including one by Lo and Janta [28], have examined the challenges and benefits of tourism villages in Chiang Mai, Thailand. Using field observations, interviews, and thematic analysis, the study found that tourism villages contribute to improving the welfare of local communities, as large numbers of tourists visit these villages to experience local culture. Additionally, community members have successfully established environmental safety systems by implementing measures to protect both tourists and residents from crime. Through collaboration with local authorities, communities have enhanced security and developed effective crime prevention strategies.

A study by Ngo and Creutz [5] evaluated the sustainability of tourism village development in rural Hoi An, Vietnam. Based on surveys and interviews, the study found that key dimensions—including economic, environmental, cultural, community, planning, and tourism aspects—had reached a sustainable level. This indicates that tourism has contributed to improving community welfare and resource management. Furthermore, the findings demonstrate how tourism villages can function as catalysts for accelerating inclusive community development in remote areas. Local communities in these villages have placed strong emphasis on preserving local identity and heritage.

Another study by Ghanem and Saad [29] employed a qualitative approach to examine the challenges of tourism development in the heritage site of Esna, Egypt, based on stakeholders' experiences, perspectives, and attitudes. The study identified two major barriers to tourism village development in Esna: (1) managerial issues, such as conflicts among authorities, lack of commitment and support from top management, limited awareness, insufficient skills, and inadequate funding; and (2) community-related issues, including antiquities theft and rapid urbanization. According to this study, management-related challenges constitute the most critical barrier.

Despite the considerable academic attention given to tourism villages, relatively few studies have focused on systematically evaluating and tracing their sustainability aspects. Such evaluation is crucial to ensure that tourism village development can be further expanded without generating unintended ecological and socio-cultural impacts. According to the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) [15], the development of sustainable tourism is an ongoing process that requires continuous monitoring of its impacts, as well as the implementation of preventive and corrective measures as needed.

1.3 Development Communication

Communication plays a crucial role in the development process by fostering community participation in development activities. Communities require access to knowledge and information in order to effectively respond to emerging opportunities and challenges. However, for such knowledge and information to be useful in the development process, they must be communicated effectively to the public [30]. This study aims to investigate communication barriers in tourism village development by analyzing the communication processes involved, in order to understand the role of each communication element in supporting or constraining development efforts.

Development communication is defined as the process of disseminating information to enhance public knowledge and to influence attitudes and values in ways that enable individuals to participate actively in development processes [31]. In this study, tourism village development is conceptualized as a communication process involving interactions among key elements such as the sender, message, channel (or medium), receiver, feedback, and noise [32].

Several Western scholars are recognized as pioneers in introducing the concept of "development communication." One of the most prominent figures is Wilbur Schramm, who in 1954 proposed that communication is inherently circular in nature [33]. This implies that senders and receivers continuously exchange roles and participate equally in the communication process. Schramm's model marked a departure from earlier models that viewed communication as a one-way (linear) process. In the context of sustainable tourism village development, communication elements interact dynamically and may function either as enabling factors or as constraints that hinder the achievement of sustainable development goals.

Development is often associated with the introduction of new ideas or innovations to society. In this regard, the Diffusion of Innovations theory proposed by Everett M. Rogers [34] is frequently used to explain development communication processes by illustrating the patterns and speed at which new ideas and products spread within a population. This theory explains how, over time, an idea or product diffuses through a social system before it is ultimately adopted. A key factor in successful adoption is the perception of the idea or product as new or innovative. According to this framework, individuals who first introduce an innovation are referred to as innovators. Those who initially accept the innovation are known as early adopters. As acceptance grows, the innovation reaches the early majority. However, some members of society may adopt the innovation later (late majority), while others may resist or reject it altogether (laggards).

3. METHOD

This study employs a case study approach by conducting field data collection in three leading tourism villages in Aceh Province: (1) Lubuk Sukon Tourism Village, Aceh Besar Regency; (2) Gampong Ulee Lheue Tourism Village, Banda Aceh City; and (3) Aneuk Laot Tourism Village, Sabang, Weh Island. Data collection was carried out to identify the

opportunities and challenges of sustainable tourism village development in Aceh Province, as represented by the three selected villages. These villages were chosen as research sites because they have received national recognition from the central government through the Tourism Village Award (Anugerah Desa Wisata) in various categories, alongside other outstanding tourism villages across Indonesia.

Data collection was conducted between November 2023 and January 2024. The primary fieldwork consisted of extensive observations, involving prolonged engagement with local communities through social interactions and informal conversations to identify the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of tourism village residents. The second major source of data was face-to-face interviews with 13 relevant informants. The collected primary data were analyzed descriptively, while secondary data were obtained from various sources, including journal articles, scientific reports, statistical publications, websites, and books.

Using the qualitative data analysis techniques proposed by Miles and Huberman [35], the analysis was conducted through several stages. First, interview transcripts were thoroughly reviewed, followed by a coding process for each informant's statements related to opportunities and challenges in sustainable tourism village development. The resulting codes were then reduced to generate categories, which were subsequently refined to produce final conclusions [35].

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Case Background

Prior to the devastating tsunami disaster that struck Aceh on December 26, 2004, the fisheries sector was one of the main pillars of the local economy, contributing approximately 6.5 percent to the regional Gross Domestic Product (GDP). However, the sector required a long period to recover, as many fishermen were lost or killed, and a significant number of boats and fishing equipment were destroyed [36]. In the aftermath of the disaster, the tourism sector emerged as a prominent alternative and has been increasingly recognized for its potential contribution to regional income.

Aceh possesses a wide range of tourism attractions, particularly in natural, historical, and Islamic tourism. With its extensive coastline, clusters of islands, and vast forest areas, Aceh offers diverse and appealing destinations for both domestic and international tourists. Since 2012, the Aceh regional government has initiated tourism village programs across several districts as part of a broader strategy to develop the creative economy [37]. Some of these villages were later designated as leading tourism villages based on their economic potential and their capacity to enhance local community welfare.

Each rural area in Aceh has its own distinctive characteristics, including scenic landscapes such as beautiful beaches, rich cultural traditions, embroidery craftsmanship, blacksmithing, wood carving, and distinctive Acehnese cuisine. The flagship products of tourism villages are integral to the creative economy sector and are primarily developed through Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). The regional government has allocated financial support to selected tourism villages as a stimulus to encourage community participation and strengthen motivation in supporting tourism-based development programs.

In 2021, Aceh Province recorded 34 tourism villages. This number increased to 40 in 2022 and surged significantly to 119 villages in 2023, encompassing various classifications ranging from pilot (emerging), developing, to advanced tourism villages [38]. Since the initiation of the tourism village program in 2012, the number of both domestic and international tourist arrivals in Aceh has shown a steady increase. In 2015, the number of visitors reached 1.66 million, rising by 25.5 percent in 2016 to 2.15 million. Tourist arrivals peaked in 2019 at 2.64 million before declining sharply by 48.5 percent to 1.36 million in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In the post-pandemic period, tourist arrivals rebounded by 26.4 percent to 1.71 million in 2022 (see Table 1 and Figure 1). At the time of writing, official data for 2023 are not yet available; however, the Aceh provincial government has set a target of 2.5 million tourist arrivals for 2023, including both domestic and international visitors [39].

International tourists visiting Aceh predominantly originate from Malaysia, supported by the availability of direct international flights connecting Aceh with Kuala Lumpur and Penang [39]. In addition to Malaysia, a significant number of tourists also come from other ASEAN countries, followed by visitors from China, as well as several European and American countries.

The city of Sabang, located on Weh Island, receives the highest number of international tourist visits due to its attractive coastal and marine tourism [40]. The second most visited destination by international tourists is Banda Aceh [40]. Beyond marine tourism, Aceh also offers cultural and spiritual tourism, ecotourism, and even tsunami-related tourism. The three tourism villages selected as fieldwork sites in this study—Lubuk Sukon, Ulee Lheue, and Aneuk Laot—are all located within areas with the highest levels of tourist visitation in Aceh Province, namely in and around Banda Aceh and Sabang (Weh Island). As tourism villages, each of these locations possesses its own unique attractions.

4.2. The Emergence of Tourism Villages

Based on field interviews with informants, the emergence of tourism villages in Aceh Province can be traced to the role of pioneering individuals who initially invited visitors from outside their villages, including international tourists. These pioneers established small businesses such as cafés and offered their homes as accommodation for visitors. In addition to providing

lodging, they also involved other community members who possessed specific skills—for example, producing traditional cakes or smoked fish to be sold as local souvenirs—thereby creating additional sources of income for the villagers. As one informant from a tourism village explained:

"Here, we have a key figure driving the tourism village, Mr. Fatwa Amri. He is known as a tourism initiator and guide, and he owns a café. When visitors come, he encourages local residents to prepare traditional Acehnese cakes or smoked fish as souvenirs from the village."

Referring to development communication and diffusion of innovations theory, individuals such as Fatwa Amri can be understood as both message senders and innovators who communicate the benefits of transforming a village into a tourism destination. When these ideas are disseminated to other villagers (message receivers), those who first accept and support the initiative can be categorized as early adopters. As acceptance spreads and more individuals support the idea, an early majority is formed.

In the three tourism villages examined in this study, the concept of tourism village development has generally reached the stage of early majority acceptance. Nevertheless, a small proportion of community members remain late adopters or even resist the idea altogether, although their numbers are relatively limited.

Based on interviews with informants, visitors who returned to their places of origin often shared stories with their families and peers about the beauty and cultural uniqueness of the villages they had visited in Aceh. This word-of-mouth communication generated interest among others outside the province and even abroad, who then expressed a desire to visit and inquired about the availability of accommodation in these tourism villages. In response, the local pioneers encouraged neighboring residents to participate by offering their homes as paid homestays.

In the early stages, tourist arrivals were largely driven by word-of-mouth communication, as visitors who had previously traveled to Aceh shared their experiences with colleagues and acquaintances. This process gradually expanded, resulting in a steady flow of incoming tourists. In 2012, in alignment with the national government's policy to increase international tourist arrivals to Indonesia, the Aceh regional government officially designated several villages that had frequently received visitors as tourism villages. Since then, local tourism authorities have implemented various training and promotional programs to further enhance tourist arrivals. One such initiative was the establishment of Tourism Awareness Groups (Pokdarwis), which function as motivators, mobilizers, and communicators in fostering community readiness and awareness in tourism village development.

Table 1: Tourist Visit Levels in Aceh Province

Year	International Tourists	Domestic Tourists	Number of Tourists	Growth (%)
2015	54,588	1,662,528	1,717,116	20.2%
2016	76,452	2,077,797	2,154,249	25.4%
2017	75,758	2,288,625	2,364,383	9.75%
2018	106,281	2,391,968	2,498,249	5.66%
2019	107,037	2,529,879	2,636,916	5.55%
2020	21,322	1,336,163	1,357,485	48.5%
2021	1,748	1,458,238	1,459,986	7.55%
2022	5,752	1,710,171	1,715,923	17.5%

4.3. Opportunities for Tourism Village Development Tourism Potential

The potential of community-based tourism (CBT) in a given area depends largely on the availability of tourism assets within the community [41], [42]. These resources, often referred to as "community-based tourism assets," may include nature-based activities, local handicrafts, and cultural events embedded within tourism villages [43], [42]. Aceh possesses significant tourism potential, as reflected in several tourism-related awards received from the central government in recent years.

The tourism assets found in the three tourism villages examined in this study in Aceh Province exhibit unique characteristics and offer substantial advantages for the development of CBT (see Figure 2: Map of the research locations).

First, these villages have largely preserved their traditional values while maintaining a diverse range of tourism assets. For instance, Lubuk Sukon offers the distinctive attraction of traditional Acehnese stilt houses constructed from wood and designed with earthquake-resistant principles (see Figure 3).

Surrounded by lush vegetation that creates a cool and serene atmosphere, the village allows visitors to enjoy traditional Acehnese dance performances, explore the village, and participate in various traditional games. The village also offers culinary tourism experiences, where visitors can learn to prepare traditional Acehnese dishes such as beulangong—a

meat curry made from beef or goat, combined with young jackfruit and bananas, and cooked in large cauldrons. In addition, visitors can explore several local attractions, including the Acehnese Traditional House Museum of Cek Mad Rahmany and the former residence museum of Governor Abdullah Muzakkir Walad.

Ulee Lheue offers a combination of natural, culinary, religious, and tsunami-related tourism attractions. Pantai Cermin, located approximately 10 minutes from the center of Banda Aceh, features scenic coastal views. Culinary tourism in Ulee Lheue includes Aceh's renowned Gayo coffee, which has gained international recognition.

Visitors can enjoy coffee at roadside stalls or coffee trucks operating along the Ulee Lheue area, along with a variety of traditional snacks and local delicacies. Ulee Lheue was among the areas most severely affected by the 2004 tsunami disaster. One notable landmark is the Baiturrahim Mosque, located very close to the shoreline yet remarkably survived the tsunami, making it both a religious and tsunami tourism destination (see Figure 4).

Aneuk Laot Tourism Village features a major natural attraction in the form of the largest lake on Weh Island. The lake's clear, bluish water, combined with its surrounding protected forest, makes it a key attraction for visitors. Covering approximately 37.5 hectares, the

Figure 5. Aneuk Laot Lake in Aneuk Laot Tourism Village, Sabang, Weh Island. (Source: Atourin.com)

lake offers stunning natural scenery and provides a relaxing environment for swimming or recreational activities (see Figure 5). In addition to its natural assets, Aneuk Laot also offers cultural tourism experiences, such as learning to prepare traditional local cakes and playing a traditional musical instrument known as Rapai.



Figure 2. Map of the research location



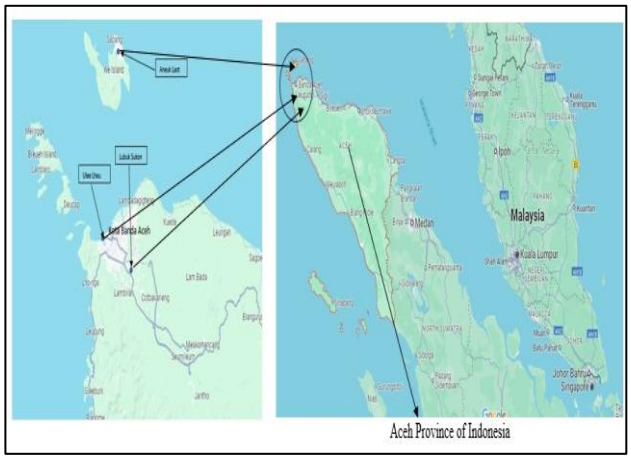
Figure 3. Traditional Stilt Houses in Lubuk Sukon Tourism Village, Aceh Besar Regency. (Source: Student Research, Architecture Conservation Program, Syiah Kuala University, 2016)



Figure 4. Baiturrahim Mosque in Ulee Lheue Tourism Village, Banda Aceh City. (Source: Acehkini.id)

4.4. Government Policy

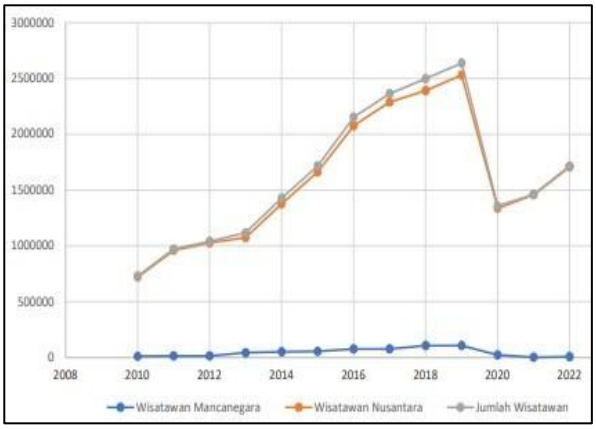
Tourism has been given a strong mandate to



contribute more significantly to a country's socio-economic development and has become a key commitment of governments worldwide in achieving the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) through sustainable tourism development as a strategic approach [42][44]. In addition, tourism policymakers continuously monitor and assess the tourism potential of villages and regions in order to develop attractive tourism products for both domestic

and international markets. In this context, the government functions as a second-level message sender in tourism village development communication, following the initial role of local pioneers. Within development communication, the messages conveyed by the government as a communicator can be analyzed in terms of both actions and policies.

Figure1: Figure 1. Graph of Tourist Visit Levels in Aceh Province



From an action perspective, the Aceh regional government has developed various transportation infrastructures, enabling tourism destinations across the province to be accessed by land, sea, and air. Direct international flights to the provincial capital, Banda Aceh, are available from Penang, Kuala Lumpur, and Jeddah [45]. Plans are also underway to open new routes connecting Aceh to Port Blair, as well as routes linking Sabang, Phuket, and Langkawi [45].

However, these infrastructural developments have not been adequately supported by optimal promotional activities. According to an informant, an academic from Syiah Kuala University in Banda Aceh, tourism promotion efforts by the Aceh government remain relatively limited and inward-looking, as they are primarily targeted at local audiences. Examples include events such as Aceh Ramadan Festival, Aceh Culinary Festival, Sabang Marine Festival, and Aceh Cultural Week. In contrast, outward-looking promotion—particularly international marketing—remains minimal, despite the fact that many of Aceh's tourism potentials are still largely unknown to global audiences. Furthermore, online promotion through websites targeting international tourists remains insufficient and requires expansion, particularly through the development of more English-language tourism content.

From a policy perspective, one of the most debated aspects of sustainable tourism development in Aceh—especially among external audiences—is the government's decision to promote halal tourism based on Islamic law (Sharia), formalized through regional regulations known as the Qanun of Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam [46]. These regulations govern social life in Aceh in accordance with the teachings of the Qur'an and Hadith, shaping both individual and collective behavior [47]. This policy is strongly influenced by the fact that the majority of Aceh's population is Muslim, which significantly shapes local culture and ways of life.

Another contributing factor is the rapid growth of the global halal tourism industry, which recorded approximately 131 million Muslim travelers in 2017 [48]. This growing demand presents a significant opportunity for regions with strong Islamic identities to develop halal tourism. In Aceh, halal tourism practices are reflected in regulations such as the requirement for restaurants to close during the adhan (call to prayer) for Zuhr and Maghrib prayers, the provision of halal food, and hospitality services that align with Islamic principles [47].

This halal tourism policy can be viewed from both positive and negative perspectives. On the positive side, halal tourism represents a niche market within the global tourism industry and aligns with sustainable development principles that emphasize the preservation of local values and cultural identity. On the negative side, the implementation of Sharia-based regulations may pose challenges in attracting new tourists, particularly Western and non-Muslim visitors. The term "Sharia" is often associated with restrictions, radicalism, and Islamophobia, which may reduce the willingness of non-Muslim tourists to visit Aceh [47]. Indeed, most Western and non-Muslim tourists who visit Aceh are not primarily motivated by its halal tourism concept, but rather by its cultural traditions and natural beauty. Their interest is largely shaped by information obtained through websites and social media platforms such as Instagram and Facebook, often created by local tourism village pioneers and Tourism Awareness Groups (Pokdarwis).

4.5. Community Hospitality

Hospitality is one of the key factors in the success of tourism development, and it largely depends on the goodwill of local residents. Therefore, tourism stakeholders in tourism villages must address the needs and expectations of community members who are not yet directly involved in tourism activities, as their positive attitudes are essential for ensuring visitor satisfaction and encouraging repeat visits.

Tourism actors in the three tourism villages in Aceh actively demonstrate their ability to interact with visitors and exhibit hospitality in guiding tourists and introducing local tourism products. As one informant from a tourism village stated:

"Here, many residents are happy when tourists come in large numbers, because they can open small stalls. For example, they can sell food and other items."

However, not all members of the community have shown the same level of enthusiasm toward the arrival of foreign tourists.

Despite the presence of significant opportunities, the success of community-based tourism (CBT) depends heavily on the challenges it faces.

These challenges must be clearly identified in order to design effective local tourism development strategies. To date, tourism development in Aceh has contributed to increasing income and creating employment opportunities for some members of tourism village communities, while also enhancing the value of local products and traditional practices. In this regard, several criteria of sustainable tourism development have been met. Nevertheless, tourism growth in Aceh continues to face a number of challenges.

4.6. Challenges in Tourism Village Development

4.6.1. Limited Community Awareness

Limited awareness among local residents regarding tourism development in their area may lead to unrealistic expectations about the benefits of tourism [42]. Moreover, a lack of awareness can result in insufficient preparedness for the changes required by tourism development, thereby affecting both the level of community participation and the competencies needed to support the tourism sector [49]. In the three tourism villages observed in Aceh, regular meetings between authorities and local communities are conducted as part of ongoing efforts to enhance public awareness of community-based tourism (CBT).

In addition, Tourism Awareness Groups (Pokdarwis) have been established in each leading tourism village as a platform for stakeholders to exchange information and design programs aimed at increasing community awareness and participation in tourism development. The provincial government has also regularly provided various training programs for local residents through these Pokdarwis forums.

However, based on observations and interviews, the level of tourism awareness among residents in the three studied villages varies significantly. Not all community members actively share responsibility for local tourism development, nor are they fully willing to support government policies in the tourism sector. This study finds that all stages of the diffusion of innovation process are present among tourism village communities in Aceh Province. In particular, late adopters and laggard groups tend to resist the concept of tourism villages, often perceiving tourism activities as incompatible with Islamic values.

Tourists are sometimes perceived as violating local norms and customary regulations, as governed by the Qanun of Aceh, which prohibits activities such as the consumption of intoxicating food and beverages, immoral behavior, gambling, and other restricted practices. These regulations apply to all individuals, including tourists, and contribute to community concerns regarding the social and cultural impacts of tourism.

4.6.2. Limited Skilled Human Resources

The skills and knowledge of tourism village communities constitute essential resources for both tourism and community development [50], [51]. However, the three villages examined in this study demonstrate a shortage of skilled human resources in this sector. Tourism governance remains weak, particularly in terms of human resource quality, especially in areas related to management and service delivery. Human resources continue to represent a major constraint in the development of the tourism sector in Aceh.

The local government is aware of this issue and has frequently organized training programs for tourism village residents, particularly in leading tourism villages. However, many participants attend these training sessions not out of intrinsic motivation to develop tourism-related businesses in their villages, but rather for short-term benefits, as reflected in the statement of one informant:

"Here, our human resources are still lacking. The same people are always the ones working, and when guests come, it's always the same people who handle them. So, it's quite difficult for us to grow faster because it's hard to engage others. If we organize a tourism package and receive a fee, some people get upset, saying we're making easy money, even though they didn't participate in the work. That's how the human resources situation is here."

Another informant highlighted a similar issue regarding tourism training programs organized by local authorities, noting that some residents are only willing to participate when financial incentives are provided:

"They join because there is money involved. If there's no payment, they are not interested—that's just how it is. And after the training ends, they don't continue developing it. Sometimes there are training sessions on homestay management, and they receive items like fans or lamps—that's all they're after. Nothing really gets developed afterward."

Tourism development requires skilled and well-educated human resources. However, this study finds that higher education institutions that provide trained personnel for the tourism sector remain limited, and even some existing tourism organizations still require significant improvement [47]. Professionalism is a critical factor in managing the tourism sector, as the level of satisfaction experienced by tourists influences their likelihood of sharing their experiences with others after visiting a destination [52].

4.6.3. Limited Management Capacity

Local communities in tourism villages may, at times, become constraints to the development of community-based tourism (CBT), as key success factors include the availability and quality of social facilities, as well as residents' attitudes toward tourists [42], [53]. Although communities in the three tourism villages studied demonstrate a relatively high level of hospitality and friendliness, they still lack the necessary skills required to effectively develop CBT. In particular, they have limited capabilities in promotion and marketing, and insufficient skills to engage in the

operation, monitoring, and evaluation of local tourism initiatives.

Collaboration among all community members is essential for achieving sustainable tourism village development. The capacity of village authorities to manage and utilize locally available resources is especially critical, as inadequate management may lead to complaints, friction, and even conflict—outcomes that are inconsistent with the principles of sustainable development.

According to one village official interviewed in this study, local residents had previously expressed dissatisfaction and lodged protests regarding the procurement of construction materials from outside the village for the development of tourism facilities:

"The issue was with purchasing materials. Sometimes the prices were high, and the community felt frustrated, questioning why we didn't buy from local residents. Ideally, it would be better to purchase locally. However, the prices were relatively higher. So we still bought from local residents, but we distributed the purchases to ensure the development program could proceed smoothly. Even if not all materials came from locals, at least some did."

Furthermore, tourism villages continue to exhibit limited management capacity, making it difficult to fully implement CBT in a way that actively involves all community members. One of the critical factors in successful CBT development is the participation of the entire community in managing tourism initiatives. Without such participation, the long-term development of CBT may be hindered. CBT is unlikely to grow sustainably if local communities are not empowered and actively involved in managing tourism activities within their own villages.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The findings of this study reveal several opportunities that can be sustained and further developed in the future within the process of tourism village development in Aceh Province. These include the diversity of tourism assets, support from local government, the hospitality of local communities, and the growing awareness among residents regarding the importance of community-based tourism (CBT). However, the study also identifies a number of challenges that hinder the effective implementation of CBT in the study area, which require appropriate solutions. The key constraints lie in the limited availability of skilled human resources and insufficient management capacity, particularly in fostering harmonious collaboration among all stakeholders within tourism village communities.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the research findings, several recommendations are proposed to provide opportunities for tourism villages to address or at least minimize the challenges of tourism development in Aceh Province:

Tourism village potential should be maximized to attract more visitors. In particular, local tourism assets need to be improved and enhanced through the development of supporting facilities, the organization of regular village cultural events (festivals), and the improvement of production processes for handicrafts, souvenirs, and traditional culinary products.

Local governments should intensify vocational training programs aimed at improving the skills of village residents, especially the younger generation. This includes enhancing product quality and competitiveness. In addition, adequate language and communication training programs, tour guide courses, and other tourism service training should be provided free of charge to equip residents with the necessary skills to serve tourists effectively.

Local governments and village authorities should support tourism villages through the provision of adequate budgets for improving public facilities for visitors, such as parking areas, public toilets, and directional signage. Furthermore, support from professionals, academics in the field of tourism, and relevant institutions should be maintained and strengthened to assist communities in increasing their awareness of tourism village development and promoting tourism assets at local, national, and international levels

REFERENCE

[1] A. Budeanu, "Impacts and responsibilities for sustainable tourism: A tour operator's perspective," *Journal of Cleaner Production*, vol. 13, no. 2, pp. 89–97, 2005.

[2] I. C. Muresan et al., "Local residents' attitudes toward sustainable rural tourism development," *Sustainability*, vol. 8, no. 1, pp. 1–14, 2016.

[3] H. Zhu et al., "Residents' attitudes toward sustainable tourism development," *Sustainability*, vol. 9, no. 1, p. 61, 2017.

[4] Digides, "What is a tourism village?" Nov. 9, 2020. [Online]. https://digitaldesa.id/artikel/apa-itu-desa-wisata

[5] T. H. Ngo and S. Creutz, "Assessing sustainability of community-based tourism in rural Hoi An, Vietnam," *Cogent Social Sciences*, vol. 8, no. 1, p. 2116812, 2022.

[6] R. Boonratana, "An assessment and evaluation of community-based tourism's contribution to sustainable lifestyles and local socioeconomic development," Mahidol University International College, 2010.

[7] Bappenas, "SDGs knowledge hub: Agenda 2030 for sustainable development," 2023. [Online]. https://sdgs.bappenas.go.id/

[8] L. O. Juma and A. Khademi-Vidra, "Community-based tourism and sustainable development of rural regions in Kenya: Perceptions of the

citizenry," *Sustainability*, vol. 11, no. 17, p. 4733, 2019.
[9] H. S. Choi and I. Murray, "Resident attitudes toward sustainable community tourism," *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, vol. 18, no. 4, pp. 575–594, 2010.
[10] UNWTO, "UNWTO tourism highlights," UNWTO, Madrid, 2013.
[11] Sekretariat Kabinet Republik Indonesia, "Indonesia tourism village award 2022," 2022. [Online]. https://setkab.go.id
[12] United Nations, "Our common future," (Brundtland Report), UN, 1987.
[13] B. R. Keeble, "After Brundtland: Preparing for the Earth Summit," *Medicine and War*, vol. 8, no. 1, pp. 39–43, 1992.
[14] B. Bramwell and B. Lane, "Sustainable tourism: An evolving global approach," *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 1–5, 1993.
[15] UNWTO, "Baseline report on sustainable tourism policies," UNWTO, Madrid, 2019.
[16] UNWTO, "Sustainable development," 2020. [Online]. https://www.unwto.org
[17] S. V. Lankford and D. R. Howard, "Developing a tourism impact attitude scale," *Annals of Tourism Research*, vol. 21, no. 1, pp. 121–139, 1994.
[18] D. Harrison and S. Schipani, "Lao tourism and poverty alleviation: Community-based tourism and the private sector," *Current Issues in Tourism*, vol. 10, no. 2–3, pp. 194–230, 2007.
[19] A. Giampiccoli and O. Mtapuri, "Between theory and practice: A conceptualization of community-based tourism and community participation," *Loyola Journal of Social Sciences*, vol. 29, no. 1, pp. 27–52, 2015.
[20] S. Cornelissen, "Tourism impact, distribution, and development: The spatial structure of tourism in the Western Cape province of South Africa," *Development Southern Africa*, vol. 22, no. 2, pp. 163–185, 2005.
[21] L. Z. Lin and C. F. Lu, "Fuzzy group decision-making in measuring ecotourism sustainability potential," *Group Decision and Negotiation*, vol. 22, no. 6, pp. 1051–1079, 2013.
[22] V. Castellani and S. Sala, "Sustainable performance index for tourism policy development," *Tourism Management*, vol. 31, no. 6, pp. 871–880, 2010.
[23] M. García-Melón, T. Gómez-Navarro, and S. Acuña-Dutra, "A combined ANP-Delphi approach to evaluate sustainable tourism," *Environmental Impact Assessment Review*, vol. 34, pp. 41–50, 2012.
[24] F. V. Uzun and M. Somuncu, "Sustainability of tourism in Ihlara Valley," *European Journal of Sustainable Development*, vol. 4, no. 2, p. 165, 2015.
[25] H. Azizi, M. Biglari, and P. Joudi, "Assessing the feasibility of sustainable tourism in urban environments using a cumulative linear model," *Procedia Engineering*, vol. 21, pp. 24–33, 2011.
[26] E. T. Byrd, H. E. Bosley, and M. G. Dronberger, "Comparisons of stakeholder perceptions of tourism impacts in rural eastern North Carolina," *Tourism Management*, vol. 30, no. 5, pp. 693–703, 2009.
[27] T. G. Ko, "Development of a tourism sustainability assessment procedure: A conceptual approach," *Tourism Management*, vol. 26, no. 3, pp. 431–445, 2005.
[28] Y. C. Lo and P. Janta, "Residents' perspectives on developing community-based tourism: A qualitative study of Muen Ngoen Kong Community, Chiang Mai, Thailand," *Frontiers in Psychology*, vol. 11, p. 1493, 2020.
[29] M. M. Ghanem and S. K. Saad, "Enhancing sustainable heritage tourism in Egypt: Challenges and framework of action," *Journal of Heritage Tourism*, vol. 10, no. 4, pp. 357–377, 2015.
[30] D. Odoom, "Understanding development communication: A review of selected literature," *E-Journal of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences*, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 37–48, 2020.
[31] S. G. Anaeto and M. Solo-Anaeto, *Development communication: Principles and practice*. Ibadan: Stirling-Horden Publishers Ltd., 2010.
[32] J. R. Dominick, *The dynamics of mass communication: Media in the digital age*. McGraw-Hill, 2005.
[33] S. W. Littlejohn and K. A. Foss, *Encyclopedia of communication theory*. SAGE Publications, 2009.
[34] E. M. Rogers, *Diffusion of innovations*. New York: Free Press, 1962.
[35] M. B. Miles and A. M. Huberman, *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook*. Sage, 1994.
[36] S. G. R. Hasibuan, "Strengthening Aceh's economy through export enhancement," *Aliansi Jurnal Nasional Network*, 2023. [Online]. https://www.ajnn.net/
[37] B. Nahaba, "Aceh government seriously develops tourism villages," *VOA Indonesia*, 2012. [Online]. https://www.voaindonesia.com
[38] Safrina, "Aceh government improves human resources in tourism sector," 2023. [Online]. https://www.acehprov.go.id
[39] N. Tashandra, "Aceh targets 2.5 million tourist visits in 2023," *Kompas*, 2023. [Online]. https://travel.kompas.com
[40] Munzir, "1.7 million tourists visited Aceh in 2022," *RRI*, 2023. [Online]. https://www.rri.co.id
[41] F. Braun, "Community-based tourism: Opportunities and challenges," 2008.

[42] L. P. Hong, H. T. Ngo, and L. T. Pham, "Community-based tourism: Opportunities and challenges—A case study in Thanh Ha pottery village, Hoi An city, Vietnam," *Cogent Social Sciences*, 2021.
[43] C. Cooper, *Tourism: Principles and practice*. Pearson Education, 2004.
[44] J. Xu et al., "Tourism and sustainable development," 2009.
[45] Acehprov, "Aceh transportation development," 2019. [Online]. https://www.acehprov.go.id
[46] Qanun Aceh, "Qanun of Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam," 2002.
[47] Herizal, S. Rasanjani, and Mukhrijal, "Tourism policy in Aceh Province: Opportunities and challenges," *Jurnal Public Policy*, vol. 7, no. 1, p. 21, 2021.
[48] Mastercard-CrescentRating, "Global Muslim Travel Index 2018," 2018. [Online]. https://www.crescentrating.com
[49] M. Tamir, "Challenges and opportunities of community-based tourism development," 2020.
[50] F. Aref, M. R. Redzuan, and S. S. Gill, "Community skill and knowledge for tourism development," *European Journal of Social Sciences*, vol. 8, no. 4, pp. 665–671, 2009.
[51] M. Robinson and D. Picard, *Tourism, culture and sustainable development*. UNESCO, 2006.
[52] OECD, "OECD tourism trends and policies," 2020. [Online]. https://doi.org/10.1787/fa44fe1e-it
[53] A. Mathieson and G. Wall, *Tourism: Economic, physical and social impacts*. Longman, 1982.