

THE IMPACT OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM AND LOCAL COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION ON ECONOMIC GROWTH IN SELONG BELANAK

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the effect of sustainable tourism (X_1) and local community participation (X_2) on economic growth (Y) in the Selong Belanak tourism area, West Praya District, Central Lombok. A mixed-method approach was employed, with quantitative methods using multiple linear regression as the primary analysis, supported by qualitative data gathered through in-depth interviews. Data were collected from 100 respondents using a questionnaire consisting of 65 validated and reliable items. The results indicate that sustainable tourism and community participation simultaneously have a significant effect on economic growth ($F = 19.921$; $\text{sig.} = 0.000$). Partially, sustainable tourism has a significant positive effect ($t = 2.968$; $\text{sig.} = 0.004$) and community participation also has a significant positive effect ($t = 2.692$; $\text{sig.} = 0.008$) on economic growth. The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.291$) indicates that both variables explain 29.1% of the variation in community economic growth. Qualitative findings confirm that local communities actively participate in tourism management with economic circulation occurring within the local area. However, field observations reveal environmental concerns, including land encroachment and the conversion of mangrove areas that pose a flood risk a reality not yet fully reflected in respondents' perceptions.

Keywords: *sustainable tourism; community participation; economic growth; Selong Belanak; multiple linear regression*

INTRODUCTION

The tourism sector plays a vital role in Indonesia's economic development, contributing to the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and employing millions of workers (Kementerian Pariwisata dan Ekonomi Kreatif, 2023). Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the tourism sector's contribution to Indonesia's GDP reached 4.8 percent in 2019, but declined drastically to 2.23 percent in 2020 due to global mobility restrictions (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2024).

However, the last five years (2020–2024) have shown significant tourism recovery. In 2020, international tourist arrivals to Indonesia dropped drastically to just 5.89 million, but gradually recovered to reach 13.9 million by 2024 (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2025). This recovery trend demonstrates that Indonesia's tourism sector is capable of recovering, although it still faces structural challenges in the distribution of economic benefits at the local level.

Lombok, especially Central Lombok, is a leading tourist destination with extraordinary natural beauty, including Selong Belanak Beach, famous for its white sand and waves ideal for surfing (rumiati et al., 2019). Although recovery has occurred since 2022 with increased visits by domestic and international tourists, Selong Belanak Village still faces fundamental problems. Sriwi and Hulfa (2019) showed that although Selong Belanak has significant tourism potential, community

participation in the management and distribution of economic benefits remains limited. Many tourism businesses are managed by parties outside the region, resulting in high economic leakage and suboptimal economic benefits for local communities. Data from the past five years shows that dependence on conventional tourism models without active community involvement makes local communities highly vulnerable to external shocks such as the pandemic. Therefore, a paradigm shift in tourism development is needed that places communities at the forefront in building local economic resilience.

Sustainable tourism with a Community-Based Tourism (CBT) approach offers a solution to maximize economic benefits for local communities while preserving the environment and culture (jamalina & wardani, 2017). Research shows that Community-Based Tourism (CBT) can improve the welfare of rural communities and strengthen socio-economic resilience, particularly in the context of tourism recovery after the COVID-19 pandemic (world tourism organization, 2022). In Indonesia, the CBT model has been regulated in the Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy Regulation Number 11 of 2022 as a strategic paradigm that positions local communities as key actors in tourism destination management. CBT emphasizes active community involvement in planning, management, and decision-making related to tourism development,

so that economic benefits can be directly enjoyed by local communities (Anggraeni & rahmawati, 2021). Currently, there are 4,812 CBT-based tourism village entities spread across various regions in Indonesia, demonstrating rapid growth in line with the increasing public interest in nature-based tourism and local culture (Kementerian Pariwisata dan Ekonomi Kreatif, 2023).

Effective implementation of Community-Based Tourism (CBT) requires increased community capacity, government support as a facilitator, infrastructure development, and collaboration between various stakeholders, including the government, the private sector, and community organizations (World Tourism Organization, 2018). In the context of implementing community-based tourism (CBT), it is important to examine how the concept is implemented at the local level. In the context of this research, the findings of Junaid dkk., (2022) provide a relevant reflection. Through a case study in Paccekke Village, Barru, they found that the success of sustainable tourism implementation is largely determined by two complementary factors: preserved natural and cultural potential, and a positive community attitude manifested through a culture of mutual cooperation and commitment from local stakeholders. These findings align with the conditions we found in Selong Belanak, where active community involvement is the backbone of tourism management.

Central Lombok Regency is one of the regions experiencing relatively stable economic growth post-pandemic. In 2023, Central Lombok's economy grew by 5.77 percent, with a Gross Regional Domestic Product (GRDP) reaching IDR 21.25 trillion at current prices. This growth was driven by several key sectors, particularly transportation and warehousing, which grew by 13.85 percent, and accommodation and food and beverage services, which grew by 8.62 percent, sectors closely linked to tourism development. The regional economic structure remains dominated by agriculture, contributing 25.07 percent, followed by construction, trade, and transportation. Although tourism has not yet become a structurally dominant sector, its growth demonstrates a significant role in driving regional economic activity, particularly through increased mobility, consumption, and the growth of service and trade businesses. Although Central Lombok's economic growth shows a positive trend and tourism-related sectors have experienced significant growth, there has been no empirical study specifically measuring the extent to which this growth is truly felt by communities in tourist villages.

Selong Belanak, as a rapidly growing

destination, requires a tourism development model that not only increases tourist visits but also strengthens the local economy through active participation. This gap between tourism sector growth and the distribution of economic benefits is the primary focus of this research. Although community-based tourism (CBT) has been widely implemented, few studies have quantitatively examined its impact on the economic conditions of communities at the destination level. Furthermore, it is unknown to what extent community participation and sustainability aspects significantly impact community disparities. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the influence of sustainable tourism variables and local community participation on economic growth variables at the Selong Belanak tourist destination.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Community-Based Tourism (CBT)

Community-Based Tourism (CBT) is essentially a tourism development approach that places local community empowerment at the heart of the entire process—from planning and management to decision-making regarding tourism development in their area. Alimi & Darwis (2023) explain that CBT is an effort to develop tourism through empowering local communities, with active community involvement in planning, management, and decision-making regarding tourism development. Through this approach, communities become not only beneficiaries but also those in control of the direction of destination development in their own land.

The primary goal of CBT is not simply to attract tourists, but rather to ensure that tourism truly improves the community's standard of living in a tangible and sustainable manner. Utama et al. (2024) emphasized that the CBT development model emphasizes active community participation as owners of the tourism destination while simultaneously encouraging the direct distribution of tourism benefits to local communities. In practice, CBT encompasses three mutually supportive dimensions: the economic dimension through the creation of local businesses, the socio-cultural dimension through the preservation of local values and traditions, and the environmental dimension through the preservation of ecosystems as long-term assets of the destination.

Local economic transformation

Local economic transformation refers to the gradual changes in a community's economic conditions resulting from the development of the tourism sector. This change is reflected not only in increased income but also in the emergence of new job opportunities, the growth of micro, small, and

medium enterprises (MSMEs), and a shift in the community's livelihood structure toward greater diversity. According to Cohen's study, cited in the *Journal of Economics Research and Policy Studies* (2022), the socioeconomic impacts of tourism on local communities can be categorized into eight groups, including impacts on community income, employment opportunities, benefit distribution, and general development.

Community-based tourism has a significant multiplier effect—every rupiah spent by tourists has the potential to circulate several times within the local economy before flowing out of the region. Khusnawati & Wahyudi (2023) demonstrated that implementing the CBT concept in managing tourist villages can improve the overall economy of the community, not only for direct tourism operators but also for surrounding supporting businesses.

Coastal Tourism Areas and Environmental Challenges

Coastal tourism areas are the destination typology most vulnerable to development pressures. On the one hand, the natural beauty of the coast is a major attraction, attracting massive tourist visits. On the other hand, uncontrolled infrastructure development can damage the ecosystems that serve as the destination's primary resource. Research in Tobati-Enggros Village, Jayapura, showed that while implementing sustainable tourism economically created new jobs and increased community income by 25%–400%,

it also resulted in significant ecosystem degradation, with water quality declining by 56% and mangrove forest cover decreasing by 10% (Darmina Wandik et al., 2025). These findings remind us that economic growth and environmental sustainability do not always go hand in hand if not managed properly. Alimi & Darwis (2023) emphasize that sustainable development must simultaneously integrate environmental protection with the fulfillment of basic human needs, achieving social equality, and maintaining ecological integrity.

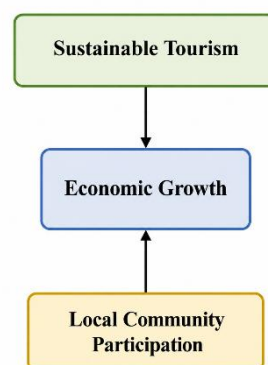
Sustainable Tourism

Sustainable tourism is a tourism development concept that seeks to simultaneously balance three pillars: economic growth, environmental sustainability, and social justice. According to Rahmat (2021), citing the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy of the Republic of Indonesia, sustainable tourism is defined as a tourism concept that fully considers current and future economic, social, and environmental impacts to meet the needs of visitors, the tourism industry, the environment, and local communities in a balanced manner.

Research Framework

Based on the problem formulation and theoretical basis above, it can be said that there is an influence of independent variables, namely sustainable tourism and local community participation, as well as economic growth as a dependent variable, which is explained as follows:

Figure 1 Research Framework



Hypothesis

The hypothesis in this study is:

1. H1: Sustainable tourism impacts economic growth.
2. H2: Local community participation impacts economic growth.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed a mixed methods design with an explanatory sequential strategy, combining quantitative and qualitative approaches.

The quantitative approach was used to measure the impact of tourism on economic growth and community participation levels, while the qualitative approach was used to explore the participation mechanisms and dynamics of CBT implementation.

The subjects of this study were residents of Selong Belanak Village, Central Lombok Regency, who are directly involved in tourism activities. They included local business owners, such as homestay owners, traders, transportation service

providers, and people working in other tourism sectors. The selection of this research subject is based on the community's crucial role in supporting the development of village tourism, as well as its role as a stakeholder in the economic impact of this activity. Furthermore, there are differences in income levels among communities involved in the tourism sector, making it interesting for further research. To ensure the data

collected truly reflects the real conditions on the ground, this study involved 100 respondents who were selected purposively—meaning, the respondents were those directly or indirectly involved in tourism and the economic dynamics in the Selong Belanak area. They were not simply those who were easily accessible, but also those most relevant to answering the research questions.

Table 1. Respondent Characteristics Based on Occupation

OCCUPATION	NUMBER (PEOPLE)
Employees	36
Local residents (outside the tourism sector)	28
Tourism developers	3
Tour guides	8
Traders	13
Homestay owners	7
Transportation rental service providers	3
Fishermen	2
Total	100

In terms of their professional backgrounds, our respondents came from a wide variety of backgrounds. This diversity was not accidental; the respondents were selected so that the voices recorded in the data belonged not only to those directly on the front lines of tourism, but also to residents who experience the pulse of tourism from a broader and more diverse perspective.

This research focuses on efforts to identify and analyze the increase in community income related to tourism development in Selong Belanak Village, as well as seeing the extent to which the economic benefits of this sector can be directly felt by the local community. The instruments used in this study consisted of a questionnaire, interview guides, and documentation sheets. The questionnaire was designed to collect data on community income levels and their involvement in tourism activities in Selong Belanak Village. The questions were systematically designed to describe the respondents' economic conditions before and after the development of the tourism sector. Additionally, interviews were used as a supporting instrument to obtain more in-depth information about community experiences in leveraging economic opportunities from tourism. Through interviews, researchers were able to explore respondents' perspectives on income changes, challenges faced, and their level of participation in tourism management.

The instrument we used was a structured questionnaire whose items were structured around three main variables: sustainable tourism (X_1), community participation (X_2), and economic growth (Y). The sustainable tourism variable (X_1) was measured through four indicators: tourism planning, participation in implementation,

monitoring and evaluation, and benefit sharing. Each indicator was measured using five statements, for a total of 20 items. The community participation variable (X_2) was measured through four indicators: environmental sustainability, local cultural sustainability, social welfare, and community-based tourism. The environmental sustainability, local cultural sustainability, and social welfare indicators were each measured using five statements, while the community-based tourism indicator was measured using ten statements. Thus, there were 25 statements for the community participation variable. The economic growth variable (Y) was measured through four indicators: increased income, employment and business opportunities, local infrastructure investment, and distribution of economic benefits. Each indicator was measured using five statements, for a total of 20 statements. Each statement was measured using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 2 (Disagree) to 3 (Neutral) to 4 (Agree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) to capture the strength of respondents' perceptions of each aspect we studied. We chose this scale because it allows respondents to express a range of views, rather than simply choosing between black-and-white choices. All collected data was then processed using a statistical approach tailored to the research objectives.

The research location was Selong Belanak Beach, located in Selong Belanak Village, Central Lombok Regency, West Praya District, West Nusa Tenggara Province. The research location was chosen based on the consideration that Selong Belanak Beach is one of the leading tourist destinations in Central Lombok Regency. As

tourism develops in Selong Belanak Village, the social and economic life of local residents has also experienced quite noticeable changes. However, behind this development, a number of real problems still loom—starting from the unequal distribution of economic benefits enjoyed by the community, the management of the tourism environment that requires more serious attention, to the still limited ability of residents to manage tourist destinations independently and sustainably. Departing from these conditions, Selong Belanak Village was chosen as the locus of this research, to explore how Community Based Tourism (CBT) is implemented in the field, while also measuring the

extent to which the approach has an impact on the development of tourist villages and improving the economic welfare of local communities.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive Analysis

Data collection in this study was conducted by distributing questionnaires to 100 respondents from the local community in the Selong Belanak area, Praya Barat district, Central Lombok. The following presents descriptive statistics for each research variable.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Research Variables

Descriptive Statistics				
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
Sustainable tourism X1	100	2.00	4.80	3.1105
Local community participation X2	100	2.96	4.96	3.7476
economic growth Y	100	3.00	4.70	3.9320
Valid N (listwise)	100			

Based on Table 1, the average score of the sustainable tourism variable (X1) is 3.1105 out of a maximum score of 4.80, which indicates that respondents generally assess the condition of tourism in Selong Belanak as running quite well. Likewise, the local community participation variable (X2) with an average of 3.7476 out of a maximum score of 4.96 indicates a relatively high level of community involvement. Meanwhile, the average economic growth score (Y) of 3.9320 out of a maximum score of 4.70 reflects respondents' positive perceptions of their economic conditions.

However, it should be noted that the distribution of respondents' answers tended to be similar, with positive assessments, resulting in relatively low data variation between respondents. This is one factor influencing the results of subsequent statistical tests.

Validity Test

A validity test was conducted on all questions for each research variable by comparing the calculated *r* value to the *r* table at a significance level of 5%, with a total of *n*=100 respondents, resulting in an *r* table value of 0.195. The sustainable tourism variable (X1) consists of 20 questions, the local community participation variable (X2) consists of 25 questions, and the economic growth variable (Y) consists of 20 questions. After testing, all items in these variables produced calculated *r* values that exceeded the *r* table of 0.195. Thus, all 65 questions used in this research instrument were declared valid and suitable for use as a measuring tool in data collection.

Reliability Test

The reliability test used the Cronbach's Alpha method, where the instrument is considered reliable if the coefficient value is above 0.70. The test results are presented in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Results of the sustainable tourism reliability test (X1)

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.932	20

An instrument is considered reliable if the Cronbach's Alpha value is > 0.7.

Table 4. Results of the local community participation reliability test (X2)

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.808	25

An instrument is declared reliable if the Cronbach's Alpha value is > 0.70.

Table 5. Results of the economic growth (Y) reliability test.**Reliability Statistics**

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.815	20

An instrument is considered reliable if the Cronbach's Alpha value is > 0.70 .

All three variables produced Cronbach's Alpha values above 0.70, namely $X1 = 0.932$, $X2 = 0.808$, and $Y = 0.815$. This demonstrates that all

research instruments are reliable and consistent in measuring the intended constructs.

Classical Assumption Tests

Before conducting the regression analysis, three classical assumption tests were performed.

Normality Test**Table 6. Normality test results****Tests of Normality**

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Unstandardized Residual	.145	100	.000	.902	100	.000

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

The results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test show an Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) value of 0.000, which is below the significance level of 0.05. Statistically, this result indicates that the residuals are not normally distributed.

However, considering this condition with reference to the Central Limit Theorem (CLT), which states that for a sufficiently large sample size, generally $n \geq 30$, the sampling distribution of the mean will approach asymptotically a normal

distribution, regardless of the population distribution (field, 2018; hair et al., 2019) With a sample size of 100, the sample in this study has met these requirements. Therefore, the multiple linear regression analysis can still be continued and the results obtained are still statistically accountable.

Multicollinearity Test

Multicollinearity detection was performed using the Variance Inflation Factor (FIV) value.

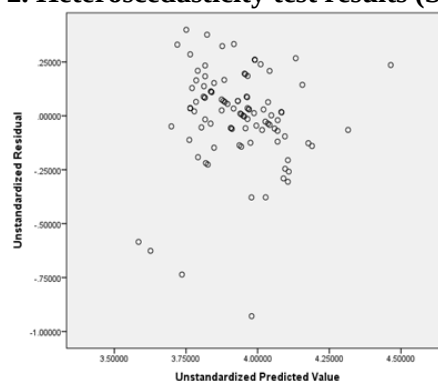
Table 7. Multicollinearity test results**Coefficients^a**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta				Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	2.558	.302			8.473	.000		
X1	.129	.043	.316		2.964	.000	.643	1.556
X2	.260	.096	.287		2.698	.000	.643	1.556

a. Dependent Variable: Y

The VIF value for the sustainable tourism variable (X1) and local community participation (X2) is 1.556, far below the threshold of 10 with a tolerance value of 0.643. This means that there is no multicollinearity problem in the regression

model used, so that each independent variable can be considered to stand alone without interfering with each other.

Heteroscedasticity Test**Figure 2. Heteroscedasticity test results (Scatterplot)**

The heteroscedasticity test was conducted through a scatterplot analysis of the Unstandardized Predicted Value and Unstandardized Residual. Figure 2 shows that the residual points are randomly distributed above and below 0 on the Y-axis without forming a systematic pattern. Although some points are located somewhat far from the main group, this

condition is not sufficient to indicate the presence of a heteroscedasticity pattern. Thus, it can be concluded that the regression model in this study is free from heteroscedasticity problems.

Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Results

After all prerequisite tests were reviewed and considered, a multiple linear regression analysis was conducted.

Table 8. Results of the multiple linear regression analysis (Coefficients)

Coefficients ^a		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t		Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)		2.558	.302		8.473	.000		
X1		.129	.043	.316	2.968	.004	.643	1.556
X2		.260	.096	.287	2.692	.008	.643	1.556

a. Dependent Variable: Y

$$Y = 2.558 + 0.129X1 + 0.260X2$$

The constant of 2.558 indicates that if both independent variables are zero, economic growth is predicted to be 2.558. The X1 regression coefficient of 0.129 means that every one-unit increase in the sustainable tourism variable will drive an increase in economic growth of 0.129

units, assuming other variables remain constant. Similarly, the X2 coefficient of 0.260 indicates that every one-unit increase in local community participation will contribute to an increase in economic growth of 0.260 units.

Hypothesis Testing

F Test (Simultaneous)

Table 9. F Test Results (ANOVA)

ANOVA ^a		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Model						
Regression		1.944	2	.972	19.921	.000 ^b
Residual		4.733	97	.049		
Total		6.678	99			

a. Dependent Variable: Y

b. Predictors: (Constant), X2, X1

The F-test results showed a calculated F-value of 19.921 with a significance level of 0.000, well below the α limit of 0.05. Based on these findings, it was concluded that the alternative hypothesis (H1) was accepted, namely that sustainable tourism (X1) and community participation (X2) jointly have a significant effect on economic growth (Y). The resulting regression model was feasible and can be used for prediction purposes.

t-Test (Partial)

Referring to Table 7, the t-test results showed:

- X1 (sustainable tourism): $t = 2.968$, $\text{sig.} = 0.004 < 0.05 \rightarrow$ significant positive effect
- X2 (local community participation): $t = 2.692$, $\text{sig.} = 0.008 < 0.05 \rightarrow$ significant positive effect

Thus, both independent variables have been shown to have a significant and positive influence on the economic growth of the Selong Belanak community.

Coefficient of Determination (R²)

Table 10. Coefficient of Determination (Model Summary)

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.540 ^a	.291	.277	.22090

a. Predictors: (Constant), X2, X1

b. Dependent Variable: Y

The R^2 value of 0.291 indicates that sustainable tourism and local community participation together explain 29.1% of the variation in the economic growth variable (Y). The adjusted R^2 value of 0.277 confirms that this contribution is substantial and not simply an artifact of the number of variables in the model. The remaining 70.9% is influenced by variables outside the research model.

Our research results indicate that sustainable tourism (X1) and community participation (X2) have a significant and positive effect on economic growth (Y) in the Selong Belanak tourism area, both partially and simultaneously. This finding aligns with the theoretical framework used in the study, which states that tourism management that prioritizes sustainability and actively involves the community has the potential to significantly boost local economic growth.

Before discussing further, we should note that the normality test indicated a non-normal residual distribution (Asymp. Sig. = 0.000). However, referring to the Central Limit Theorem, this condition does not preclude the feasibility of the regression analysis, given that our sample size reached 100 respondents. At this sample size, the sampling distribution of the mean is sufficiently asymptotically normal, allowing valid inferences (field, 2018; hair et al., 2019).

Furthermore, the quantitative findings were further strengthened by in-depth interviews with community leaders and Selong Belanak tourism operators. Mr. Alwan and Mr. Marzoan (Ambare) consistently stated that local communities have been involved since the early stages of tourism development, from the deliberation process with heads of organizations such as the tourism group (Pokdarwis) to the formation of a trader association with a clear management structure and legal basis. Strategic decisions are made through a representative mechanism, and each community member has the opportunity to voice their opinions and innovate, provided they benefit the wider community. This finding aligns with Junaid et al.'s (2022) findings, which state that positive community attitudes and a culture of mutual cooperation are key factors contributing to the success of sustainable tourism management—conditions we also found to be evident in Selong Belanak.

From an economic perspective, interviews revealed that money circulates within the Selong Belanak area before flowing out to other areas. The community is no longer solely dependent on the agricultural sector, but has expanded into various businesses such as accommodation, surf equipment

rentals, umbrella businesses, food sales, homestays, and transportation services. This participation is not limited to those who work directly on the beach; as many as 30% of the Selong Belanak community is directly involved in tourism, and 80% experience economic benefits from the development of tourism in the Selong Belanak area. These results are supported by (Meri Anti Khusnawati & Amin Wahyudi, 2023), who found a similar impact: when the community is fully involved in tourism management, economic benefits tend to be distributed more evenly across all levels, as we found in Selong Belanak, where approximately 80% of residents experienced the positive impacts of tourism.

However, there is a contradiction with previous research. This finding is interesting to examine because it differs from the conclusions of several previous studies conducted at the same location, Selong Belanak. Previous research stated that the economic benefits of tourism often leaked to outside parties and were not optimally enjoyed by the local community. In the research that has been conducted, this condition does not apply. The community actually plays a role as a primary actor, not merely a spectator, in the management of their own region. This condition aligns with (Permatasari, 2022), which states that the success of CBT is reflected in the extent to which local communities become primary actors not merely passive beneficiaries in tourism management in their own region.

This difference is likely due to several interrelated factors: the unique characteristics of the research location, geographically a semi-accessible village, which encourages community-based management; the development of an increasingly inclusive tourism management model; and the support of several training sessions from the local and provincial governments. The Selong Belanak community has even taken independent initiatives, including the formation of the SBCA (Sanitation and Community Empowerment Association) association, which focuses on sanitation, which previously received formal government support.

However, behind this positive image, field observations revealed a different side not fully captured by questionnaires or interviews. The continued expansion of tourism has had a significant impact on environmental conditions, most prominently the gradual shrinking of land, accompanied by the conversion of irrigation channels and the loss of mangrove areas. The knock-on effects are now beginning to be felt: the appearance of waterlogging during the rainy

season, a phenomenon previously unheard of by local residents.

This situation reflects a gap between public perception and the reality on the ground. Respondents tended to provide optimistic assessments of environmental conditions, while the reality on the ground shows that pressure on the local ecosystem is already being felt. This also aligns with the concerns expressed by Mr. Alwan in the previous interview, that the biggest challenge going forward is not just limited human resources and landfill space, but also how to ensure that tourism growth does not erode environmental quality and the social values that have long been the foundation of Selong Belanak community life.

The R² value of 29.1% indicates that almost all of the variation in economic growth in the Selong Belanak area can be explained by the two studied variables, a significant figure in a complex socioeconomic context. However, the remaining 70.9% suggests that other factors play a role but are not captured in the model, such as local government policies, access to business capital, the quality of tourism infrastructure, and the fluctuating dynamics of tourist visits.

Overall, this study confirms that sustainable tourism and local community participation are not merely ideal concepts; both have been empirically proven to play a real role in driving economic growth. However, this success needs to be maintained seriously, especially by ensuring that the growth of the tourism sector does not sacrifice environmental sustainability, which in fact becomes a broader force and a more comprehensive mixed-method approach will hopefully complete our understanding more thoroughly.

CONCLUSION

This study provides a convincing answer to our initial question: sustainable tourism and local community participation have been statistically proven to have a significant and positive impact on economic growth in the Selong Belanak tourist area, both simultaneously and partially. The resulting regression equation ($Y = 2.558 + 0.129X_1 + 0.260X_2$) indicates that any increase in these two variables significantly contributes to improving the local community's economic conditions.

Qualitative findings from interviews reinforce this picture. The Selong Belanak community is not merely spectators on their own land; they are actively involved from planning to implementation, with economic turnover occurring within their own territory before flowing outward. This contrasts with the findings of several previous

studies that highlighted economic leakage at tourist destinations. We believe this difference is influenced by the unique characteristics of the location and the established community-based model.

However, one aspect cannot be ignored: field observations reveal the real impact of tourism development on the environment, in the form of land constriction and the loss of mangrove areas, which are now starting to cause flooding during the rainy season. This gap between the respondents' perspectives and the reality on the ground is an important note that reminds us that economic growth should not be pursued at the expense of environmental sustainability, which is precisely the heart of the appeal of the selong mullet itself.

Suggestion

Based on the findings and limitations of this study, there are several points to be addressed for future consideration.

For local governments, we hope the results of this study can serve as a foundation for designing tourism policies that better support local communities. Spatial planning regulations in tourist areas need to be strengthened—particularly those concerning land protection, irrigation channels, and mangrove ecosystems, which are beginning to be impacted. Community training programs should also address not only the technical aspects of tourism management but also foster long-term environmental awareness. Referring to (Kusuma & Hos, 2025), increasing human resource capacity and strengthening formal institutions need to be prioritized to ensure not only high-quantity but also high-quality community participation in long-term tourism management.

For tourism managers and the Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis), the community-based management model that has been successfully implemented in Selong Belanak needs to be maintained and strengthened. Deliberation forums should become a regular agenda—not just a formality—so that the voices of all levels of society are truly heard and considered in every decision.

For local communities, the spirit of mutual cooperation and innovation that has developed needs to be continuously nurtured. However, on the other hand, we also hope that the public will become more aware of environmental impacts that may not be felt now, but which could potentially threaten the sustainability of tourist areas if left unaddressed early.

For future research, we recommend expanding the scope of variables to include other factors suspected of influencing economic

growth—such as infrastructure, regional policies, or access to capital. The use of secondary economic data to complement the primary questionnaire data is also worth considering, so that the analysis results do not rely entirely on respondents' subjective perceptions. A longitudinal approach is also an attractive option for capturing changes in Selong Belanak's condition over time in a more comprehensive manner.

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