

RIVER ECOTOURISM DEVELOPMENT AS A SUSTAINABLE SOCIO ENTREPRENEURSHIP ON THE GAJAH WONG RIVER BANK COMMUNITY IN YOGYAKARTA CITY

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Abstract

Communities living on the banks of rivers have very complex problems, especially economic problems. However, the presence of river ecotourism is a breakthrough to improve the economy of riverbank communities. The aim of this study is to examine the impact of the development of river ecotourism as a sustainable socio entrepreneurship on the Gajah Wong River Bank Community, Yogyakarta City. The design of this study is a qualitative research applying case study approach which was conducted on the bank of the Gajah Wong River located in Giwangan Village, Umbulharjo District, Yogyakarta City. The authors implemented observations, interviews, and documentation studies as the data collection techniques to collect primary and secondary data. The Triple Bottom Line theory by John Elkington's is used in this study. The results of the study indicate that the development of river ecotourism has had a significant impact on the economy of riverbank communities as sustainable socio entrepreneurship, including; 1) Creating new jobs and development of MSMEs through ecotourism, 2) Alleviating poverty and slum settlements along rivers, 3) As well as raising public awareness through river ecotourism.. The study can be used as a basis for making public policies in the development of river ecotourism. The value of this study is that humans can balance the use of nature to meet human needs (profit) but must pay attention to the balance of the ecosystem (environment).

Keywords: river ecotourism development, sustainable socio entrepreneurship, Gajah Wong River bank community, Yogyakarta City

Introduction

Cities have dynamic and complex lives and problems (Maring & Hasugian, 2015). One of the unresolved urban problems to date is the problem of riverbank slum settlements (Krisandriyana et al., 2019). The existence of urban slum settlements is caused by various factors such as urbanization, socio-economic conditions, urban spatial planning, and land, as well as the facilities and infrastructure available (Rindarjono, 2013). People who live on the banks of the river are often referred to as marginal and vulnerable because of the limitations they have, namely economic, educational, moral, access, and social limitations. Economic limitations are the most striking thing that causes many people to choose to live on the banks of the river.

The city of Yogyakarta is one of the cities that has slum settlement problems of 264.90 hectares. Umbulharjo Sub-District is one of the sub-districts in the City of Yogyakarta with the largest slum area in the City of Yogyakarta, which is 75.20

hectares, which means 28.39 percent of the total area of slums in the City of Yogyakarta. Dense settlements, low community income, low community awareness, lack of facilities and infrastructure factors that cause many urban slum settlements (Ritohardoyo & Sadali, 2017; Sulestianson & Indrajati, 2015). In segment 1, Sungai Gajah Wong has a slum area of around 38.13 hectares and reduced to 9.46 hectares in 2017 after the arrangement of slum areas in the form of environmental road construction, drainage, waste management, and public open spaces (Yogyakarta, 2022). Many public open spaces are laid out in riverbank areas which are then used as river ecotourism because of the potential to attract many visitors.

River ecotourism is considered as an answer to the problem of slum settlements along rivers which are expected to be able to bring significant changes to riverbank communities, especially the impact on the people's economy so that their welfare increases. In addition, the aim is to open new, more appropriate livelihoods because the majority of the livelihoods of riverbank communities are as odd jobs, construction workers, street vendors, street workers, prostitutes, and others. (Maring & Hasugian, 2015).

Natural utilization of riverbanks is carried out to obtain interests through the development of river ecotourism. The Triple Bottom Line which consists of Profit, People and Planet will be used as an analytical tool in this study. The use of nature is intended to obtain "profit" or profits that are expected to be able to bring changes to the community around the riverbanks so that their quality of life is better. However, not only obtaining "profit", the people concerned must be more empowered or what are referred to as "people". Because nature has been utilized, it must pay attention to the balance so that there is no gap between profit, people and planet (Elkington, 1998). If the balance between the three aspects in the Triple Bottom Line is met, it will not be difficult to achieve Sustainable Socio Entrepreneurship.

Conservation of the river environment is focused on watershed management from upstream to downstream because it is a very important aspect, especially in urban areas and as part of the urban ecosystem (Widodo et al., 2010). The development of river ecotourism on the banks of the Gajah Wong River is based on the historical concept of the area where the Giwangan Village area is a well-known area as a riverbank slum area in Umbulharjo District. Initially, the arrangement of the area was carried out by the PUPR ministry to build green open spaces and city parks to organize slum settlement areas on the banks of the Gajah Wong River. The area is also an irrigation canal that is used for agricultural irrigation in the Bantul Regency area. The existence of these facilities is actually used by the local community (especially youth) as a place for fish farming. Over time, this fish farming place went viral and was much loved by the general public, so it was developed as a river ecotourism.

The development of river ecotourism has been able to change the quality of life of the community, especially from an economic standpoint. With river ecotourism, able to bring many benefits, ecotourism on the Mudal River was developed with the aim of empowering local communities and preserving the environment and this has been successful because the number of visitors continues to increase every year

(Irsyad, 2020). Apart from the Mudal River, the development of other river ecotourism is carried out on the Mahakam River which aims to preserve biodiversity (especially endemic biota) and improve the welfare of its people. (Ranuari, 2016; Susanto & Kiswantoro, 2020).

From the several studies above, the formulation of the problem taken in this study is how to develop river ecotourism to become sustainable socio-entrepreneurship in the Gajah Wong River Bank Community in Yogyakarta City? The conditions experienced by riverbank communities are in the form of economic problems, so this research was conducted to provide solutions to the problems faced through the development of river ecotourism. This needs to be explained further because not much research has discussed how sustainable socio-entrepreneurship can be applied to the development of ecotourism on the Gajah Wong River, Yogyakarta City, which is different from the tourism business concept. In addition, the use of the triple bottom line theory from John Elkington is also rarely used in research on ecotourism development because it is

Literature Review

River Ecotourism Development

Ecotourism development is the utilization of nature aimed at meeting human needs and satisfaction through management and various planned activities (Nugroho et al., 2018). Ecotourism is also referred to as a form of travel to nature aimed at conserving the environment, which consists of four interconnected components, namely the government, tourism administrators or organizers, tourism recipient communities and visiting tourists. (Suwantoro, 2004; TIES, 2006). Tourism is a sector that has a significant impact on the economy, one of which is the city of Yogyakarta, which is known as a tourist city in Indonesia.

The river has enormous potential to be developed into a tourism area to improve the quality of life of the community so that it is not only a structural effort but also a non-physical effort so that the targeted achievements can be achieved (Rietbergen-mccracken & Narayan, 1998). With this, the development of river ecotourism is not only an attempt to gain financial benefits but also an effort to improve the environment (Tisnawati & Ratriningsih, 2017).

In the development of ecotourism, The International Ecotourism Society in Epler Wood (1999) states that there are eight principles of ecotourism that must be the foundation, including the development of river ecotourism, including; 1) preventing and tackling tourist activities towards nature and culture, 2) environmental conservation, 3) income for the area, 4) community involvement in planning, 5) harmonization with nature, 6) income for the community, 7) environmental carrying capacity, and 7) great opportunity to generate income for the country (Wood, 2002).

Sustainable Socio Entrepreneurship

The concept of sustainable socio-entrepreneurship is fundamentally different from the concept of business or entrepreneurs because social and economic aspects are integrated into it (Green & Haines, 2002). Some things that need to be known in looking at socio entrepreneurship are; *first*, sustainable socio entrepreneurship carries out its activities efficiently to meet community needs that have not been met by other institutions. *Second*, it has the potential to make changes

in society. *Third*, the strategy developed must be acceptable to the wider community. *Fourth*, morals and ethics are highly respected. *Fifth*, focus on the processes and behaviours undertaken to create change (Green & Haines, 2002). Socio entrepreneurship has a goal to increase social value which is oriented in processes and behaviour, namely the development carried out must involve human beings as a whole (Soetomo, 2006; Stoffers et al., 2018). This is in accordance with what was stated by John Elkington regarding one of the 3P concepts, namely "people" where humans must be involved in the business carried out or empowered in order to achieve a balance between profit, people and planet which has an impact on sustainability. (Elkington, 1998).

Gajah Wong River bank Community

Riverbank community is a community that lives in the riparian area of the river. Based on Presidential Decree No. 32 of 1990, the riparian area outside settlements is a minimum of 100 m, in large tributaries a minimum width of 50 m and for residential areas around 10-15 m is sufficient for inspection roads (Keputusan Presiden Republik Indonesia Nomor 32 Tahun 1990, 1990). Society is defined as a group of individuals who form a unit that are interconnected with one another (Setiadi & Kolip, 2013). Riverbank communities are often indicated as marginal and vulnerable communities because of their limitations (Lubis, 2007). The factors that cause people to be forced to live in riverbank areas, namely; socio-economic environment consisting of income earned, work, physical environment, number of family members, etc. and the most dominant is the economic factor (Yeates & Garner, 1980). It should be noted that the people along the river have their own characteristics which can be seen from their daily activities (Sridaryanti et al., 2022).

Research Methodology

This study was conducted in Giwangan Village, Umbulharjo District, Yogyakarta City. The reason for choosing the location is because Giwangan Village is the only area that has river ecotourism which is quite developed compared to other rivers. Qualitative research through a case study approach is carried out to answer the topic or problem raised by the researcher. Data collection techniques include observation, interviews, and documentation studies to obtain appropriate and valid data. In-depth interviews were conducted with informants who match the predetermined characteristics (Slamet, 2006) namely the people living on the banks of the Gajah Wong River and stakeholders involved in the development of the Gajah Wong River ecotourism. In addition, observations were made by making observations at the research location to see the various types of activities carried out by the riverbank community (Sugiyono, 2012). While the documentation study is carried out by seeking data from outside to support the primary data obtained so that there are two types of data, namely primary and secondary data which are then reduced, presented, and analyzed (Alsa, 2004) by using the Triple Bottom Line theory from John Elkington which includes 3P namely Profit, People and Planet (Alsa, 2004; Elkington, 1998). In this theory it is stated that if a business wants to survive and be sustainable, then it is not only concerned with profit but also must

pay attention to the contributions made to society (people), as well as contribute positively to the environment (planet). (Jeurissen et al., 1999).

Results and Discussion

River ecotourism as sustainable socio entrepreneurship



Triple Bottom Line

Diagram 1. *Triple Bottom Line* chart

[Source : inchainge.com]

Some of the positive impacts arising from the development of river ecotourism on the banks of the Gajah Wong River are; 1) creation of new jobs for riverbank communities and significant MSME development through river ecotourism; 2) as an effort to alleviate poverty and slum settlements along rivers; 3) awareness and changes in people's behaviour towards the environment through river ecotourism.

First, the creation of new jobs for riverbank communities and the significant development of MSMEs through ecotourism. This is a positive energy to change people's lives for the better. Jobs that were originally looked down upon, turned into decent jobs. Prior to the existence of the Gajah Wong River ecotourism, the average work of the community was as street vendors near the Giwangan terminal, odd jobs, prostitutes, and many were still unemployed, so the amount of income per day could not be ascertained and this was justified by the community concerned. With river ecotourism, it opens new jobs for the community, namely people can become traders, providers of tourism services (such as parking attendants, tour guides, etc.) and tour administrators, so that they will earn income. Communities involved in tourism operations are able to earn income ranging from 50,000 to 500,000 per day, and on average choose to become traders. Maximum income is obtained on weekends (Saturday-Sunday) because there are quite a lot of tourist visitors, it is even estimated that up to 500 visitors. With the income earned is enough to meet the needs of everyday life. This is of course a better condition when compared to the conditions before ecotourism existed.



Figure 1. Seller's booth in Bendhung Lepen

[Source : primary data/author's documentation]

Profit is often associated with the economy because river ecotourism is expected to bring benefits to the community (Elkington, 1998). Communities use natural resources to gain profits in order to meet their needs. Some of the tourist attraction objects (ODTW) offered in the Giwangan Village are the Bendhung Lepen Tourism Object, the Love Pier, and Kelengkeng Village. The Bendhung Lepen Tourism Object offers the attraction of the number of fish cultivated in irrigation channels and adequate facilities so that it is comfortable to be used as a place for recreation with family, friends and others. While the tourist attraction "Dermaga Cinta" has an attraction from the riverside which is offered by using boats and ships that have interesting shapes. Meanwhile, the "Kampung Kelengkeng" tourist attraction offers a tourist attraction in the form of education related to the cultivation of longan plants in narrow urban areas, the use of roadsides, and the benefits of longan plants. Of the three ecotourism, there is no entry ticket (free), only parking fees are charged sincerely.



Figure 2. Bendhung Lepen attractions (left), Dermaga Cinta (center), and Kampung Kelengkeng (right)

[Source : primary data/author's documentation]

Table 1. The Gajah Wong River Tourist Attraction Object

Attractions Name	Tours offered
Bendhung Lepen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Educational tours and fish farming - Culinary tourism (MSME development) - Children's playground - A place for recreation with the family - Public space
Dermaga Cinta	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Down the river by boat - Educational tours - Culinary tourism (MSME development) - Public space
Kampung Kelengkeng	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Educational tour of the longan tree nursery in a narrow area - Diversification of longan plant seeds

[Source : primary data/processed by the author]

Second, as an effort to alleviate poverty and slum settlements along the river. River ecotourism does not only focus on how to get profits, but also seeks to empower the people who live around it. Because the element "people" relates to the humans in that environment. Communities who have lived on the banks of the Gajah Wong River have knowledge of the ecological system they live in and even the local community has a close relationship with the environment and its natural resources. (Obaid, 2013). What is meant is how the people around the riverbanks create a new culture and show that they are more empowered and do not experience the limitations that are labeled as "marginal" people, so it is important to empower the community to achieve independence. By giving trust to the local community to manage tourism and involving them more in various activities will make them more confident and become empowered people. So far, the management of tourism in Giwangan has been fully handed over to the local community under the supervision of the Yogyakarta City Tourism Office, Villages and River Communities (FORSIDAS Gajah Wong).

Third, awareness and changes in people's behaviour towards the environment through river ecotourism. Rivers are known as providers of human needs and have an important role in maintaining the balance of urban ecosystems (Ranuari, 2016). However, what needs to be underlined is that not all people have the awareness to maintain the balance of the ecosystem when the environment is used to gain "profit". "Planet" is directly related to the environment which is used as an object of humans. Often the planetary concept is forgotten by humans when they are already making a profit. Profit as the main orientation so that when the profit has been obtained then the planet will be ignored. Whereas profit, people, and planet are related to each other. When the planet is damaged, the profit that will be generated will not be maximized either (Smith & Sharicz, 2011). When viewed as a whole, not only financial benefits can be obtained through river ecotourism, but also other benefits that are useful for the environment. Because through the profits that have been obtained, the surrounding community cares more about the

environment and grows a sense of belonging to each other, so that people will protect their environment with full awareness and responsibility.

Gajah Wong River is one of several major rivers in the city of Yogyakarta. Gajah Wong River has a big role in the city's ecosystem. The important role of the Gajah Wong River is as a source of water (irrigation) for agriculture to Bantul Regency, so that when the river is damaged and polluted it will affect the quality of agricultural products.

Sustainable Ecotourism Development Efforts

Integrated Ecotourism is still something that is being endeavored to become sustainability from the existence of ecotourism that is developing on the banks of the Gajah Wong River. Bringing together several tours which then support tourism in Yogyakarta. Of the several tourism potentials that exist in the Giwangan Village Area, they can be integrated to create attractive tour packages that can increase the attractiveness of visiting tourists.

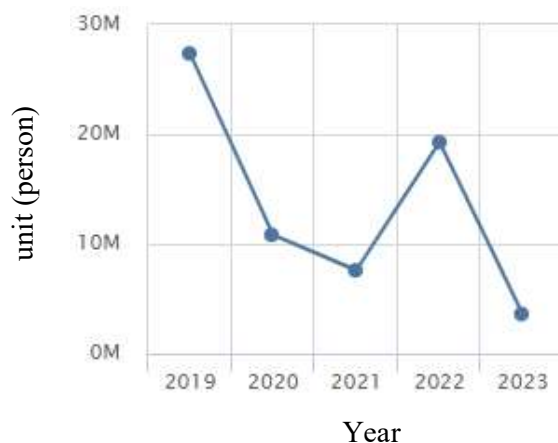


Figure 1: The Number of Tourist Visits in Yogyakarta City Tourism Destinations
[Source : Government tourism office, DIY]

From the data above, the highest number of tourist visits was in 2019, namely 27,365,291 people (before the Covid-19 pandemic). During the Covid-19 pandemic the number of visits decreased drastically because many tourist attractions were closed, in fact the number of visits only reached 10 million people. In 2022 in the new normal era (after the Covid-19 pandemic), the number of visits increased again, even reaching 19,275,989 people, and at the beginning of 2023 the number of visits had reached 3,604,788 people (DIY, 2023). From the data on the increasing number of visits, the developing river ecotourism can be used as a support for superior tourism from the City of Yogyakarta to increase tourist attraction. So the things that need to be done are as follows.

1. Development of regional potential

The potential of the river to be developed as ecotourism is very large because the City of Yogyakarta does not have natural tourism which is caused by limited land and it becomes residential land. The only land that can be used as natural tourism is the river. This was stated by the Yogyakarta City Tourism Office. The potential in question is the potential of the area owned by the Gajah Wong

River, which has a large current and is one of the rivers that has historical value. The large currents it has can be used as a vehicle such as a boat or ship to traverse the river. This has been developed, namely the existence of the Love Pier tourist attraction which presents a tourist attraction in the form of a river crossing using a duck-shaped boat and an engine ship. In addition, the regional potential in the form of arts and culture must also be developed because it has the potential to become an attraction for tourists.

2. Development of facilities and infrastructure

Facilities and infrastructure are important in developing tourism because they greatly affect the comfort of visitors. Existing tourism at Gajah Wong has paid enough attention to the facilities and infrastructure as well as the comfort of visitors. Some of the facilities and infrastructure available include: good riverside access roads, provision of gazebos, prayer rooms, bathrooms, children's playgrounds, fishing ponds, MSME stalls, trash bins, and others. Maintenance of facilities and infrastructure cannot be an element that is forgotten because visitors will feel comfortable when using clean facilities. So far, the discourse that will be developed is the addition of photo spots because taking photos is a trend nowadays. When there are many and interesting photo spots, it will increase the interest of visitors to visit.

3. Promotion

Promotion is still a big task that needs to be developed by the Gajah Wong River ecotourism manager. In its management, promotions are still carried out conventionally even though they have started to explore digital promotions. The use of social media is still very limited and does not contain interesting content. Innovation and creativity are needed in the promotion. The younger generation must have more participation because they are more literate about technology. The use of digital media must be further developed because digital media has great power in spreading news and information. So that the Gajah Wong river ecotourism is better known to the public.

4. Product development

Product development is one thing that must be done in order to create sustainability in developed tourism. One of the products that can be developed in Giwangan Village is traditional culture or local wisdom. So far local wisdom has not been developed optimally, even though this can be used as an additional attraction so that the developed tourism is more attractive. In addition to increasing tourist attraction, it is also a form of preserving local culture because culture is an inseparable aspect of tourism development (Lenggogeni, 2017). Some of the cultures that can be used as tourism support on the Gajah Wong River are: gamelan, traditional dances, traditional food, etc. which are symbols of local culture and original values will be preserved (Demartoto, 2013; Sims, 2009).

Product development is aimed at increasing the profit that will be obtained on the basis of the more varied products offered, the greater the opportunity for tourist attraction to be created. Some things to note are the criteria, which include; uniqueness, authenticity, characteristics that cannot be found anywhere else. So that it will raise the curiosity of tourists and will ultimately increase the number of visits (Suhartawan, 2022).

Conclusions

The conclusion that can be drawn from this research is that river ecotourism is a form of sustainable socio-entrepreneurship which is expected to be a problem solving of the problems of slum settlements along the Gajah Wong River. The aim of this study is to examine the impact of the development of river ecotourism as a sustainable socio entrepreneurship on the Gajah Wong River Bank Community, Yogyakarta City. Economic conditions are a problem that must be addressed immediately, so that the development of river ecotourism is the answer to this problem. In addition, arguments about environmental conservation are also a strong reason for the development of the Gajah Wong river ecotourism in the city of Yogyakarta.

So far, the positive impacts of river ecotourism can be seen, including; 1) creation of new jobs for riverbank communities and significant MSME development through river ecotourism; 2) as an effort to alleviate poverty and slum settlements along rivers; 3) awareness and changes in people's behaviour towards the environment through river ecotourism.

In developing river ecotourism, don't get stuck because you have to make updates and innovations so that the developed ecotourism can survive and be sustainable. The efforts that can be made to create sustainable river ecotourism are by development of regional potential, development of facilities and infrastructure, promotion and product development. If the above efforts are carried out optimally, then integrated ecotourism will be realized and tourism in the city of Yogyakarta will develop and progress.

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