

Study of Community Perceptions on The Development of Mount Ijen as a Tourist Destination From Socioeconomic and Environmental Perspectives

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Abstract

The development of the Mount Ijen Tourism Area in Tamansari Village, Licin District, Banyuwangi Regency, has had a significant impact on the socio-economic and environmental aspects of the local community. This research aims to evaluate public perceptions of the development of the Ijen Crater tourist area. The research method used is the Interactive Model from Miles and Huberman. Data collection techniques were carried out using observation, interviews, questionnaires and documentation involving 16 research samples consisting of 10 local communities and 6 key informants. The data analysis technique uses Nvivo 12 Pro to determine the relationship between each variable. The results of the research show that there is a positive influence from the development of the Ijen Crater tourist area, namely in terms of 1) economic: income of the surrounding community increases, types of work are varied and new job opportunities are opened, 2) socio-cultural: attitudes of tolerance increase, local culture and arts become more sustainable and increased security, and 3) environment: no land conversion occurs. This research emphasizes the importance of collaboration between government, business actors and the community to achieve sustainable tourism development.

Keywords: Community Perception, Tourism Development, Socio-Economic, Environment

1. INTRODUCTION

Ijen Crater Tourist Park, located at the eastern tip of Java Island, Indonesia, is one of the most famous natural tourist destinations in the world, renowned for its rare blue fire phenomenon and the stunning views of its acidic crater lake. In addition to attracting the interest of domestic and international tourists, the Ijen Crater Tourism Park also has significant economic and environmental importance. As part of the Ijen Nature Tourism Park ecosystem, this area not only offers extraordinary natural beauty but also serves as an important source of income for the local community through the tourism sector. However, the rapid development of tourism in the Ijen Crater Tourism Park has raised various issues that require in-depth attention, including the social, economic, and environmental impacts felt by the local community (Adhiyaksa & Sukmawati, 2021).

Ijen Crater Tourist Park, or specifically Mount Ijen, has a natural wealth of sulfur, with the highest sulfur content in Indonesia. In addition, the area around the Ijen Crater tourist park has high soil fertility, which is usually utilized by the community for agricultural activities, and its protected forest area also boasts high biodiversity. With the utilization of all available potentials in the Ijen Crater Tourism Park, it is hoped that the community will achieve very good living conditions in terms of socio-economic and environmental aspects (Musavengane & Kloppers, 2020).

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Process of forming perceptions requires individuals to first undergo a stage that begins with sensing, where humans receive sensory processes in the form of stimuli through their sensory organs. This allows perceptions to emerge due to sensations, which in turn evoke certain emotional states. When human sensory organs receive stimuli, the human brain continuously establishes connections with its environment (Sulaiman & Runtiko, 2022).

Public's perception regarding the development of the Ijen Mountain Tourism Area, viewed from socio-economic and environmental aspects, may differ from one another. This is because an individual's perception is influenced by several factors, including how they interpret what they see and feel based on their experiences in specific situations (Arintiko et al., 2020). Therefore, it can be said that public perception is highly dependent on the individual as a person.

The rapid advancement of technology, especially through e-commerce, helps the development and promotion of tourism, including the Ijen Crater Tourism Park, which has now gained worldwide recognition and is highly sought after by international tourists. This is evidenced by the increase in the number of international tourists by 23,756 people and domestic tourists by 115,419 people from 2014 to 2015, which will certainly have an impact on the local community around the Ijen Mountain Tourism Park (Purnomo et al., 2020).

There is a correlation between the increase in the number of visitors and the income of the community in tourist areas, resulting in an improvement in the welfare of the local population. The development of the tourism sector contributes to increasing job opportunities and even has the potential for communities to use their capital to enhance profits (Laksmi et al., 2023). In addition, in the development of tourism, the physical and non-physical elements, in this case, the traditions and culture inherent to the local community, are the main driving forces (Yuli et al., 2023).

Research on community perceptions regarding tourism development from socio-economic and environmental aspects has indeed been extensively conducted, including studies such as "Development of Tourism Potential, E-Commerce Based Local Economy in the Gunung Ijen Tourist Area, Banyuwangi Regency" (Ardiyanti, 2017), "Social capital: An investment towards community resilience in the collaborative natural resources management of community-based tourism schemes" (Musavengane & Kloppers, 2020), "Environmental management and stakeholder roles in sustainable tourism development: a feasibility study" (Irawan & Hartoyo, 2022), "Reviving tourism industry post-COVID-19: A resilience-based framework" (Sharma et al., 2021), and "The role of private sector ecotourism in local socio-economic development in southern Africa" (Snyman, 2020).

Thus, this research aims to understand the perceptions held by the local community around the Ijen Crater Tourism Park regarding the development of the Ijen Mountain Tourism Area, viewed from socio-economic and environmental aspects.

2. METHOD

This research was conducted at the tourist attraction of Ijen Crater Tourism Park, specifically in Tamansari Village, Licin District, Banyuwangi Regency. The research period will last for 2 months, from April to May 2024. The selection of this research location is based on several considerations. First, Ijen Crater Tourism Park is the most popular tourist attraction among

visitors compared to other tourist sites in Banyuwangi. This indicates a great economic potential for the communities surrounding the tourist attractions. Secondly, Ijen Crater Tourist Park has its own uniqueness and appeal, namely the Blue Fire phenomenon that can only be found in a few places in the world (Fitriawati & Suroso, 2023). This uniqueness is the main attraction for tourists to visit the Ijen Crater Tourism Park.

This research utilizes two types of data, namely primary data and secondary data. Primary data is obtained through observations, interviews, questionnaires, and documentation at the tourist site of Kawah Ijen Tourism Park. Meanwhile, secondary data is collected through document studies and literature reviews relevant to the research object. The data analyzed in this study is limited to the last five years, from 2016 to 2021, which marks the initial period of development for the tourist attraction Taman Wisata Kawah Ijen.

This research involves 10 members of the community in Tamansari Village, Licin District, Banyuwangi Regency. The sample selection for the research uses the Proportional Sampling method. In addition, there are 6 key informants involved: 1) the village head, 2) the head of the tourism management, 3) the leader of the farmer group, 4) the sulfur miner, 5) the trader, and 6) the trolley driver. The selection of key informants in qualitative research aims to obtain in-depth and comprehensive information.

This research focuses on three main aspects: economic, socio-cultural, and environmental. The economic aspect is analyzed based on variables such as income level, type of occupation, and business sector. The socio-cultural aspect is examined through variables of attitudes, security, and culture. Meanwhile, the environmental aspect is evaluated using variables of facility completeness and land use planning (Utami et al., 2023).

The data analysis technique used in this research is the Interactive Model Analysis by Miles and Huberman, which has a data analysis syntax consisting of data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing or verification (Li et al., 2024). The research data was analyzed with the help of QDSA Nvivo 14 software to categorize information within the documents and explain the relationships between the information.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Analysis of Economic Aspects

The people of Tamansari Village generally make a living as farmers. Although farming is their main occupation, they also earn additional income from the tourism sector. This additional income is uncertain, and the increase in community income is often seasonal (Dolezal & Novelli, 2022).

The analysis in Table 1 shows that the income of the people in Tamansari Village increased by Rp. 170,543. This is accompanied by a 35.3% increase in job opportunities. This increase is also reflected in the types of tourism businesses undertaken by the community, such as food and beverage stalls, young coconut ice, tour guides, shoe rentals, homestays, and restaurants (Wondirad et al., 2021).

Table 1. Analysis of Tourism Development from Economic Aspect

Indicator	Tourism Development		Impact	
	Before	After	Positive	Negative
Income Level				
Community Income	Average of Rp. 1,547,378	Average of Rp. 1,783,125	Community income has increased in various sectors	Income is relatively fluctuating
Employment				
Type of Work	Farmers, miners, and motorcycle taxi drivers	More varied such as traders, cart taxi drivers, lodging, tour guides, and others.	Creating job opportunities and reducing the unemployment rate.	-

Source: Analysis Results, 2024.

Analysis of Socio-Cultural Aspects

The development of tourism in Tamansari Village has a positive impact on the preservation of traditional culture, such as arts, dances, customs, and ways of dressing. The village community, known for its harmony, culture, and safety, has proven to be unaffected negatively by the development of tourism. (Zhang & Li, 2024). The attitude of helping one another, preservation of traditional arts, mastery of language, level of education, livelihoods, and crime rates remain stable (Hermawan dkk., 2021).

In fact, the analysis shows some positive improvements. The tradition of goat racing has become safer, proficiency in foreign languages has increased, public awareness of the environment and education has grown, and new livelihoods have emerged in the tourism sector. Active community participation is the key to the development of a tourism area (Mulyan & Isnaini, 2022).

Although there are cases of crime, they are not directly related to the development of tourism. Overall, the development of tourism in Tamansari Village has a positive impact on preserving and enhancing local cultural values, as well as providing economic benefits for the community. Local wisdom is a potential that must be preserved (Mahrinasari dkk., 2024).

Table 2. Analysis of Tourism Development from Socio-Cultural Aspect

Indicator	Tourism Development		Impact	
	Before	After	Positive	Negative
Behavior				
Helping each other, friendly, harmonious, and mutual cooperation.	1) The attitude of mutual help, friendliness, harmony, and cooperation is very strong. 2) Conflicts have never occurred.	1) The attitude of mutual help, friendliness, harmony, and cooperation is still very strong. 2) Conflicts have never occurred.	There has been no decline in the quality of attitude.	-
Cultural Preservation				
Increase in local arts and cultural activities.	There are traditions of the Jaran Kencak art, Goat Racing, Kuntulan art, Jaranan art, Barong art, and Pencak Silat art.	1) The tradition is still preserved and made into an annual event to attract the	The community is becoming increasingly supportive in preserving local arts and culture.	-

Indicator	Tourism Development		Impact	
	Before	After	Positive	Negative
		interest of tourists. 2) There is support from the government in the preservation of culture.		
Language Proficiency	1) Communicate using Osing and Indonesian. 2) People still rarely master foreign languages.	1) Many people have mastered English, but still use the local language. 2) Preserving Osing language and Indonesian language.	1) Osing and Indonesian are prioritized for communication. 2) Increased mastery of English.	-
Educational Awareness	1) Not yet graduated from elementary school 1,745 people. 2) Graduated from elementary school 3,429 people. 3) Graduated from junior high school 1,654 people. 4) High school graduate 826 people. 5) Graduated from university 104 people.	1) Not yet graduated from elementary school 1,042 people. 2) Graduated from elementary school 3,821 people. 3) Graduated from junior high school 1,496 people. 4) High school graduate 578 people. 5) Graduated from university 321 people.	1) Increased insight and knowledge. 2) More people are interested in completing higher education.	-
Changes in Livelihoods	The majority work as farmers and farm laborers.	More varied such as traders, trolley motorcycle taxis, inns, tour guides and so on.	Many new types of job opportunities are opening up.	-
Safety				
Criminality rate	Very minimal crime occurs.	There are crimes that occur but not because of the tourism development process.	Tourism development does not lead to higher crime rates.	-

Source: Analysis Results, 2024

Analysis of Environmental Aspects

Tourism destinations can develop well if they have adequate facilities as an important supporting aspect for tourists to enjoy a pleasant tourist experience (Pung et al., 2024).

Tourism development can be said to be successful if the availability of tourist facilities is adequate. This shows that tourism development and the development of tourist facilities are closely related. Good tourist facilities can even be a special attraction for tourists to visit a destination (Phelan et al., 2020).

Thus, it can be concluded that facilities are a determining factor in the successful development of tourism destinations. The availability of adequate tourist facilities and sustainable tourism development are the main keys to attracting tourists and making a successful tourist destination.

From an environmental point of view, Tamansari Village falls into the category of villages that are experiencing rapid development. This is evident from various indicators such as an increase in the number and quality of homestays, restaurants, shops, and means of transportation. In addition, the repair of damaged roads and more regular road shoulder boundaries have facilitated traffic circulation in the village. Interestingly, no changes in land use have occurred due to the development of tourist attractions.

Analysis of the physical amenities variable showed significant improvements, including the addition of 61 homestays, 3 restaurants, 16 shops, and 10 new means of transportation. The quality of roads, parking lots, and other physical indicators also showed improvements to facilitate tourists (Birendra et al., 2023). Meanwhile, the land use analysis revealed that there has been no land conversion over the past five years despite the development of tourist attractions. This shows that Tamansari Village has managed to develop significantly without compromising environmental aspects and existing land use.

Land use in Tamansari Village remained consistent before and after tourism development, despite the village's high economic potential as a tourist area. Usually, areas with such potential will experience rapid changes in land use (Abdillah et al., 2023). However, Tamansari Village did not experience such changes. This is in accordance with the statement of the tourist attraction manager of the Ijen Crater Tourism Park, which states that tourism development in the Ijen Crater Tourism Park does not result in natural damage or changes in protected land functions for tourism facilities. Therefore, tourism development in Tamansari Village does not affect land use change. The following are the results of the analysis of the impact of tourist attraction development from the environmental aspect.

Table 3. Analysis of Tourism Development from Environmental Aspects

Indicator	Tourism Development		Impact	
	Before	After	Positive	Negative
Facilities and Infrastructure				
Restaurant	2 units	5 units	Additional of restaurant units	-
Store	18 units	34 units	Addition of shop units	-
Homestay	7 units	68 units	Addition of homestay units	-
Road Condition	1) Road conditions are quite good and can be passed by 2 or more	1) Road conditions are very good and can be passed by 2 or more wheeled vehicles.	The increasing number of repairs to damaged roads and the renewal of materials on the roads. The	-

Indicator	Tourism Development		Impact	
	Before	After	Positive	Negative
	wheeled vehicles. 2) There are still potholes on some roads and there are no roadside.	2) Increased road repair activities. 3) There is already a roadside. 4) Arrangement for the use and circulation of vehicles is already good.	flow of traffic is managed quite well.	
Transportation Facilities	15 units of Trooper vehicles.	25 units of Trooper vehicles.	Increased number of transportation facilities.	-
Parking Lot	1) Area for parking: $\pm 10,000 \text{ m}^2$ 2) Capable of accommodating around 500 vehicles. 3) Still unable to accommodate all tourist vehicles.	1) Area for parking: $\pm 10.000 \text{ m}^2$ 2) Capable of accommodating around 500 vehicles. 3) Still unable to accommodate all tourist vehicles. 4) Maintenance and organization of the parking lot by the manager.	There is parking lot management and maintenance	The parking area is not able to accommodate all the vehicles from the tourists.
Land Use Management				
Land Conversion	1) The area of agricultural land is 84,273 hectares. 2) The area of the plantation is 58,037 hectares. 3) The area of state forest land is 178,209 hectares. 4) The area of other land is 2,350 hectares.	1) The area of agricultural land is 84.273 hectares. 2) The area of the plantation is 58.037 hectares. 3) The area of state forest land is 178.209 hectares. 4) The area of other land is 2.350 hectares.	There was no land conversion related to tourism development.	-

Source: Analysis Results, 2024

From a socioeconomic perspective, the development of Mount Ijen as a tourist destination could offer significant benefits to the local economy. These benefits may include an increase in income for small and medium-sized enterprises, the creation of job opportunities, and the development of infrastructure that can enhance the quality of life for local residents (Erdirin, & Ozkaya, 2020; Kubíčková et al., 2017). Nevertheless, this growth may also lead to social changes, such as a heightened dependence on the tourism industry, which can be vulnerable to fluctuations in tourist numbers and global economic conditions.

From an environmental standpoint, the development of tourism at Mount Ijen must be balanced with efforts to preserve the natural environment. It is essential to involve the local community in environmental management and monitoring activities to ensure that the growth of tourism does not damage the ecosystem, such as pollution or habitat degradation (Muhanna, 2006; Belsoy et al., 2012). A sustainable and eco-friendly approach is crucial in maintaining the balance between economic growth and environmental conservation (Udodiugwu et al., 2025).

Therefore, understanding the local community's perceptions of the development of tourism at Mount Ijen is vital for designing strategies that not only promote economic benefits but also protect the environment and enhance the social well-being of the community. The involvement of local stakeholders in decision-making processes will help ensure that tourism development aligns with their needs and values while minimizing negative impacts.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the research results and discussions outlined earlier, it can be concluded that the development of the tourist attraction Taman Wisata Kawah Ijen has a positive impact on various aspects in the village of Tamansari. From an economic perspective, this development opens up new job opportunities, allowing farmers to earn additional income from tourism ventures. Socially and culturally, the development of this tourism does not eliminate the culture of mutual cooperation, the preservation of traditional arts, the use of local languages, education levels, types of livelihoods, nor does it increase the crime rate in the village. From an environmental perspective, the development of the Kawah Ijen Tourism Park contributes to the increase in the quantity and quality of tourism facilities and infrastructure, and does not cause changes in land use in Tamansari Village.

To enhance the development of tourist attractions, the government is advised to strengthen cooperation between the government, business actors, and the community, especially farmers. This initiative aims to empower the local economy and reduce unemployment rates. It is very important for the government to involve the community in the decision-making process that affects their socio-cultural conditions. Specifically for leading tourist attractions like Ijen Crater Tourism Park, adequate parking facilities are needed for the comfort of visitors

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