

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM VILLAGE MODEL 5.0: DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FOR OPTIMAL SOCIAL RETURN ON INVESTMENT

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Abstract

This article analyzes the impact of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funds invested in tourist villages in Banyumas using the Social Return on Investment (SROI) method. The initial research process involved identifying stakeholders and determining the scope of social, economic, and environmental impacts. Furthermore, data was collected through surveys and interviews with the community, tourist village managers, and CSR distribution companies. The SROI analysis process includes mapping the inputs, outputs, and outcomes of CSR investments, as well as monetizing social outcomes to calculate the SROI ratio. The results of the analysis show that CSR investments in Banyumas tourist villages have significant positive impacts, exceeding the initial investment value. Every rupiah of CSR funds generates substantial social returns in the form of increased community income, job creation, preservation of local culture, and improved environmental quality. The resulting recommendation is the need for comprehensive CSR impact measurement using the SROI framework to optimize fund allocation and ensure program sustainability. This approach not only measures financial efficiency, but also the social value created for the community and the environment of tourist villages.

Keywords: tourism village, SROI, CSR, digital transformation, Banyumas

INTRODUCTION

The concept of sustainable tourism villages has gained significant attention as a strategy to balance economic growth, social equity, and environmental preservation. In Banyumas, Indonesia, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funds have been instrumental in transforming tourist villages into hubs of innovation and cultural preservation. However, the impact of these investments often extends beyond financial metrics, necessitating frameworks like Social Return on Investment (SROI) to comprehensively evaluate their social, economic, and environmental contributions (Social Value International, 2023).

The development of tourism villages has become an important strategy in encouraging sustainable local economic development. According to research by Suharno et al (2025), tourism village management must consider three main dimensions: economic, social, and environmental. The study shows that tourism villages that successfully integrate these three dimensions tend to have a greater positive impact on community welfare and ecosystem sustainability. However, major challenges still exist, such as limited infrastructure, low community participation, and lack of sustainable funding.

In addition, a study by Oktavilia et al. (2024) highlights the importance of a collaborative approach in tourism village development. This study shows that partnerships between the government, the private sector, and local communities can increase the efficiency and

effectiveness of tourism village development programs. For example, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) investments from the private sector can be utilized to support skills training, creative economy product development, and local cultural preservation. However, the success of this collaborative model is highly dependent on transparency and alignment of goals between all stakeholders.

Both studies emphasize the need for comprehensive impact measurement, such as using the Social Return on Investment (SROI) method, to ensure that investments in tourism villages provide maximum benefits to the community and the environment. Thus, the development of tourism villages is not only a tool for economic growth but also a means to create long-term social and environmental resilience.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Sustainable Tourism and CSR

Sustainable tourism emphasizes minimizing negative impacts while maximizing benefits for communities, cultures, and ecosystems (UNWTO, 2022). CSR initiatives in tourism often focus on infrastructure development, capacity building, and environmental conservation. However, the effectiveness of these programs depends on stakeholder participation and transparent impact measurement (Agyei et al., 2021).

Social Return on Investment (SROI)

SROI is a robust framework for evaluating the social value created by investments. It quantifies both tangible and intangible outcomes, enabling organizations to measure the broader impacts of their initiatives (Nicholls et al., 2022). Studies have shown that SROI can enhance decision-making by highlighting areas where resources yield the highest social returns (Emilia et al., 2021).

Digital Transformation in Tourism

Digital tools such as mobile applications, virtual reality, and data analytics are revolutionizing tourism management. These technologies enhance visitor experiences, streamline operations, and promote sustainable practices (Gretzel et al., 2023). Integrating digital transformation into tourist village models can amplify the reach and efficiency of CSR-funded initiatives.

Community Engagement

Community involvement is critical for ensuring the sustainability of tourism projects. Engaged communities are more likely to adopt environmentally friendly practices and preserve cultural heritage (Taczanowska et al., 2023). This study hypothesizes that combining digital transformation with active community engagement will maximize the SROI of CSR investments in Banyumas tourist villages.

RESEARCH METHODS

Research Design

This study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative analysis (SROI calculations) with qualitative insights from surveys and interviews. Data was collected from three primary sources in Tourism Village Pekunden Banyumas: local communities, tourist village managers, and CSR distribution companies.

Data Collection

Surveys: Distributed to 200 households in Banyumas tourist villages to assess changes in income, employment, and quality of life. Interviews: Conducted with 15 key informants, including village leaders, CSR program coordinators, and cultural practitioners. Secondary

Data: Reviewed reports from CSR companies and government agencies to contextualize findings.

SROI Analysis Process

The SROI framework involves: Identifying stakeholders and determining the scope of impacts; Mapping inputs (e.g., CSR funds), outputs (e.g., training programs), and outcomes (e.g., increased income); Monetizing social outcomes using proxies and market values; Calculating the SROI ratio by dividing total social value by total investment.

Ethical Considerations

Informed consent was obtained from all participants, and data confidentiality was maintained throughout the research process.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

SROI Findings

The analysis reveals an SROI ratio of 2.18, indicating that every rupiah invested in CSR programs generates Rp2.18 in social value. Key outcomes include: Economic Impact: A 10% increase in household incomes and the creation of 20 new jobs; Cultural Preservation: Revitalization of traditional crafts and performances, attracting 10% more domestic tourists; Environmental Benefits: Improved waste management systems and reforestation efforts covering 1 hectares.

Role of Digital Transformation

Digital tools played a pivotal role in amplifying CSR impacts. For instance, mobile apps facilitated real-time communication between villagers and tourists, while virtual tours promoted lesser-known attractions. These innovations not only enhanced visitor experiences but also reduced operational costs.

Community Engagement

Active participation from local communities ensured the success of CSR initiatives. Villagers contributed to decision-making processes, implemented eco-friendly practices, and organized cultural events. This collaborative approach fostered a sense of ownership and accountability.

Discussion

The results underscore the importance of integrating digital transformation and community engagement into sustainable tourism models. By leveraging technology and empowering communities, tourist villages can achieve higher SROI ratios and create lasting social value.

To contextualize these findings, a comparative analysis was conducted with SROI studies on tourist villages in other regions of Indonesia and abroad. For instance: A study by Pratono et al (2017) on the SROI of community-based tourism in Surabaya reported an SROI ratio of 1.23, driven by higher levels of community engagement and stronger institutional support. The higher ratio was attributed to the integration of digital tools for marketing and resource management, which enhanced operational efficiency and stakeholder participation.

In Raja Ampat, research on CSR-funded ecotourism initiatives revealed an SROI ratio of 3.1, primarily due to robust environmental conservation programs and partnerships with international NGOs (Saiz, 2024).

Internationally, a case study in Thailand's Ban Thung Man Nuea in Lampang demonstrated an SROI ratio of 1.08, highlighting the importance of long-term capacity building and cultural preservation programs (Khanthong et al., 2025).

Compared to these examples, the SROI ratio of 2.18 in Banyumas reflects moderate success but indicates room for improvement. While economic and cultural impacts were significant, environmental benefits lagged behind due to limited reforestation efforts and waste management coverage. This suggests that scaling up eco-friendly practices and fostering stronger public-private partnerships could enhance outcomes.

The results highlight the potential of CSR investments to drive sustainable development in tourist villages. However, the relatively lower SROI ratio in Banyumas compared to Yogyakarta and international benchmarks underscores the need for strategic enhancements. Successful models often integrate advanced digital tools, such as mobile applications for real-time data collection and virtual reality platforms for immersive cultural experiences. These innovations not only improve operational efficiency but also attract tech-savvy tourists, thereby amplifying social returns.

Furthermore, the study emphasizes the critical role of community engagement. Villages with high levels of local participation, as observed in Raja Ampat and Thailand, tend to achieve higher SROI ratios. This aligns with findings that community-driven initiatives foster ownership and accountability, ensuring long-term sustainability.

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

Strengthen environmental programs by expanding reforestation efforts and adopting circular economy principles for waste management; Leverage digital transformation through mobile apps and virtual tours to enhance visitor experiences and operational efficiency;

Foster greater community involvement by providing training and resources for local entrepreneurs and cultural practitioners. This study demonstrates the potential of CSR investments in Banyumas tourist villages to generate significant social returns. While the SROI ratio of 2.18 is promising, it lags behind benchmarks from other regions, highlighting opportunities for improvement. By integrating digital tools, strengthening environmental programs, and empowering local communities, Banyumas can optimize its SROI outcomes and serve as a model for sustainable tourism development.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates the potential of CSR investments in Banyumas tourist villages to generate significant social returns. The proposed Sustainable Tourism Village Model 5.0 integrates digital transformation and community engagement to optimize SROI outcomes. Recommendations include adopting comprehensive impact measurement frameworks, promoting digital literacy among villagers, and fostering multi-stakeholder partnerships. Future research should explore the scalability of this model across other regions and its applicability to different types of tourism initiatives.

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