MULTI-STAKEHOLDER COLLABORATION IN IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF LOCAL HUMAN RESOURCES IN SUPER-PRIORITY TOURISM DESTINATION LABUAN BAJO MANGGARAI REGENCY

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ABSTRACT

Objective: This research aims to explore the dynamics of collaboration between stakeholders and the strategies implemented by a combination of stakeholders in improving the quality of local human resources in Labuan Bajo, West Manggarai Regency.

Theoretical Framework: Data from the Central Bureau of Statistics for 2021 and 2022 regarding West Manggarai Regency shows a labor force of 158,269, 150,499 employed, and 7,770 unemployed. 4.91% of the people are unemployed. Local human resources who are working: 59% are elementary school graduates, 13% are junior high school graduates, 15% are high school graduates, and 13% are University graduates. As many as 64.71% work in the agricultural sector. There are 164 villages, five sub-districts, and 94 tourism villages. Strong collaboration between stakeholders is needed to empower local communities. The right strategy can accelerate the improvement of the quality of local human resources. Realizing a sustainable destination requires the involvement of local communities.

Method: This research uses a qualitative method with a case study approach. Data collection techniques were conducted using in-depth interviews, observation, and literature study. The sample selection technique uses purposive sampling.

Results: Stakeholders empowering local communities are academics, the tourism industry, NGOs, community groups, central and regional governments, and the media. The challenges faced in stakeholder collaboration are a lack of understanding of the concept of sustainable super premium tourism destination, the pros and cons between stakeholders regarding tourism development direction policies, and the lack of digital infrastructure in villages. The joint stakeholder strategy in building local human resources is implemented by strengthening local human resources to improve the economy, strengthening local human resources through education and training, building local human resources to care about the environment and culture, empowering human resources in tourism villages, and strengthening human resources in the Regional Government and Komodo National Park Center.

Conclusion: Labuan Bajo Flores Tourism Authority (BPOLBP) is the leading actor in building stakeholder collaboration. Strong collaboration between stakeholders and the right strategy is
needed to improve the quality of human resources. The involvement of local human resources helps the sustainability of tourist destinations.

**Originality/Value:** The unique value of this research is 1). Strong involvement of central government in empowering local communities. 2). A joint stakeholder strategy to improve the quality of local human resources to participate in the development of premium tourism.

**Keywords:** stakeholder, collaboration, empowerment, super priority destination.

**COLABORAÇÃO DE VÁRIAS PARTES INTERESSADAS NA MELHORIA DA QUALIDADE DOS RECURSOS HUMANOS LOCAIS NO DESTINO TURÍSTICO SUPER PRIORITÁRIO LABUAN BAJO MANGGARAI REGENCY**

**RESUMO**

**Objetivo:** Esta pesquisa tem como objetivo explorar a dinâmica da colaboração entre as partes interessadas e as estratégias implementadas por uma combinação de partes interessadas na melhoria da qualidade dos recursos humanos locais em Labuan Bajo, Regência de Manggarai Ocidental.

**Estrutura Teórica:** Dados do Bureau Central de Estatísticas de 2021 e 2022 sobre a Regência de Manggarai Ocidental mostram uma força de trabalho de 158.269, 150.499 empregados e 7.770 desempregados. 4,91% das pessoas estão desempregadas. Recursos humanos locais que estão trabalhando: 59% são graduados do ensino fundamental, 13% são graduados do ensino médio, 15% são graduados do ensino médio e 13% são graduados da Universidade. Cerca de 64,71% trabalham no setor agrícola. Há 164 aldeias, cinco sub-distritos e 94 aldeias turísticas. É necessária uma forte colaboração entre as partes interessadas para capacitar as comunidades locais. A estratégia correta pode acelerar a melhoria da qualidade dos recursos humanos locais. A concretização de um destino sustentável requer o envolvimento das comunidades locais.

**Método:** Esta pesquisa usa um método qualitativo com uma abordagem de estudo de caso. Técnicas de coleta de dados foram realizadas utilizando entrevistas aprofundadas, observação e estudo da literatura. A técnica de seleção de amostras utiliza amostragem intensiva.

**Resultados:** As partes interessadas que empoderam as comunidades locais são acadêmicos, a indústria do turismo, ONGs, grupos comunitários, governos centrais e regionais e a mídia. Os desafios enfrentados na colaboração das partes interessadas são a falta de compreensão do conceito de destino turístico sustentável super premium, os prós e contras entre as partes interessadas no que diz respeito às políticas de orientação do desenvolvimento turístico e a falta de infraestrutura digital nas aldeias. A estratégia conjunta das partes interessadas na construção de recursos humanos locais é implementada através do fortalecimento dos recursos humanos locais para melhorar a economia, fortalecendo os recursos humanos locais através da educação e da formação, construindo recursos humanos locais para cuidar do meio ambiente e da cultura, capacitando recursos humanos em aldeias de turismo e fortalecendo os recursos humanos no Governo Regional e no Centro do Parque Nacional de Komodo.

**Conclusão:** A Autoridade de Turismo Labuan Bajo Flores (BPOLBP) é o principal ator na construção da colaboração entre as partes interessadas. É necessária uma forte colaboração entre as partes interessadas e uma estratégia adequada para melhorar a qualidade dos recursos humanos. O envolvimento dos recursos humanos locais contribui para a sustentabilidade dos destinos turísticos.
1 INTRODUCTION

Labuan Bajo is the capital of West Manggarai Regency with a very strategic geographical location to the west of Flores Island, East Nusa Tenggara Province, Indonesia. Surrounded by a group of small islands with sea waters and charming beach views, Labuan Bajo has the potential to become a world-class destination (Yusni et al., 2019). The city called "A Thousand Sunsets" also has a uniqueness that is not shared by other regions in Indonesia, even in the world, namely Komodo (Varanus Komodoensis), giant lizards that are spread across Komodo Island, Rinca Island, and Padar Island. These animals, icons of Indonesian people's pride, can be found in the Komodo National Park, which was designated as a world heritage site by UNESCO in 1991. Varanus Komodoensis has become a significant attraction for tourists who love uniqueness and authenticity.

As one of the main tourist destinations in Indonesia, Labuan Bajo has experienced significant development in the tourism industry. The government has included Labuan Bajo as five Super Priority destinations, along with Toba Lake, Mandalika, Borobudur, and Likupang. Labuan Bajo has even been developed into a sustainable, premium-class tourism destination. This means that all government institutions and organizations must support this policy by developing all fields in this tourist destination.

However, behind this rapid development, several issues need more attention. Firstly, local communities have deep concerns regarding their position in the rapidly growing tourism industry. Many local people feel like they are just spectators in this big show. Data shows that tourism development has not absorbed many local workers, especially for significant and strategic positions. This situation raises questions about how inclusive tourism development should be and how to empower local communities.

Second, abundant natural resources surround Labuan Bajo, and many star hotels and restaurants still import agricultural and livestock products from outside the area. This is ironic, considering that most of the residents of West Manggarai Regency, where the Labuan Bajo tourist area is located, are farmers. The main problems faced are related to
the quality, quantity, and especially continuity of supply of agricultural products. Continuity of supply is a critical issue that causes many tourism businesses to choose to bring in products from outside the region.

Finally, there are demographic facts that cannot be ignored. Most of the residents of West Manggarai Regency have only graduated from elementary school, and most live in villages. This reality creates challenges in empowering local communities, especially in industry, which is increasingly complex and requires specific skills. Collaboration between stakeholders and community empowerment in tourism activities is crucial to ensure sustainable and inclusive tourism development.

Active community involvement will improve the quality and authenticity of tourism experiences and ensure that tourism's economic and social benefits are distributed equally to all community members. In this context, recent research offers in-depth insights into the factors influencing community participation in community-based tourism development. A study conducted by Mai et al. using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) revealed that various factors, including economic benefits, tourism resources, community resources, social capital, community influence, and mechanisms and policies influence citizen participation in community-based tourism development. Of all these factors, community resources have the most decisive impact on citizen participation in community-based tourism development (Mai et al., 2023). Based on these findings, it is clear that building community resources and increasing collaboration between stakeholders is very important in empowering communities and successful tourism development. Therefore, policies and strategies that support the development of community resources and community empowerment must be a priority in tourism development efforts in any region, including Labuan Bajo.

Building a conscious tourism character in the community is one of the essential keys to creating sustainable tourism. This awareness is not only related to the recognition of local potential but also to an understanding of the responsibility and role of the community in maintaining and advancing tourism in their area. This conscious tourism character becomes increasingly relevant when viewed from Hariyanto's findings, which show the importance of community resources in developing community-based tourism (Hariyanto, 2017). Communities aware of tourism will be more likely to make optimal use of their community resources, develop social capital, and collaborate with other stakeholders in creating authentic and sustainable tourism experiences. Thus, community
Empowerment through education and training on tourism awareness is one of the critical strategies to ensure tourism provides tangible benefits for the community and the surrounding environment.

The participation of local communities in the development of an ecological-based tourism industry can not be ruled out because developing an area has implications for developing the stakeholders within it. This aligns with what Alamineh (2023) stated in his research: Tourism is a global industry with a multidimensional impact on destinations. This industry can significantly contribute to local communities' development, and all stakeholders participate responsibly (Alamineh et al., 2023). The social impacts of tourism are extensive and varied and are linked to other impacts of tourism. Therefore, studying it is very important to manage tourism responsibly. The research results show that tourism has positive effects, such as hotel expansion, land transportation, air transportation, electricity, internet, banking, and other infrastructure. This development can lead to job creation and economic growth. However, there are also negative social impacts, such as unequal access to social services, expansion of prostitution, theft, illegal trade, and adoption of lifestyles and behavior by tourists that do not conform to local norms. Therefore, all stakeholders must participate responsibly to ensure tourism benefits local communities while minimizing its negative impacts.

The importance of stakeholders' roles in the tourism industry was also expressed by Sunuantari (2017), who emphasized the importance of local community involvement in advancing tourist destinations (Suntuartari, 2017). This opinion is reinforced by Ernawati (2019) who found a stakeholder approach model for developing community-based tourism consisting of community, industry, government, academics, and media (Ernawati et al., 2019). The relationship between previous research further confirms the importance of multi-stakeholder collaboration in improving tourism and human resource participation in creating tourist destinations. This aligns with research currently being carried out by the author, which focuses on exploring the dynamics of collaboration between stakeholders and the strategies implemented by a combination of stakeholders in improving the quality of local human resources in Labuan Bajo, Manggarai Regency, Manggarai.

The relevance of stakeholder collaboration in the tourism industry is becoming increasingly crucial, especially in the context of research conducted by Purnamasari. As the research findings highlight, community resources, economic benefits, tourism
resources, social capital, community influence, and mechanisms and policies influence citizen participation in community-based tourism development (Punamasari, 2011). In this case, collaboration between stakeholders, including government, tourism businesses, local communities, and non-governmental organizations, must ensure all these factors are integrated and optimized. This is supported by Wondirad's opinion that collaboration will encourage stakeholders to contribute to sustainable tourism development and help maximize collective results from the destination. (WONDIRAD et al., 2020). As the primary key in developing a sustainable tourism sector, a comprehensive approach is needed to determine the right collaboration strategy through the functions and roles of each stakeholder in a tourism destination. (Islahuddin et al., 2022).

This collaboration ensures that community resources, which have the most substantial impact on citizen participation, are managed and developed to maximize the community's benefits while maintaining the sustainability of these resources (Tosida et al., 2016). In addition, with effective collaboration, mechanisms and policies can be designed to promote and support active community participation so that they become not only spectators in the development of the tourism industry in their area but also the main actors who directly benefit from the growth of this sector. Effective stakeholder collaboration will enable the design of comprehensive solutions, increase the feasibility of plans, encourage discussion, communication, and negotiation between stakeholders, and increase trust and mutual understanding (Wondirad et al., 2020a). In Labuan Bajo's context, the relevance of stakeholder collaboration is significant. With collaboration, local potential can be optimized, problems such as the supply of agricultural and livestock products for the tourism industry can be overcome, and local communities can be empowered to play a more active role in community-based tourism development in their area (Dewi et al., 2013).

Currently, conditions regarding the role of stakeholders in building and improving the quality of local human resources are essential. It is felt that the acceleration of tourism development in Labuan Bajo is not balanced with the quality of supporting human resources. Therefore, academics, industry, community, government, and media are working to improve local human resources to support the development of premium and sustainable tourism in Labuan Bajo. The efforts that have been made include providing training and assistance to local communities regarding digital, managerial, and soft skills.
The results of quantitative research from Iswanto showed that tourism industries, communities, and the local government in Labuan Bajo assess that the people of West Manggarai, especially in Labuan Bajo, already have an awareness of how important it is to have superior local human resources in developing the tourism industry. However, the availability of human resources who are ready to work and skilled are still minimal. Then, the readiness of human resources in terms of mentality in carrying out work in the tourism industry is still supposed to be inadequate and not good. Next, the discipline and responsibility of the workforce in this area are still lacking, and it is still challenging to find trained and skilled local workers (Iswanto, 2022). Based on the above background, the research objective was formulated, namely to identify the main stakeholders involved in the tourism industry in Labuan Bajo and their role in developing local human resources, identify the challenges and obstacles faced in multi-stakeholder collaboration in empowering local human resources, and explore the strategies and tactics implemented by a combination of stakeholders in improving the quality of local human resources.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The rapid and massive development of tourism in Labuan Bajo has confused the local community about how they can participate in developing this tourist destination. They feel like toddlers being asked to run fast. Moreover, most of the people of West Manggarai Regency who live in villages as farmers and livestock breeders may only be spectators; even with limited digital infrastructure and road access, they could only have listened. Tourism development must be enjoyed by all levels of society, both in cities and villages. In developing tourist destinations, local communities must be involved so that they will feel ownership, which in turn can ensure the sustainability of the tourism industry (Thetsane, 2019).

Involving local communities in the development of a tourist destination can create effective environmental management that is built on indigenous, regional, and scientific knowledge, economic development, social empowerment, protection of cultural heritage, and the creation of interpretive and nature-based experiences for tourist learning and cross-cultural appreciation (Muganda et al., 2013a). It would be perfect if the local community supported tourism so that the tourism industry that is being developed could be realized. On the other hand, if community aspirations are not included in tourism
planning, tourism development resistance can occur, which can be detrimental to the industry (Reindrawati, 2023).

The involvement of local communities in tourism development can provide various economic, socio-cultural, and environmental changes in the lives of local communities (Thetsane, 2019). Local entrepreneurship, leasing tourism land, making agreements with local operators, leasing land for tourism, making partnership agreements with tourism operators, and participation in planning and decision-making related to tourism, wildlife, parks, and land use are forms of local community involvement that can be realized in tourism sector (G, 2015). Developing a tourism destination by involving the community, which includes sharing knowledge, gaining commitment from the community, and participation in the decision-making process, will ultimately lead to satisfaction from tourists (Fong & Lo, 2015). What often happens is that the community only acts as spectators and as parties affected by tourism developments in their area, both positive and negative, because they do not play a role in making related decisions (Andreyanova, 2021).

In developing a tourist destination, several tourism components must be considered: Attractions such as natural, cultural, and artificial. Then, accessibility includes access to tourist attractions such as highways, mass transportation, airports, etc. Next, Activities that can enhance the tourist experience include camping, hiking, fishing, etc. After that, Accommodations are places where tourists can rest, such as homestays, hotels, and guesthouses. Later, Amenities include restaurants, souvenir shops and public facilities, places of worship, health, parks, and others. Finally, Ancillary Services refer to organizations that do not directly play a role in travel and tourism but play a supporting role, such as offering related products and services. An example of a travel agency, the main products are selling hotels and flights, but it will also offer various additional services to provide full service to its clients and earn extra income, such as insurance companies offering travel insurance and car park operators providing parking facilities at airports as well as in other locations. (Ratliff & Kunz, n.d.)

For local communities to be involved in tourism development, it is necessary to improve the quality of the community through empowerment, which is a valuable tool for increasing the capacity and assets of local communities. Khalid (2019) emphasized that community empowerment requires community members’ involvement and collective action rather than individual action. The community empowerment process must include
meeting the real and perceived needs of the community, better access to resources, controlling social and environmental aspects, and managing local organizations through developing community capacity (Khalid et al., 2019).

Empowering local communities and improving their capacity requires stakeholder collaboration. In tourism, stakeholders are actors, individuals, groups, and organizations interested in developing tourist destinations, whether the same or different (Klitsie et al., 2018). Meanwhile, collaboration is a process where these actors come together to discuss issues of mutual interest to reach common ground. Wood & Gray (1991) defined collaboration as an interactive process through which autonomous stakeholders in a problem domain use shared rules, norms, and structures to decide on issues related to that problem domain (Schöttle et al., n.d.). The key to successful collaboration is trust and commitment between partners at all stages of the collaboration (Park & Kohler, 2019a). Collaboration between profit, non-profit, government, and the public can occur within one or across sectors, as cross-sector or multi-sector collaboration. Wondirad (2020) concluded from several studies that stakeholder collaboration plays a vital role in communication between stakeholders, effective and coordinated destination management and marketing, visitor destination safety and security, improvement of basic infrastructure, positive visitor experience, destination competitiveness, and results better collective (Wondirad et al., 2020b).

Data from the Central Bureau of Statistics 2021 about Community Resources in West Manggarai who are actively working shows that 59% are elementary school graduates, 13% are junior high school graduates, 15% are senior high school graduates, and 13% are college graduates. Most of the people of West Manggarai Regency, namely 64.71%, work in agriculture, animal husbandry, and fisheries. West Manggarai Regency has 64 villages, five West Manggarai sub-districts, and four tourist villages (Farida, 2022). Then, data from the Central Bureau of Statistics for 2022 shows that the population of West Manggarai is 263,687. The workforce is 158,269; 150,499 are employed, and 7,770 are not employed. This means that 4.91% of the people of West Manggarai Regency are unemployed (Ramadhan, 2023).

Based on the data above, involving the West Manggarai community in tourism development in the Labuan Bajo destination area is a must. Apart from absorbing open unemployment, it is also to supply livestock and agricultural products, which, up to now, star-rated hotels and restaurants in Labuan Bajo still bring in products from outside.
Intervention is needed in regional policies through regulations that allow local human resources to participate more in tourism development. But of course, local human resources must have prepared themselves and be thoroughly prepared to compete in the tourism industry. To realize this, stakeholder collaboration is needed to improve the quality of local community resources in West Manggai through empowerment to create a sustainable tourist destination. Collaboration between stakeholders can help maximize collective outcomes from destinations where each stakeholder contributes to overall sustainable tourism development (Bae, n.d.). Successful collaboration will improve relations between organizations, ensure broader actor participation, provide appropriate solutions to problems, and facilitate the implementation of joint decisions (WONDIRAD et al., 2020). These are factors contributing to a world-class and sustainable tourism development vision in Labuan Bajo.

The central and regional governments, as the driving force for the development of the Labuan Bajo Tourism Destination, must be able to collaborate with all stakeholders to be involved in various activities that can improve the quality of local human resources. Multiple stakeholders can collaborate in tourism development, including the private sector, academics, government, donor agencies, civil society, media, and local communities (Muganda et al., 2013). The government must also make regulations to encourage local communities to participate more in developing Labuan Bajo tourism. Be brave and firm in carrying out and enforcing these regulations so that trust arises from the community. What should be noted is that local communities are legitimate stakeholders and have a moral obligation to tourism development (Muganda et al., 2013).

3 METHOD

This research used qualitative methods to understand the dynamics, perceptions, and interactions between stakeholders in Labuan Bajo (Sukmadinata, 2009). The case study approach was chosen to obtain a specific picture of how stakeholder collaboration functions in the local context in Labuan Bajo (Creswell, 2002).

Data collection techniques were carried out in several ways, including conducting interviews with key stakeholders such as central and regional governments, academics, tourism businesses, local communities, non-governmental organizations, and the media. Then, I made observations by observing daily interactions and activities related to empowering local human resources. I also conducted literature studies, collecting official
documents, reports, and publications relevant to the research. The population in this research was all stakeholders involved in Labuan Bajo tourism. The sample selection technique used purposive sampling, selecting informants who knew and had experience relevant to the research focus (Moleong, 2000).

Purposive sampling was based on specific characteristics; informants were selected based on the following criteria:

1. Stakeholders who created the concept for developing Labuan Bajo as a sustainable super premium tourist destination and human resource development.
2. Stakeholders who were responsible for managing human resources in the development of the Labuan Bajo tourist destination.
3. Stakeholders who were responsible for supervising and controlling HR management in the Labuan Bajo tourist destination.
4. Stakeholders who played an active role in creating curriculum, tourism research and training of local human resources.
5. Stakeholders who were responsible for making policies regarding local human resource development.
6. Stakeholders who actively participated in sustainable tourism development programs, as well as local human resource development.
7. Stakeholders who provided training and assistance to local MSME businesses.
8. Stakeholders who were trusted by the local community as sources for obtaining information and direction.
9. Stakeholders who could mobilize the community to care about the environment and local culture.
10. Stakeholders who helped the community build community-based Tourism and sustainable tourism in tourist villages.

Based on the above criteria, 15 informants were selected consisting of:

1. Representatives of the Central Government and related institutions.
2. Representatives of Regional Government and associated institutions.
3. Representative of Komodo National Park.
4. Representative of the Head of Tourism Villages.
5. Representatives of non-formal figures consisting of traditional leaders and religious leaders.
6. Representatives of NGOs that strengthen sustainable tourism in tourist villages.
7. Representative of Regional Hotel and Restaurant Business Association.
8. Representative of Tour Leader Association.
13. Representatives of the Community engaged in the cultural sector.
14. Representatives of the Community working in the environmental sector.
15. Representatives of the Community working in the social sector.

Data analysis used several stages: 1) Converted data from interviews and observations into written text; 2) Identifying the main themes and sub-themes from the data; 3) Linked the findings with relevant literature and theory to gain a deeper understanding. Validity and Reliability used various data sources (interviews, observations, documentation) to ensure the accuracy of the findings (Djam'an, 2011); 4) Returned findings to the informant to provide the researcher's interpretation matched the informant's perspective and discussed with colleagues or experts in the tourism sector to get input and feedback.

This research focused on Labuan Bajo, West Manggarai Regency, as a case study location and did not cover other tourism areas in Indonesia. Researchers were in the field (Labuan Bajo Tourism area) for almost six months. The research only involved stakeholders who directly impacted tourism development and empowered local human resources in Labuan Bajo. The analysis was based on qualitative data obtained from in-depth interviews, observations, literature studies and documentation, without detailed quantitative analysis. Certain aspects of the tourism industry, such as environmental impacts or financial aspects, were not covered in depth in this research. Research time was limited to a certain period, so the findings might not capture recent changes or developments.
4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Collaboration between stakeholders is essential to create a good tourist destination. This is in line with the opinion of Shahirah et al. (2021) that collaboration between stakeholders is crucial in developing competitive and sustainable tourist destinations.

The stakeholder driving force in this activity is the Central Government through Labuan Bajo Flores Tourism Authority. In this case, the central government is mobilizing all ministries and institutions at the center and regions to provide training, assistance, and financing for local human resource development. Various government activities are aimed at MSMEs; tourism service actors, farmers, livestock breeders, fishermen, environmental, social, and cultural activists, communities in tourist villages, and tourism vocational school students and university students. In collaboration with other stakeholders, the government provides training and assistance in increasing digital skills, entrepreneurship training, financial management, creative economy training, making hydroponic plants, training for managing homestays, marketing, and other soft skills training. The role of local governments is to strengthen Job Training Centers to provide various hard skills and soft skills training related to tourism. Also, regulations should be created that support tourism development and local human resources’ involvement in Labuan Bajo's tourism industry. The regional government of Manggarai Regency has made regulations to absorb a minimum of 60% of the local workforce and encourage the tourism industry to absorb local MSME products. In developing tourist destinations, the role of the government is significant because the government has the authority to make policies and support the formation of tourist destinations (Yang et al., 2021).

Furthermore, the role of academics in developing Labuan Bajo tourism is to create a curriculum tailored to the needs of the tourism industry. Educate students to be able to adapt to tourism developments through a certified internship program. Then, assist local governments in carrying out research related to tourism development, improving the quality of local human resources, and participating in making regulations. Academics are central to building students’ character in creating sustainable tourism. This character formation is important because the future of Labuan Bajo tourism rests on their shoulders (Rinaldi et al., 2022).

One essential factor in the local human resource development program is the participation of industry and professional associations, which actively provide resource
persons for training and mentoring MSME businesses, assisting with financing, marketing their products, and obtaining legal business permits. Professional associations are involved in helping the government in making policies and regulations. Also, participate in building local human resources with training, mentoring, and licensing. In the tourism industry, human resources play a very crucial role. Therefore, before being absorbed by industry, local workers must be mentally trained and in skills until they are ready to compete in the working world (Ganie & Dar, 2018a). Tourism companies and professional associations in Labuan Bajo also actively contribute to protecting the environment, especially concerning industrial waste management. Participate in programs to clean up marine and land waste with the community.

NGOs and community groups are no less important in this activity. Various NGOs and community groups are directly involved in community empowerment programs. NGOs and communities that care about the environment mobilize people to care about environmental cleanliness by cleaning up marine and land rubbish and encouraging people not to throw rubbish carelessly on land or in the sea. Educate people to be able to select and sort waste to make usable products. NGOs and community groups that care about sustainable tourism play a role in strengthening sustainable Community-based Tourism in tourist villages.

NGOs also play an essential role in strengthening the local Labuan Bajo community's economy by providing training and assistance to MSMEs. NGOs are critical in sustainable community development to balance environmental and development goals while strengthening local social ties (Abiddin et al., 2022). For community groups, many are active in the social, economic, and environmental fields. Those operating in the social sector play a role in strengthening the mentality of disadvantaged communities, such as mothers who are victims of violence and scavengers, to survive and be productive in making products from recycled waste. These marginalized communities received training and assistance in selecting and sorting waste, which can made into various pieces of equipment sold for tourism needs.

For community groups that are engaged in strengthening the community's economy, their role is to train and assist small-scale MSMEs so that they can adapt to tourism developments. Collaborating with local governments, these MSMEs are encouraged to produce products the tourism market needs. Meanwhile, community groups operating in the cultural sector play a role in training local culture and arts in
schools and campuses and reviving local culture in the community by forming artistic studios. Afterward, participate in national and international events to showcase local West Manggarai art. The religious and traditional leaders as opinion leaders and community mobilizers also play a significant role in maintaining local culture and wisdom to be included in tourism products. Encourage the government and industry to involve as many local communities in tourism development as possible. These opinion leaders have a strategic position in moving people to get involved in tourism development, their influence not only on opinions but also on the attitudes and behavior of other people (Wu et al., 2021).

The last one is the role of media groups, which actively cover and inform about tourism developments in Labuan Bajo. The media is engaged in promoting and marketing tourism products. Also active in socializing government policies related to tourism development and supervising them. Journalist associations also often hold training and competitions in schools, such as photography and article writing related to tourist attractions in Labuan Bajo. The media, especially social media, often influence tourist choices for traveling. The advantage of social media, where people can interact directly, is that it is a vital source for tourists in choosing tourist destinations (Liu et al., 2020).

4.1 DYNAMICS OF COLLABORATION BETWEEN STAKEHOLDERS

4.1.1 Interaction and interrelation between stakeholders

Collaboration between stakeholders in the Labuan Bajo development program as a super premium tourist destination consists of the role and activity of each stakeholder, starting from the government (central and regional), academics, industry, professional associations, NGOs, communities, and the media. NGOs and local governments collaborate with industry to provide training and assistance on sustainable tourism to vocational schools, MSMEs, and tourist villages. The multi-stakeholder collaboration model applied for sustainable tourism in Labuan Bajo balances the three pillars of sustainability: environmentally sustainable, economically profitable, and socially acceptable (Fatina et al., 2023).

The environmental care program is an activity that involves many stakeholders, namely, cleaning up marine and land waste as well as training in selecting and sorting waste into valuable products. Almost all stakeholders and combinations take the time to carry out this activity. The rubbish problem is one of the main problems in the Labuan
Bajo tourist area. Many people still throw rubbish carelessly, throwing it into the sea or burning it. In addition, waste management is not good, causing rubbish to pile up for days in rubbish dumps. So it disturbs the beauty and causes an unhealthy environment. The increasing amount of waste in Labuan Bajo is in line with the growth of the local population, the increasing number of tourists, and heterogeneous socio-cultural conditions (Haris et al., 2023).

The activity program to improve the local community's economy is carried out through collaboration between State-owned companies, private companies, and the central government through the Partnership and Community Development Program (PKBL) and Corporate Social Responsibility by providing training, mentoring, financing, as well as helping to market products and obtain legal permits (Intellectual Property Rights) and Halal Certificate to local MSMEs. Through the curation process, MSMEs are encouraged to be independent and be involved in national and international events. The central government plays a role in creating national and international events. In contrast, regional governments play a role in providing business places in various tourist areas and making regulations so that tourism industries can absorb the products of these MSMEs. This measure improves the local economy by strengthening MSMEs because they can absorb large amounts of local human resources. Not only will the owner's economy improve, but it can also help the economy of its employees. The role of MSMEs in supporting the tourism industry is essential because they participate in running the economy in the tourist destination area (Budilaksono et al., 2022).

Regarding culture in Labuan Bajo Tourism destination, the role of religious and traditional figures is significant. In collaboration with various communities and local governments, religious and traditional leaders encourage the government to include local wisdom in every tourism product, such as displaying local culture and arts at various national and international events, including local elements in infrastructure development. Also, it instills local values in guesthouses and encourages tourist villages to maintain local wisdom. The government has even made an MoU with the Diocese to provide training and assistance to local human resources in institutions under the auspices of the Diocese.

In carrying out activities, stakeholders use many communication channels. The communication channels most often used in collaboration are face-to-face and social media. Environmental communities and local governments use Traditional megaphones
to invite people to play an active role in maintaining ecological cleanliness by cleaning up rubbish in their living areas. Social media, especially WhatsApp, is a mainstay for coordinating more extensive activities such as cleaning up marine waste. Other social media, such as Facebook and Instagram, inform people about past and future activities. WhatsApp is the most widely used social media for interaction between stakeholders. Through WA groups, stakeholders share information, coordinate, and discuss the latest strategic policy issues, followed by face-to-face discussions through FGDs, meetings, and seminars (Thomas & Mefalopulos, 2009).

4.2 CHALLENGES AND OBSTACLES IN COLLABORATION

Collaboration between stakeholders is needed in developing tourist destinations so that the planned programs can be implemented well (Saito & Ruhanen, 2017). Stakeholder collaboration is necessary so that tourist destinations can grow sustainably. There are three essential things to maintain the sustainability of a tourist destination, namely involving local communities economically, protecting the environment, and revitalizing local culture. The government's vision to develop Labuan Bajo as a world-class and sustainable tourist destination certainly requires involvement from the local community. However, this collaboration between stakeholders faces technical and non-technical challenges. The obstacles found in the field are: 1). Many local stakeholders do not yet understand the concept of sustainable super premium tourism promoted by the central government. This gave rise to confusion and reluctance among some stakeholders to participate. They consider that this development concept is unclear. Some think of this destination concept as a brand; some believe it to be the quality of Labuan Bajo tourism today. Therefore, so that collaboration can run smoothly, it is necessary to have equal perceptions between stakeholders so that each stakeholder understands the underlying program (Pasape et al., 2013). 2). There are still pros and cons between stakeholders regarding the sustainable super premium tourism development policy, so some people are influenced by their attitudes. Opponents claim this tourism development concept will damage the environment and benefit investors. Infrastructure development in the Komodo National Park, such as in Loh Buaya, the Rinca Island area, has received opposition from several environmental NGOs because it is considered to damage the environment, even involving the IUCN. Then, the government's policy of increasing very high prices to enter Loh Liang on Komodo Island and Padar Island, related to...
conservation costs and implementation of carrying capacity, was opposed by many stakeholders. There are apprehensions that a very high increase will affect the number of visits to Labuan Bajo, which will affect the local community's economy, which is just emerging from the economic downturn caused by the pandemic. Some stakeholders feel they are not involved in the tourism development process. This creates mutual suspicion. For example, when the Central Government manages international events regarding the Labuan Bajo Flores Tourism Authority (BPOLBF), some stakeholders feel that only the same people within BPOLBF circles are involved. This central government representative institution tasked with accelerating integrated tourism development in the Labuan Bajo Flores Tourism has faced many challenges in its activities (BPOLBF, 2020) 4). Some people live in villages that do not have adequate internet signal, which is made worse by road infrastructure that is difficult to reach by vehicles. This makes it difficult for stakeholders to coordinate and communicate. For example, collaboration with village officials is still tricky. 5). There is still training for the community with minimal assistance. So that people feel less of the impact. Moreover, the training is given to village communities with inadequate English language training for teachers and digital skills training for tour guide groups. Training in this field requires sufficient time to use it correctly.

4.3 OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES IN EMPOWERING LOCAL HUMAN RESOURCES

One of the factors that can support the success of developing a tourist destination in Labuan Bajo is the human resource factor, which is willing to make efforts and ready to innovate. This is because:

1. The role of traditional and religious leaders as opinion leaders in local communities is so decisive that it can be an opportunity for developing tourist destinations by involving local communities. The challenge is not all traditional and religious leaders agree with the tourism development concept developed by the central government. So, society also has divided opinions and attitudes.
2. The people of Labuan Bajo have culture and local wisdom that can strengthen tourism development, such as being open and friendly and upholding local culture and wisdom. However, along with the rapid development of
tourism, some local people are starting to be influenced by the culture introduced by tourists worldwide—examples of clothing style and hedonistic lifestyle.

3. Many tourist destinations can still be developed, for example, spiritual tourism, cultural tourism, and village tourism. So, it requires local human resources to build them. The challenge is that not all tourist villages have a "champion" or figure who can mobilize the community to develop their village, and there is a lack of funds to build it.

4. There is not yet a lot of tight business competition, so local people can fill these business opportunities. The challenge is that there are still groups of people who feel that life is enough because they still have lots of land assets to sell. The rapid development of Labuan Bajo tourism has made land prices expensive. However, many people sold their assets without being able to manage their finances, ultimately returning to poverty.

5. Most of the people of Labuan Bajo are farmers, breeders, and fishermen, so if managed well, the products can meet the needs of the tourism industry. The challenge is that local human resources who live in villages as farmers do not have much information about tourism development. Apart from that, there is no agricultural management to fulfill the tourism industry because there are problems with product continuity.

6. The central government is directly involved in developing Labuan Bajo tourism regarding accessibility, attractions, amenities, and human resource development. The challenge is that there are still people who do not participate in maintaining the infrastructure built by the central government and even destroy it. Apart from that, there is still training without sufficient assistance for the community to understand and apply the material. The education level of most local people living in villages is elementary school graduates. This causes society to be slow in accepting accelerated technology and innovation.

7. The Komodo National Park is where the beautiful nature and unique Komodo animals can be well maintained. These two things provide job opportunities for many local human resources to build ecotourism and community-based tourism. The challenge is that the village community's aspirations are still difficult for the government to accept because the settlements are in the Comodo National Park (TNK) conservation area. This is related to
state policies and regulations in conservation areas. Apart from that, the increasing number of tourists entering Komodo National Park could threaten the sustainability of conservation.

8. There are NGOs concerned with developing Indonesian tourism, such as the Swiss Contact, which operates in sustainable tourism; the Komodo Survival Program (KSP), which protects Komodo animals from extinction; and the WWF, which strengthens Community-Based Tourism in Tourism Villages so that it helps in realizing a sustainable tourism destination. The challenge is that the knowledge and awareness of local human resources to maintain sustainable tourism still require motivation and increase.

9. The rapid development of tourism in Labuan Bajo opens up opportunities for residents to increase their income and primary jobs, for example, being a guide, motorbike taxi driver, small trader, or active in cultural studios. The challenge is that there are still many local people who are reluctant to take advantage of this opportunity, so many people outside West Manggarai take advantage of it.

10. A lot of land in Labuan Bajo has not been productive for a long time. Local communities could use these lands to carry out tourism business activities. The challenge is that no policy regulates this yet.

4.4 STRATEGIES THAT HAVE BEEN IMPLEMENTED AND THE IMPACTS

The development of the Labuan Bajo tourist area into a premium quality and sustainable tourist destination will most likely be achieved if supported by quality human resources and an awareness of maintaining sustainability. Geni & Dar (2018) say that human resources are the most critical asset, considered the tourism industry's blood and soul(Ganie & Dar, 2018b). So, we need to improve the capacity of tourism human resources to maintain service quality standards through continuous training because workforce needs are changing, and competition in the tourism industry is getting more demanding (Gjirokastra Region, 2014). So, the good intentions and cooperation of the local community will influence the success of tourism development. If the aspirations and capabilities of local communities are not in line with tourism development and planning, the potential sustainability of a tourist destination will be threatened (G, 2015). The local
communities must be involved in planning, management, and evaluation to maintain the sustainability of tourist destinations.

Therefore, the central government, as the leading actor, collaborates with stakeholders to create local resource development strategies, including:

1. *Strengthening local human resources to improve the economy.* The strategy to support local human resources for economic improvement is implemented in several steps, namely: Strengthening local MSMEs with training, mentoring and financial assistance; selecting the best MSMEs through an incubation and curation process; Establishing a Creative Hub which becomes a center for MSMEs to make premium class products; Building human resources in tourist villages which are alternative tourist destinations, apart from Komodo National Park; Hard skills and soft skills training for local human resources engaged in tourism services such as tour leaders, event managers, tourist drivers, residential facilities managers, restaurant managers, amateur divers, with training in digital skills, financial and language management; train farmers to use organic materials in managing their farms; train and assist farmers to plant hydroponic plants; Collaborate with the ministry of agriculture to develop farmers so that their products can be supplied to the tourism industry.

2. *Improving the quality of local human resources through formal and non-formal education.* This strategy is implemented in several steps, namely: Establishing new educational institutions such as schools, campuses and soft skills training institutions; Creating a curriculum that is adapted to developments in the tourism industry; Involving religious leaders and traditional leaders in local human resource development; Carrying out research that becomes input for local governments to create policies and regulations related to tourism development and local human resources; Receive various academic activities from campuses outside Labuan Bajo, such as research activities, Community Service Program, Visits, Internships, in order to exchange information and gain new skills; The Komodo National Parks Center created the "Ranger goes to campus" program to introduce Komodo National Parks and educate students to have awareness about conservation and sustainable tourism; The government provides scholarships to outstanding students; Creating various competitions for vocational school students that encourage strengthening the quality of local human resources.
3. **Building local human resources to care about the environment and culture.** This strategy is implemented in several steps, namely: Increasing waste clean-up actions and waste sorting training in the community; Strengthening community involvement to support the preservation of Komodo and Komodo National Park; Providing training to vocational school students, MSMEs, village human resources, Pramuwisama, about sustainable tourism; Involving religious and traditional leaders in local human resource development to include elements of environmental and cultural sustainability; Creating more events that can involve local culture; Increasing tourism products that can absorb local wisdom.

4. **Empowering human resources in tourism villages.** This strategy is implemented in several steps: Forming tourism awareness groups; Strengthening Community-Based Tourism; Creating thematic tourism villages according to the strengths of each village; Providing training in tourism village management to tourism awareness groups and village-owned enterprises; Giving awards to tourism villages with achievements.

5. **Strengthen the human resources of the Regional Government and Komodo National Parks Center.** The strategy is implemented in several steps, namely: Providing various training to Regional Apparatus Organizations, for example, website management; Providing different training for KNP employees; examples of training to improve Ranger capabilities in security aspects for tourists, Strategic Visitor Flow (SVF) training for KNP Center employees, training for Naturalist Guides; Training for the Forestry Partner Community and Fire Partner Community to help protect the Komodo National Park area.

From the strategies implemented above, there is a noticeable impact of developing local human resources on tourism development. Local people are starting to realize that the rapid development of tourism is an opportunity to improve their economy. So, more and more local people use digital media for various purposes, such as marketing tourism products. The growth of MSMEs is also increasingly widespread, from small ones to MSMEs that can sell their products to the tourism market. Then, the proliferation of tourist residences owned by local communities in cities and in tourist villages, such as homestays and guest houses, to accommodate tourists with limited finances.

Public awareness is also growing in education, formal and non-formal. An increasing number of educational institutions provide soft skills training, such as training
in foreign language skills, digital skills, and the creative economy—the emergence of public awareness to join stakeholder training. In addition, Komodo National Park has become an attractive place for top national campuses to conduct research and field lectures.

In the environmental sector, public awareness of the importance of environmental cleanliness in Labuan Bajo is increasing. This is proven by the increasing number of ecological communities growing and participating in cleaning up areas from land and sea rubbish. In terms of culture, the many national and international events in Labuan Bajo have moved the community to explore the original cultures of the local community. The growth of arts and culture groups is an effort to meet the needs of the tourism industry. The government is also starting to build infrastructure characterized by local culture, such as at airports and other tourist attractions.

Tourism Villages: increasingly, tourism villages are becoming visiting destinations for domestic and foreign tourists. The large number of tourists entering the villages has encouraged tourism awareness groups assisted by the government to start improving their activities regarding attractions, amenities, activities, and accessibility in their areas. More and more tourism villages in West Manggarai are competing nationally. Coal Village is in the top 300 of the Indonesian Tourism Village Awards in 2023 (Suryatni, 2023) out of 4,573 tourism villages participating in the competition. Meanwhile, Komodo Village is in the top 500 (Rote, 2023). Data from the Ministry of Creative Economy records 4,714 tourist villages in Indonesia (Surti, 2023).

Finally, for regional government agencies, digital libraries have begun to be established in several Government tourism offices. Awareness of the importance of tourism as a leading sector is increasing. The regional tourism office has already started proactively coordinating with BPOLBF as an extension of the central government to carry out various activities to develop the quality of local human resources. These activities take the form of training and mentoring, as well as holding multiple cultural events. The provincial government is starting to collaborate with various stakeholders to develop Labuan Bajo as a sustainable tourist destination.

The strategies created by the government, central and regional, together with other stakeholders, do not yield results at this time because the impacts of all these strategies can be seen in a long time. Primary data from this study was obtained through in-depth interviews and observations with 15 main stakeholders. Meanwhile, secondary data was
obtained from search results through literature studies to get more comprehensive results; quantitative research is needed on communities that participate in activities to improve the quality of local human resources.

4.5 CONTRIBUTION OF LOCAL HUMAN RESOURCES TO THE PROGRESS OF TOURISM

Tourism is a labor-intensive industry with great potential to employ many skilled and unskilled people (Ganie & Dar, 2018b). As an industry primarily service-based, the tourism industry requires a lot of human resources to develop and deliver its services (Ganie & Dar, 2018b). The quality and quantity of human resources are essential elements for the progress of this sector (Gjirokastra Region, 2014).

The development of a tourist destination can not be separated from the factors of attractions, accessibility, amenities, activities, and ancillary services (Ismail & Rohman, n.d.) Attractions relate to natural, cultural, and manufactured tourism products. Accessibility is access to tourist attractions such as roads, vehicles, airports, and ports. Amenities relate to places to eat, souvenir shops, etc. Tourists can do activities at tourist spots, such as snorkeling, diving, tracking, etc. Then, ancillary services relate to additional services from the main tourism product, such as insurance and parking services. Labuan Bajo's local human resources can participate in this rapidly growing tourism development.

For attractions, local human resources can manage cultural and natural attractions. Local human resources can display local culture and wisdom as a tourist attraction. Meanwhile, for natural tourism, local human resources can contribute to maintaining the environment. For amenities, local human resources can sell unique local souvenirs such as craft, fashion, and culinary products. Then, for accessibility, local communities can collaborate with the government to build access to tourist attractions. It also provides tracking routes that only local people understand. Local communities can provide various activities at tourist destinations at sea and on land. Local human resources can offer activities that add to the experience for tourists, such as staying in a native house with a unique culture, preparing local culinary specialties, or tracking to enjoy nature. Meanwhile, for ancillary services, local human resources can provide additional services such as parking and special delivery facilities.
The progress of a sustainable tourist destination can not be separated from the contribution of local human resources and community involvement because tourism offers experiences to tourists. So that culture, customs, and local wisdom can become a unique attraction. The contribution of local communities is also significant for sustainability. Local communities' commitment to developing a tourist destination through planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation is crucial to success. The involvement of local human resources will foster a sense of ownership of the tourist destination to help maintain its sustainability.

5 CONCLUSION

Stakeholders involved in empowering local communities in Labuan Bajo, West Manggarai, are academics, the tourism industry, NGOs, communities, central and regional governments, and media. Through the Labuan Bajo Flores Authority Agency (BPOLBF), the central government is the leading actor in building collaboration between stakeholders to improve the quality of local community resources. This agency plays a role in coordinating ministries and related institutions from the central and regional levels to empower local communities. Religious leaders and traditional leaders play a significant role in mobilizing the community to get involved in the tourism industry in Labuan Bajo. Challenges faced by stakeholders in building collaboration include a lack of understanding from stakeholders about the tourism concept being developed, stakeholders feeling that they are not involved in tourism development, and the emergence of pros and cons between stakeholders regarding tourism development policies. Apart from that, the lack of digital infrastructure in the villages also hinders collaboration success. The stakeholders' strategy in building local human resources includes improving their economic livelihoods and formal and non-formal education quality, cultivate the environment and culture conservation awareness in tourist villages, and strengthen regional government and Komodo National Park's human resources.

5.1 RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS

The involvement of the central government in improving the quality of local human resources through various training and mentoring programs can accelerate the development of local human resources. The use of digital technology will encourage the independence of local human resources to adapt to tourism developments. Local people
who have received training and assistance have been motivated to enter the tourism industry. Local communities' involvement will impact improving tourist destination's economy and sustainability. Increasing local government and stakeholders' involvement in encouraging community works with local nuances to enter the tourism industry will stimulate local economic actors to be more productive.

5.2 LIMITATIONS

This research has several limitations. First, this research focused on Labuan Bajo, West Manggarai Regency, as a case study location and did not cover other tourism areas in Indonesia. Second, research time was limited to a certain period, so the findings might not capture recent changes or developments. Third, this research was conducted in Labuan Bajo West Manggarai through in-depth interviews with key stakeholders, field observations, and literature studies; this inhibits the generalization of the findings. Further research using quantitative methods with a population representing Labuan Bajo's people is needed.

5.3 POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS

The author offers potential solutions to increase collaboration between stakeholders in community empowerment.

1. It would be better if the concept of a sustainable super premium tourism destination were well socialized so that all stakeholders could understand the main objectives of developing tourist destinations. This makes it easier for stakeholders to participate and collaborate.

2. Central and regional governments should improve the quality of communication and coordination in making policies and coordinating well with stakeholders. The high price increase for Komodo Island and Padar Island has raised opposition from many stakeholders.

3. Tourism is a field that involves many sectors. So if tourism advances, many sectors will increase. However, tourism is also very vulnerable to issues or disaster events. Learning from the Covid 19 disaster, tourism was the hardest hit sector. Therefore, the government must develop local human resources to have multi-skills and be economically resilient to have alternatives if tourism shocks occur.
4. Labuan Bajo is included in the Super Priority Tourism Destination category, so central government intervention is politically extensive in infrastructure development and human resources. After the government changes, policies will likely change. In this regard, the regional government and local stakeholders must prepare, especially regarding developing local human resources who can manage and maintain them.

5. The development of information technology is so rapid it affects all sectors, including the tourism sector. Therefore, developing local human resources who are digitally literate is a must. Supporting digital infrastructure provides a marketing communication outlet so they can market their products through digital communication. Many villages in West Manggarai still do not have adequate internet signals.

6. Tourism development seems to have caused land prices to increase sharply, tempting the villagers to sell land without having good financial management skills. It would be better for the government and stakeholders to advocate for the community to make good use of their land ownership. Government firmness is also needed to take action against land speculators who leave land in the Labuan Bajo area unproductive and tourism development of local human resources.

7. The prices of other products, such as food and boarding houses, follow the sharp increase in land prices. Meanwhile, the West Manggarai regional minimum wage is currently 2,123,994, and many workers in the private sector have salaries far below the minimum wage. There must be intervention from local governments to align prices with local community income.
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