

Received: 11 November 2022 Accepted: 15 March, 2023

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.33182/rr.v8i4.141>

Sustainable Community-based Ecotourism (CBET) Performance: a Qualitative Measurement

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the concept, implementation, and impact of Community Based Ecotourism (CBET) in the context of empowering local communities.

Using a qualitative approach, this conceptual article will focus on several ecotourism destinations in various destinations of Indonesia that apply the CBET model. Collecting qualitative data through in-depth interviews with key stakeholders, such as local community members, ecotourism managers, and local government representatives is advisable. In addition, document analysis and direct observation will be carried out to understand CBET implementation and its impact. Finally, this conceptual article presents variables, dimensions, and indicators that serve as open questions for guidance in conducting qualitative research.

Keywords: *Community-based Ecotourism; Sustainability; Entrepreneurship; Tourism.*

Introduction

Community-based Ecotourism (CBET) is an interesting tourism research studied by academics. CBET refers to tourism trips that exploit natural beauty, learn about flora and fauna, and enjoy local culture (Khanra et al., 2021). CBET research has been conducted and is dominated by a quantitative approach (Borges et al., 2022; Butcher and Chomvilailuk, 2022; Ngoc Thuy and Phuong Thao, 2019).

Previous CBET research has mostly focused on measuring the desire to visit, emotional experience, and tourist satisfaction (Borges et al., 2022; Quynh et al., 2021).

However, research that examines CBET using a qualitative approach is very limited (Kunjuraman, 2022).

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In fact, studying CBET qualitatively is able to provide an in-depth picture of local culture and values capable of influencing ecotourism management, interactions between tourists and the community, ecotourism correlations and local community entrepreneurial interests, as well as overall ecotourism sustainability (Kry et al., 2020). However, the measurement tools used in CBET research, especially with a qualitative approach, are still very limited. Indeed, this measurement tool already exists, but it is not yet comprehensive and is based on the perceptions of researchers alone (Aneseyee et al., 2022). One of the CBET studies qualitatively was conducted by Kunjuraman et al (2022).

The research was conducted through in-depth interviews with the director of the Kinabatangan Orang-utan Conservation Program (HUTAN). However, the measuring instrument used is based on the beliefs of the researcher, although this is not blamed because it is based on the expertise of the researcher. Therefore, this research will focus on developing a CBET sustainability measurement tool that can be used in a qualitative approach. Thus, this research can serve as a guideline for other researchers to be able to measure CBET dimensions, both qualitatively.

Research Method

This study will use a systematic literature review (SLR) approach, in which the development of the CBET measurement tool is based on articles contained in the database, namely: Elsevier, MDPI, Academy of Management, Wiley, Springer, and Emerald. This research is expected to be able to provide an overview of the measuring instruments used in measuring CBET. The flow and process of searching the literature database can be seen in Figure 1.

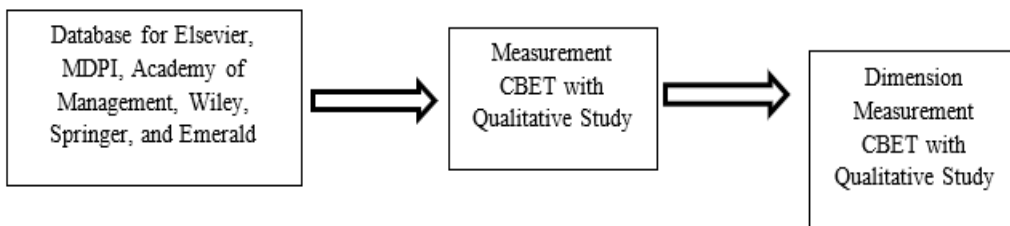


Figure 1 Process of Searching Literature Database

In conducting SLR, the articles used are stored in the Elsevier, MDPI, Academy of Management, Wiley, Springer, and Emerald databases.

This study refers to the SLR developed by Hasana et al (2022). In filtering articles based on keywords and year of publication. In searching for articles, the researcher used the keywords "ecotourism" and "community-based ecotourism", while for the year of research, the researcher looked for articles published in the vulnerable years 2019 - 2023. At the filtering stage, the researcher checked the title and abstract, so that if the title and abstract were accordingly, the article

will be further analyzed. In the early stages of a literature search, 40 articles related to ecotourism and CBET were found, which were then selected into 15 articles for further analysis.

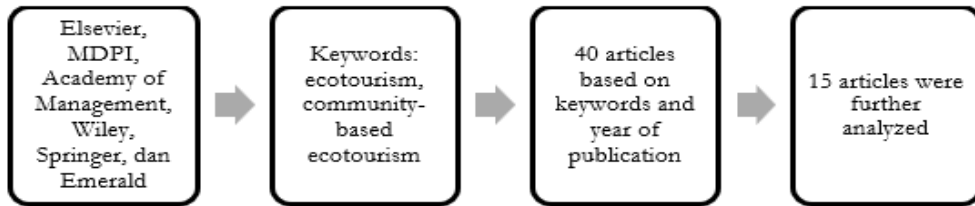


Figure 2 Systematic Literature Review Sequential Process

Results and Discussion

This study will try to provide a comprehensive picture of the CBET measurement tool with a qualitative approach. This is because previous studies developed measurement tools based on their perceptions or beliefs, even though they were acceptable (Guba, 1990). Therefore, this study will extract 15 articles found in forming the CBET measuring tool, where the measuring tool can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1 Measurement Dimension of CBET with Qualitative Research

No	Variable	Dimension	Indicator	Reference
1	Entrepreneurial Marketing	Proactive Orientation	How do you get information about the latent needs of visitors that have not yet been identified?	Eggers et al (2020)
		Opportunity Driven	How do you identify market opportunities and get innovative ideas so that productive entrepreneurship can be achieved?	
		Customer Intensity	What do you do to keep visitors paying attention and loyal to your product and how do you convey the value of your business to them?	
		Innovation Focus	How do you focus and increase the resources you have so that innovation is created in your business?	
		Risk Management	How do you identify and control the risks associated with your business?	
		Resources Leveraging	What do you do with your business related to the use or addition of resources in the surrounding community?	
		Value Creation	Has your business used the right resources so that they have value for your visitors? Please explain!	
2	Entrepreneurial Orientation	Innovativeness	How can you build creativity and skills to create new products in your business?	Eggers et al (2020)
		Proactiveness	How do you control your business so that you can anticipate the possible impacts that will arise from your business?	
		Risk Taking	How do you deal with socio-economic related uncertainties in your business?	
3	Leadership Empowerment	Meaningfulness of Work	How do you create a positive business environment so that all stakeholders are productive, satisfied, and loyal?	Kundu et al (2019)
		Fostering Participation in Decision Making	How can you foster the participation of team members in your business to express their ideas so that they can be considered in your decision making?	

No	Variable	Dimension	Indicator	Reference
		Expressing Confidence in High Performance	What will you do so that the team members in your business can develop faith and concern for your business goals?	
Table Continues:				
		Providing from Bureaucratic Constraints	Autonomy To what extent do you allow the team at your business to be able to do things on their own ways?	
4	Entrepreneurship Intention	Professional Goals	To what extent do you see entrepreneurship as a field of work that you want to pursue and become your professional goal?	Kumar dan Shukla (2022)
		Intention To Start	What did you do to start your goal as an entrepreneur?	
		Effort to Build Business	What efforts have you made to realize your business?	
5	Service Dominant Logic	Co-Creation	To what extent do you allow your customers to evaluate and share experiences with you in terms of creating shared value?	Xie et al (2020)
6	Smart Tourism	Informativeness	How do you leverage technology to make it easy for visitors to find information about travel destinations?	Pai et al (2020)
		Accessibility	How do you take advantage of technology in the tourism sector so that visitors can easily find destinations?	
		Interactivity	What will you do to make it easy for visitors to share tourism information content?	
		Personalization	How do you try to meet the needs of visitors in relation to the provision of tourism information?	
		Security	How can you assure visitors that their personal information is not being misused in connection with tourism technology?	
7	Tourists' Travel Satisfaction and Revisit Intention	Travel Experience Satisfaction	What will you do so that visitors feel satisfied by visiting tourist sites?	Pai et al (2020)
		Tourist Happiness	What will you do to make visitors feel happy by visiting tourist sites?	
		Revisit Intention	What will you do so that visitors have the intention to return to visit tourist sites?	
8	Sustainable Performance	Cultural Awareness	How would you take advantage of the opportunity to learn more about the culture and history of the local people?	Khalid et al (2019)
		Community Resources Identification	What are your efforts to make the natural and cultural environment of the community become a tourist attraction?	
		Environmental Education	How do you seek to provide education about proper land use practices to local residents, local business owners, and visitors? Because it is important for the success of tourism development	
		Economic Planning	What efforts have you made related to tourism for community economic growth?	
		Resource Preservation	How can you ensure that tourism development includes protection of the natural environment?	
		Stakeholder Inclusion	Have you embraced all stakeholders such as	

the community, tour leaders, even visitors
so that the tourism industry in your place
can be successful?

The results show that from the extraction of the 15 articles, there are eight variables and 36 dimensions that can be used in measuring CBET. The first factor that is important to measure in CBET research is entrepreneurial marketing. This variable refers to marketing activities and strategies used by businesses to promote their products or services in the market (Guerola-Navarro et al., 2022). Entrepreneurial marketing is an innovative approach to reaching target customers, creating brand awareness, and increasing sales (Ho et al., 2022). In the context of CBET, entrepreneurial marketing can be focused on strategies in which CBET managers or communities provide excellent service as a driving force to increase the number of tourists. In measuring entrepreneurial marketing in the CBET context, several dimensions can be seen, namely: Proactive Orientation, Opportunity Driven, Customer Intensity, Innovation Focus, Risk Management, Resources Leveraging, and Value Creation (Eggers et al., 2020). The second major factor that can be measured in the context of CBET is entrepreneurial orientation. The concept of entrepreneurial orientation is the attitude, behavior, and tendency of an individual or organization to adopt an entrepreneurial approach to doing business (Satyanarayana et al., 2022). Entrepreneurial orientation focuses on the ability to identify innovative business opportunities and the ability to take strategic steps to exploit these opportunities.

Strong entrepreneurial orientation involves an intense focus on discovering and developing new opportunities (Zighan et al., 2022). Thus, CBET managers or communities must have a high level of entrepreneurial orientation, capable of creating service innovations provided to managed ecotourism. Entrepreneurial orientation in CBET can be measured by the dimensions of innovativeness, Proactiveness, Risk Taking (Eggers et al., 2020).

Leadership empowerment is the third important factor to be measured in the context of CBET. Leadership empowerment is the behavior of leaders who provide direct direction through delegating authority, entrusting decision-making to individuals or teams, sharing knowledge, and providing opportunities for employees to develop skills and careers (Sharma and Kirkman, 2015). In the CBET context, leadership empowerment is described as a leader who has the behavior of prioritizing empowerment, both for ecotourism management members and the community, so that they are able to promote innovation (Zhang et al., 2022). Leadership empowerment in the context of CBET can be measured using the dimensions of Meaningfulness of Work, Fostering Participation in Decision Making, Expressing Confidence in High Performance, and Providing Autonomy from Bureaucratic Constraints (Kundu et al., 2019). The fifth factor that is important to measure in the context of CBET is entrepreneurship intention.

This factor refers to a person's desire to become an entrepreneur or start their own business. Entrepreneurial intention involves a combination of internal and external factors that influence a person in developing an interest and determination to become an entrepreneur (Maheshwari et al.,

2022). Internal factors include personal characteristics such as self-confidence, the desire to achieve autonomy, resilience to uncertainty, and the desire to take risks. External factors can include the influence of the social environment, family support, access to resources, and favorable market conditions (Al-Mamary and Alraja, 2022).

Ecotourism in an area provides business opportunities for the surrounding community. This is because, local and foreign tourists will visit the ecotourism, so they can become potential customers. In the context of CBET, entrepreneurship intention can be measured using Professional Goals, Intention To Start, and Effort to Build Business dimensions (Kumar and Shukla, 2022). Another important factor to measure in CBET research is service dominant logic (SDL), which is measured by the co-creation dimension. The concept of co-creation puts forward the process of creating value together between producers and consumers. In addition, SDL also focuses on collaboration between companies and customers in creating innovative services. The interaction between producers and consumers in SDL theory is known as co-creation (Font et al., 2021). In co-creation, consumers are not only users of goods or services but also parties who can become partners for producers in creating value. The concept of co-creation can be a means of creating long-term relationships between companies and customers (Xie et al., 2020). The next factor that is important to measure in CBET research is smart tourism.

The concept of smart tourism combines information and communication technology with the tourism industry to improve the tourist experience, operational efficiency, and sustainability of the tourism sector (Buhalis and Sinarta, 2019). In the CBET context, smart tourism refers to the use of technology in ecotourism management, such as digital promotion, e-ticketing, digital guides, and others. In smart tourism, dimensions that can be measured are Informativeness, Accessibility, Interactivity, and Personalization (Pai et al., 2020).

Tourists' satisfaction and revisit intention are the next important factors to measure in the context of CBET. Tourists' Travel Satisfaction and Revisit Intention has dimensions to measure, namely pleasant experiences, thinking about the happiness of life, the satisfaction of visiting, the convenience of traveling again, recommending to others, and staying more often (Genc and Gulertekin Genc, 2022).

Measuring tourist satisfaction and the desire to visit is very important. This is because these measurements can provide input to ecotourism managers or the CBET community regarding the antecedents that shape visitor satisfaction or dissatisfaction (Orden-Mejía and Huertas, 2022). Finally, another factor that is important to measure in the context of CBET is sustainable tourism performance. Within these variables, there are several dimensions that can be measured, namely cultural awareness, community resources, environmental education, economic planning, resource preservation, and stakeholder inclusion. Sustainable tourism performance refers to the strategy of tourist destinations, in particular, ecotourism in implementing strategies to achieve sustainable performance (Khalid et al., 2019).

Conclusion

From the results of conducting the SLR, it can be concluded that to conduct CBET research with a qualitative method approach, eight variables with 36 dimensions can be used. These variables are Entrepreneurial Marketing, Entrepreneurial Orientation, Leadership Empowerment, Entrepreneurship Intention, Service Dominant Logic, Smart Tourism, Tourists' Travel Satisfaction and Revisit Intention, and Sustainable Tourism Performance. By using measurements of these variables, researchers can measure economic, social, cultural, and technological aspects of CBET, so that researchers get a comprehensive picture of CBET.

Acknowledgement

This research was supported by a grant from The Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology Indonesia by contract number 1402/LL3/AL.04/2023.



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