

# The Role of Local Community in Cultural Tourism Development

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**Abstract.** The local community has an important position in the tourism sector. They are the actors who mostly understand the condition and the problems. This paper explores the existence of the local community in tourism development in Ponorogo Regency. This study is qualitative research. Data consisted of primary and secondary data. The data obtained was then analyzed using Miles, Huberman, and Saldana's (2014) interactive analysis model. The research results show that Ponorogo has 889 art and cultural communities. These communities engage in cultural tourism planning and implementation. The planning process was bottom-up by accommodating the tourism agenda that the local community network had arranged. Local communities also engage directly in cultural tourism activity agenda. Direct engagement can be seen from their participation in the full moon *Reyog* festival, national *Reyog* festival, and tourism agenda activity held at villages and districts. Ninety (90) tourism activity agendas are implemented and distributed in villages and districts throughout Ponorogo Regency.

**Keywords:** local community, tourism, cultural tourism

## 1 Introduction

The tourism industry is a reliable sector. This industry has large development potential, at both local and national levels. Tourism is one of the new industries that can result in rapid economic growth by providing job opportunities and a standard of life and stimulating other productivity sectors [2]. Similarly, [3] states that tourism is a very promising sector as it can improve the community economy. Tourism results in economic growth and job opportunities for the population, and its benefit comes with social cost [3]. To get tourism benefits directly to the people (community), the people should be engaged in the tourism sector.

A community's direct engagement is desirable in tourism development. Local people and the local community are the main actors facing tourism directly. Local people should be considered strategic collaborators in tourism planning and development because they will benefit from and spend the cost of tourism directly. Tourism development should align with the needs and desires of all stakeholders so that they can benefit from it [4]. Community engagement in tourism planning and development can result in a common vision and focus on community heritage and culture in tourism product development, and a typical destination can be created. [5] appeal to the need to position the

local community as the tourism planning and management hub. Similarly, [6] state that people's attitude and participation determine successful and sustainable cultural tourism. Law No. 10 of 2009 about Tourism also emphasizes the participation principle in tourism development.

Considering this, the local community is one of the important elements in developing the tourism sector. In this case, public aspiration and the local community's knowledge are interesting elements to tourists, so the community is the key to tourism development. [7][8][3][9] stating that community is an important element of sustainable tourism development. Similarly, [10] suggests that community is the key to building welfare through tourism and sustainable tourism development because, through local community empowerment, they can maintain their culture and environment. Local empowerment and collaboration are also used to meet the justice and equality goals constituting the agenda of sustainable development [11]. Local communities should be viewed as strategic collaborators in tourism planning and development because they will benefit from and spend the cost of tourism directly. Tourism development should be in line with the needs and desire of all stakeholders so that they can benefit from it [4].

Considering the elaboration, this paper studies the existence of the local community in cultural tourism development. To explore the existence of the local community in cultural tourism development, the author took Ponorogo Regency as the location. Ponorogo has tourism potency and is promoting its tourism. The regency's seriousness in tourism is reflected in the mission and Local Regulations regarding the Blueprint of Tourism Development in Ponorogo Regency in 2023-2025. Ponorogo also has a variety of local communities as tourism supporting actors.

## **2 Research Methods**

This study is qualitative research. Data consisted of primary and secondary data. Primary data in the form of demographic data was obtained from documentation. The interview was conducted using the snowball technique until the data was saturated. The data obtained was then analyzed using [1] interactive analysis model. This analysis consists of data collection, condensation, display, and conclusion [1]. Data analysis started with data collection and then was followed with data condensation through data tabulation or classification. The data was sorted and then coded. After that, a data display was carried out; if the data were perceived as unqualified, data condensation would be conducted. A conclusion could be drawn if the data was perceived to be sufficient.

## **3 Findings and Discussion**

Ponorogo is one of the regencies well-known for its culture. Considering the cultural tourism agenda, Ponorogo has many cultural tourist destinations. Cultural tourist attractions include Reyog art, leather puppet shows, cultural expos, heirlooms, and cultural expos. *Reyog* show is devised to be held routinely during a full moon. Villages also hold *Reyog* shows to commemorate certain events, such as village clean-up rites (*bersih desa*). To attract more tourists, many *Reyog* shows

were held in Telaga Ngebel. Meanwhile, for the national-level event, there are the national *Reyog* festival and mini *Reyog* festival. In addition to *Reyog*, Ponorogo also has diverse cultural wealth, such as puppet shows (*pagelaran wayang*) held at the end of each month and theatrical shows. A variety of arts, traditions, and rites exist and can be tourist objects. In addition, many culture-based tourist villages exist, e.g., Plunturan cultural village.

Ponorogo Regency's cultural potency has been recognized by Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (Indonesian: *Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset dan Teknologi*, called Kemendikbudristek) and the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy (Indonesian: *Kementerian Pariwisata dan Ekonomi Kreatif*, called Kemenparekraf) by assigning Ponorogo as a national-level cultural city. The tourism potential is supported by various achievements. One of them is the assignment of Ponorogo Reyog National Festival as the Top 10 Kharisma Event Nusantara. The central government, through Kemenparekraf, has also assigned Ponorogo to be a creative regency after attending the *Petik* test process in 2022. In 2023, Ponorogo also became one of the cities representing Indonesia in the UNESCO Creative Cities Network.

Considering the data released by the Culture, Tourism, Youth, and Sport Service Office of Ponorogo Regency, this regency has 109 cultural and art tourist objects. The details can be seen in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Cultural Tourism Destination in Ponorogo Regency

Type of Tourist Attraction	Number
Reyog festival	5
Traditional puppet shows	4
Cultural parade and fair	4
Historical attractions	1
<i>Larung</i> and parade	2
<i>Grebeg</i>	4
Village festivals	17
<i>Gajah-gajahan</i>	15
<i>Jaranan</i>	5
<i>Unto-untoan</i>	5
Traditional music festivals ( <i>odrot, campursari, cokean, mocopat, karawitan, thek thur, angklung</i> , and others)	28
<i>Ketoprak</i>	3
<i>Ludruk</i>	1
Human puppet shows ( <i>wayang orang</i> )	1
Arts of kites ( <i>layangan</i> )	1

Source: Processed from BPS Kabupaten Ponorogo 2022

Table 1 shows that cultural destinations vary in Ponorogo Regency, from traditional music, arts, puppet shows, *Reyog* to village festivals. This is an asset for the region to keep developing cultural tourism through good management and promotion.

The Government of Ponorogo Regency's seriousness in developing cultural tourism is indicated by the construction of *Reyog Ponorogo Museum*, which will build, among others, the largest sculpture of *Reyog* Ponorogo. The government also cooperates with other parties and promotes through social media. The Culture, Tourism, Youth, and Sport Service Office of Ponorogo Regency promotes through its website at <http://e-reyog.com/?i=2> as one of the media to promote *Reyog* tour. On this website, visitors can see *Reyog* show schedules in Ponorogo. In addition, the government, in collaboration with Universitas Muhammadiyah Ponorogo, develops the Ponorogo Tourism Application. This application can guide tourists who want to visit various destinations in Ponorogo and see the schedule of cultural shows in Ponorogo.

Recalling its resources, Ponorogo is feasible to be a tourist destination, particularly a cultural one. A resource is anything that can be developed and contribute positively, either directly or indirectly, to tourism development [12]. Similarly, Sedarmayanti, Sastrayuda, and Afriza (2018) states that resources can be a capital (asset) in tourism development; it includes, among others, wide territory and geographical location, natural resources, large population and diverse cultures, security stability, political and governmental commitment, and successful development. Ponorogo's various cultural tourism agendas and attractive art potencies are resources for developing cultural tourism.

Unique and attractive cultures in Ponorogo are the factors triggering the arrival of tourists. It is because Ponorogo has specific and unique objects that are interesting to visit and do not exist in other places. As known, tourism has the following essences: uniqueness, typicality, difference, originality, diversity, and locality [14] and therefore attracts people to do tour travel.

The regency's successful tourism development can be seen from the number of tourist visits. The number of tourists visiting Ponorogo increased during the 2017-2019 period. The detailed information can be seen in Table 2.

Table 2: Number of Tourists in Ponorogo Regency

Year	Tourists		Total
	Aboard	Domestic	
2017	320	336475	336795
2018	347	538305	538652
2019	259	1122804	1123063
2020	0	443037	448037
2021	0	161758	161758
2022	0	589268	589268

Source: BPS Kabupaten Ponorogo 2022

Table 2 shows the decrease in tourist numbers in 2019-2021. No foreign tourists came to the city in 2019-2021. The decrease in the number of tourists visiting seemed to be very significant, 68%. It could be due to the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic, but serious attempts should be made to attract tourists in large numbers. In 2022, the number of tourists visiting increased dramatically by 200%. It became a positive indicator of the tourism sector's revival. However, the growth of tourist numbers in Ponorogo Regency has not yet achieved the goal specified in the Medium-Term Regional Development Plan (Indonesian: *Rencana Pembangunan Jangka Menengah Daerah* or RPJMD) of Ponorogo Regency. Considering regional officials' performance indicator, the targeted increase in domestic and foreign tourist visits is 10% in 2021 and 2022. Table 2 shows no increase in foreign tourist visits in 2021 and 2022. This implies that the tourism development in Ponorogo Regency has not been consistent with the specified guidelines of gain.

The dramatic increase in the number of tourist visits is inseparable from the local community support. This cultural tourism is supported by many arts associations that can encourage the cultural tour agenda. The number of art associations in Ponorogo can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3 Number of Arts Communities in Ponorogo

Types of Arts	Number of Communities
<i>Reyog Dadak</i>	465
<i>Reyog Thek</i>	36
<i>Karawitan</i>	218
<i>Campursari</i>	47
<i>Ketoprak dan ludruk</i>	13
<i>Wayang orang</i>	2
<i>Music odrot</i>	5
Traditional dance studios	24
<i>Reyog pegon, gajahan, jaranan, unto</i>	79

*Source: Processed from BPS Kabupaten Ponorogo 2022*

Table 3 shows that Ponorogo Regency has diverse art associations as its potential. There are 465 *Reyog* associations. These associations are distributed throughout the regency. *Karawitan* associations are the second largest number of associations in this regency, with as many as 218. *Reyog* and *karawitan* can establish an interesting collaboration. *Reyog* is inseparable from music and arts, originating from *pengrawit*. This *Reyog* art can also be supported by the existence of 24 dance studios. Dance studios here can collaborate to present interesting *Reyog* choreography. Table 2 also shows other rare arts such as *wayang orang*, *ketoprak*, and *ludruk*. It can be said that these three types of art are almost extinct because they are performed very rarely and are less known to the younger generation. This large number of art associations is expected to be a cultural tourism potential through their participation in the tourism industry.

Local community participation is important to effective tourism governance [15]. For that reason, participation requires the local community's role in making decisions from planning to evaluation and receiving the benefit of development by considering autonomy and community independence [16]. The local community also plays a role in using the resources it has to participate in tourism development. Improving people's effective participation in decision-making and encouraging the local population's partnership and ownership in the tourism project can also improve community capacity and tourism sustainability [17].

The local community's engagement in the form of cultural associations in Ponorogo Regency can be seen from the process of planning and implementing tourism activities. The tourism agendas existing in Ponorogo are specified annually. In preparing this tourism agenda, local communities become an element composing it. They have the opportunity and right to file the activity plan. The existing communities have network and routine meetings. This meeting also discusses the activities to be held. This activity agenda they have discussed becomes a material of consideration in determining the annual tourism agenda in Ponorogo. In this case, the participation of the community in determining the bottom-up tourism agenda. In addition, communities also engage in planning the national *Reyog* festival; they are an important part of giving input to the festival. They can also participate in the committee.

In its implementation, the community is also a direct actor in the tourism industry. The activities held by communities also become one of the destinations in the tourism agenda. Full moon *Reyog* (*Reyog bulan purnama*) is a monthly routine agenda. The main actors of this event are community members. They take turns to be the performers of the event. Some communities also have activities held in the village and district. The events conducted in these communities are also one of the tourism destinations that can be witnessed directly. Art and cultural events the communities hold then become activities distributed throughout Ponorogo Regency. Based on the data released by the Culture, Tourism, Youth, and Sport Service Office of Ponorogo Regency, 90 tourism activities are distributed in villages and districts throughout Ponorogo Regency. In addition, communities are also a part of the national *Reyog* festival. They become the representative of Ponorogo as the host of the event. From these varying activities, the direct engagement of communities in cultural tourism activities can be seen.

Direct engagement of communities in tourism development is very desirable. Local people are the main actors in tourism. Local communities should be viewed as strategic collaborators in tourism planning and development because they will benefit from and spend the cost of tourism. Tourism development should align with the needs and desires of all stakeholders so that they can benefit from it [4]. Community engagement in tourism planning and development can result in a common vision and focus on community heritage and culture in tourism product development, and a typical destination can be created. [5] appeals to the need to position the local community as the tourism planning and management hub. [6] people's attitudes and participation determine successful and sustainable cultural tourism. Law No. 10 of 2009 about Tourism also emphasizes the participation principle in tourism development.

The existence of local communities in the tourism sector can also be a medium for improving the people's economy, as suggested by [7]. [18] states that local community empowerment can improve the people's welfare and economy. To achieve this, mature planning, destination management, and local authority or government are required to encourage the people's spirit [18]. Therefore, it can be concluded that the people's engagement in planning and implementation can improve their potential to develop themselves and their economy.

## 4 Conclusions

Ponorogo has 889 art and cultural communities. These communities engage in cultural tourism planning and implementation. Planning is conducted bottom-up by accommodating the tourism agenda arranged by the local community network. Local communities also engage directly in cultural tourism activity agenda. Direct engagement can be seen from their participation in the full moon *Reyog* festival, national *Reyog* festival, and tourism activities held in villages and districts. It is reported that 90 tourism activities are distributed in villages and districts throughout Ponorogo Regency.

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