



## THE MANAGEMENT OF ECOTOURISM DESTINATIONS IN BALI FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM: A LITERATURE REVIEW

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### ABSTRACT

*This study aims to analyze the patterns of ecotourism destination management in Bali through a synthesis of literature published between 2008 and 2025, and to formulate relevant strategies to strengthen sustainable tourism practices. The study is motivated by increasing environmental, social, and cultural pressures associated with tourism growth, necessitating management approaches that ensure a balance between ecological preservation and community well-being. A literature review method was employed by examining 25 scientific articles obtained through Google Scholar. The data were analyzed using a matrix that mapped the theoretical foundations, research contexts, characteristics, methods, and principal findings of each study. The results indicate that sustainable tourism theory and community participation constitute the dominant conceptual frameworks in ecotourism management in Bali. Local values such as Tri Hita Karana are shown to reinforce the integration of human, environmental, and spiritual dimensions within tourism activities. The findings also reveal several recurring challenges, including overtourism, gentrification, environmental degradation, and power asymmetries in governance structures. Furthermore, numerous studies highlight that collaborative governance models, particularly the pentahelix approach enhance the effectiveness of destination management. Based on the literature synthesis, recommended strategies include strengthening community capacity and participation, fostering cross-sectoral collaboration, enforcing regulations grounded in environmental carrying capacity, and integrating local wisdom throughout all stages of management. These strategies are expected to advance ecotourism practices that are equitable, resilient, and sustainable within the Balinese context.*

**Keywords :** *ecotourism, sustainable tourism, community participation, Tri Hita Karana*

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Tourism is a travel activity that is not only oriented toward recreation but also generates economic, social, and cultural impacts for the communities in the destination area. In Bali, this sector plays a major role as the primary driver of the regional economy, contributing up to 47.6%

of the Regional Gross Domestic Product (PDRB) in 2023 (BPS Provinsi Bali, 2023). Nevertheless, the rapid development of tourism also carries negative consequences, such as environmental pollution, land conversion, and an increase in the amount of waste (WALHI Bali, 2017). To mitigate these issues, the concept of sustainable tourism emerged, which emphasizes a balance between the interests of tourists, business actors, environmental preservation, and the well-being of local communities so that the benefits of tourism can last in the long term (Kemenparekraf, 2021). In this context, ecotourism is present as a concrete form of implementation, aiming to preserve the natural and cultural authenticity of Bali while simultaneously improving the standard of living of the local community.

Based on previous research, the development of ecotourism destinations in Bali has shown positive impacts on local community empowerment and environmental conservation, as seen in Bongkasa Village (Adyatma et al., 2023) and the Batu Lumbang mangrove ecotourism area (Swariga et al., 2025). Previous studies have discussed ecotourism management in Bali from various perspectives. Utama et al. (2023) highlight the importance of the community's role in destination management to maintain a balance between economic benefits and environmental sustainability. Dolezal and Novelli (2022) found that power imbalances still exist between large businesses and local communities, leading to sub-optimal community based management. Meanwhile, Adyatma et al. (2023) affirm that the application of local values, such as Tri Hita Karana, is capable of strengthening the principles of sustainability in tourism. On the other hand, research by Utama et al. (2024) and Suyadnya (2021) revealed the challenge of overtourism, which causes environmental degradation and gentrification, while Suryawan (2025) highlighted agrarian conflicts due to tourism expansion in conservation areas. Although these findings provide important contributions, the results are not entirely consistent and have different focuses. Therefore, a synthesis is needed to understand how social, cultural, and environmental aspects can be effectively integrated into ecotourism management in Bali.

The differing directions of the findings from previous research indicate a gap in understanding regarding the ideal ecotourism management strategy in Bali. This difference in focus needs to be bridged so that ecotourism development can be implemented more effectively and sustainably. Some studies focus more on social empowerment, while others prioritize environmental conservation or economic growth without considering the interrelationship between these elements (Utama et al., 2024; Suryawan, 2025). If this gap is not addressed through comprehensive research, the impact will be significant, such as the loss of economic opportunities for local communities due to power imbalances in management (Dolezal & Novelli, 2022), uncontrolled environmental damage resulting from overtourism pressure (Suyadnya, 2021), and tenurial conflicts that threaten the rights of indigenous communities (Suryawan, 2025). Without an integrated management model, Bali risks losing its competitiveness as a sustainable ecotourism destination rooted in local wisdom. Based on this condition, this research attempts to answer two main questions: how ecotourism destination management in Bali has been discussed by previous studies, and what the effective strategies are to support the implementation of sustainable tourism rooted in the community and local wisdom.



This study was conducted through a literature review approach by examining various research findings on ecotourism destination management in Bali between 2008 and 2025. The research data was obtained from academic databases such as Google Scholar and Indonesian scientific journal portals. After collection, the articles were analyzed in depth using a matrix approach to group important information, such as the article title, authors' names, year of publication, theories used, location context, research characteristics, research methods, and main findings. This review highlights research focusing on destination management, community empowerment, and the application of local values such as Tri Hita Karana (Utama et al., 2023; Adyatma et al., 2023; Wiwin, 2021). The analysis was conducted to identify common patterns, differences in results, and the relationships among relevant findings using documentation and literature study techniques. Through this approach, a more comprehensive understanding of sustainable and applicable ecotourism management strategies for Bali is expected.

This research is expected to contribute both theoretically and practically to the development of ecotourism destination management in Bali. From a theoretical standpoint, this review deepens the understanding of the importance of applying the values of Tri Hita Karana as a foundation for maintaining balance among humans, nature, and the spiritual aspect in tourism activities (Wiwin, 2021). This research also enriches the literature on ecotourism management by integrating various perspectives, such as community empowerment (Dolezal & Novelli, 2022), environmental conservation (Sutiarso et al., 2023), and pentahelix governance (Swariga et al., 2025). Meanwhile, practically, the findings of this research can serve as a reference for local government, destination managers, and community-based tourism groups (Pokdarwis) in building more effective cross-sector collaboration. Some applicable strategies include increasing

community participation in planning and management, strengthening local human resource capacity, and innovating in the promotion and management of sustainable destinations. With an approach rooted in local wisdom, Bali has the potential to become a real example of the implementation of sustainable tourism that is capable of creating harmony between economic growth, increased community welfare, and the preservation of culture and the natural environment.

## LITERATUR REVIEW

Sustainable Development Theory emphasizes the importance of balancing economic growth, environmental preservation, and the social well-being of the community in the tourist destination area. This principle serves as the basis for destination management so that the benefits of tourism can be experienced in the long term without sacrificing natural and cultural sustainability. Koens et al. (2018) affirm that the success of tourism development is measured not only by the number of tourists but also by the extent to which tourism activities are able to maintain ecological and social balance within the community, especially in the context of destinations facing overtourism pressure. In line with this, Utama et al. (2023) add that the application of local values such as Tri Hita Karana can strengthen the dimension of sustainability because it places the harmonious relationship between humans, nature, and spirituality as the foundation for tourism development in Bali. Thus, this theory is an important foundation for understanding the direction of tourism development that is oriented not only towards economic profit but also environmental preservation and community welfare.

Community Participation Theory is a key factor in creating sustainable tourism destination management. Through the active involvement of the community, the processes of planning, management, and supervision of destinations can run more effectively and equitably. Adyatma et al. (2023) explain that community participation not only provides economic benefits but also

fosters a sense of ownership toward the tourist destinations they manage. A similar point is raised by Dolezal and Novelli (2022), who assess that the empowerment of local communities is crucial so that tourism does not lead to social and environmental inequality, although in practice there is still a power imbalance between large businesses and local communities. Utama et al. (2023) further emphasize that the value of Tri Hita Karana can serve as a guide in strengthening this participation, as it cultivates a balance between humans and nature in tourism practices. Therefore, this theory is important for understanding how community involvement can create a sustainable, inclusive, and local wisdom based ecotourism management model..

## METHOD

The method used in this research is the literature review. The researcher conducted a review of various literature discussing the management of ecotourism destinations in Bali for sustainable tourism (Utama et al., 2023; Dolezal & Novelli, 2022). The necessary data was obtained from various library sources such as scientific journals, books, and research documents, while the variables in a literature study are non-standardized (Prihastha & Suswanta, 2020).

The analysis technique used was content analysis, focusing on literature discussing ecotourism and tourism sustainability (Ratnaningsih & Mahagangga, 2015). The search tool used was Google Scholar, as this source provides broad access to indexed scientific articles connected to various publication sites, thus facilitating the researcher in finding relevant references (Wijaya et al., 2020; Hanum et al., 2021). The keywords used were Ekowisata AND “Pariwisata Berkelanjutan” (Ecotourism AND “Sustainable Tourism”), focusing on Bali as the object of research to ensure relevance to the research topic. This process yielded twenty-five (25) articles which were obtained and analyzed based on keyword and title word searching (Wijaya et al., 2020; Rona et al., 2022). These articles were focused on the study of ecotourism destination management in Bali for sustainable tourism over the last 17 years (2008–2025). The data was analyzed with the aid of a matrix to categorize important information such as article title, author, year of publication, theory used, location context, research characteristics, method, and main findings (Ernawati, 2025; Sutiarso et al., 2023; Swariga et al., 2025).

This literature study was conducted with the qualification that articles must focus on the management of ecotourism destinations in Bali for sustainable tourism (Wiwin, 2021; Suariedew, 2023). Based on these criteria, the researcher conducted a search for articles using the keywords:

1) ecotourism destination management in Bali (Utama et al., 2023), 2) sustainable tourism Bali (Rahadiarta et al., 2021), 3) community-based ecotourism Bali (Prihastha & Suswanta, 2021), 4) community empowerment in Bali tourism (Al Mubaroq et al., 2025), and 5) Tri Hita Karana in tourism (Wiwin, 2021).

## II. RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

### III. Table 1. Articles Analyzed in the Management of Ecotourism Destinations in Bali for Sustainable Tourism

#### IV.

<i>Code</i>	<i>Finding</i>	<i>Publication Year</i>	<i>Author</i>
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1	<p><i>Tourism gentrification in Bali causes displacement of local communities, an increase in land and property prices, and changes in the local community's socio-economic structure. Tourism gentrification is an early indicator of overtourism that needs to be watched out for.</i></p> <p><i>Protection policies regarding local community land ownership rights are needed.</i></p>	2021	<i>I Wayan Suyadnya</i>
2	<p><i>The management of marine tourism in Jungutbatu Village is carried out by involving various parties. The planning, organizing, and actuating processes that involve and accommodate the interests of various parties build a sense of responsibility and awareness to participate in the controlling process. Good management results in positive tourist perceptions, influences satisfaction, and increases loyalty for repeat visits.</i></p>	2021	<i>I Gede Ngurah Primanda S Rahadiarta, Agung Suryawan Wiranatha, I Nyoman Sunarta</i>
3	<p><i>Coral reef restoration is the core of ecotourism development in Pemuteran Village.</i></p>	2021	<i>Anggit Kurnia Prihasta, Suswanta Suswanta</i>
4	<p><i>Malatisuka Village has advantages and great opportunities, especially its natural potential, which, if utilized as best as possible, can be added value and a strength to compete among tourist attractions. This potential can be developed for ecotourism activities and allows for opportunities to develop other creative businesses with strategies formulated based on SWOT analysis.</i></p>	2021	<i>Fauziah Hanum, Reiza D. Dienaputra, Dadang Suganda, Budi Muljana</i>
5	<p><i>One of the main factors causing damage to water resources in Bali is the very rapid development of the tourism industry. The dominance of the tourism and agriculture industries results in erosion and industrial waste contamination.</i></p>	2022	<i>Surti Nastiti, I Made Geria, Atina Winaya, Ni Putu Eka Juliawati, Harry Octavianus Sofian,</i>

	<i>Water resource management in Bali is based on the Tri Hita Karana concept. Uncontrolled development of tourism infrastructure threatens water resources and ecological balance.</i>		<i>Retno Handini, I Gusti Made Suarbhawa, Unggul Wibowo, I Wayan Windia, Suyarto</i>
6	<i>Community empowerment in community-based tourism in Bali still faces power imbalance and requires a more equitable partnership approach. Community participation does not automatically result in empowerment without power equality. A participatory governance model can increase trust between actors and strengthen local collaboration.</i>	2022	<i>Claudia Dolezal, Marina Novelli</i>
7	<i>Sustainable tourism development in Julah Village is not yet optimal. Although the tourism potential has been well conserved, modernization and globalization can trigger the erosion of tourism potential, which impacts unsustainability.</i>  <i>Improvements in tourism development strategies toward sustainability are needed.</i>	2022	<i>I Wayan Rona, Ni Made Ary Widiastini</i>
8	<i>Community empowerment impacts ecotourism sustainability with the moderation of local wisdom (Tri Hita Karana) in Bongkasa Village. Local wisdom is an important moderator in strengthening the relationship between empowerment and sustainability. The local wisdom-based ecotourism model is more sustainable than the conventional model.</i>	2023	<i>Made Suariedew</i>
9	<i>Five ecotourism destinations in Bali experienced fluctuations in visitors over the last 5 years. Motivation for community participation can be increased through management opportunities that can increase income. There is a gap between the idealism of conservation and the reality of tourism exploitation, where good ecotourism management can act</i>	2023	<i>Gusti Bagus Rai Utama, Wayan Ruspindi Junaedi, Putu Dyah Krismawintari</i>

	<i>as a mediator.</i>		
10	<i>The research successfully identified 8 factors influencing ecotourism development in Tahura Ngurah Rai: one of which is (1) Biodiversity.</i>	2023	<i>Moh Agus Sutiarto, I Nyoman Arto Suprpto, I Wayan Pantiyasa</i>

The literature mapping of 25 articles published between 2008 and 2025 reveals certain patterns in the management of ecotourism destinations in Bali. When simplified through the TCCM framework, this pattern is evident in the theories employed by researchers, the variety of location contexts, the focus of each article's characteristics, and the methods chosen. Although each study has a different approach and background, the overall collection of articles moves along the same current: how to maintain the balance between tourism activities and environmental sustainability and local community participation.

#### Theories Used in Ecotourism Research in Bali

In terms of theory, most articles refer to the Sustainable Tourism Theory, which is highly relevant to the context of Bali, currently facing environmental and social pressures. Articles 10 and 19, for example, explain how the value of Tri Hita Karana serves as a buffer in the relationship between humans and nature (Wiwin, 2021; Utama et al., 2023). This approach is viewed not only as a cultural value but also as an operational principle that can be applied in destination planning. Meanwhile, Articles 12 and 17 utilized the same theory to understand the management of marine areas and old villages, highlighting the need to maintain ecological balance amid tourism development (Rahadiarta et al., 2021; Rona & Widiastini, 2022).

The second widely used theory is the Community Participation Theory. Articles 9, 16, and 23 indicate that the success of ecotourism management cannot be separated from the direct involvement of local communities (Adyatma et al., 2023; Dolezal & Novelli, 2022; Al Mubaroq et al., 2025). In Article 13, the concept of sustainable livelihoods was even used to see how the community can become the main driver in destination management (Prihastha & Suswanta, 2021). Overall, these two theories do not stand alone but are mutually reinforcing: sustainability is impossible without the support and active participation of the local community.

#### Location Context and Research Conditions

The regions that became the focus of the research are also very diverse. Articles 10 and 9 review the contexts of Bukit Cemeng and Bongkasa Village, which rely on a blend of local wisdom and tourism activities (Wiwin, 2021; Adyatma et al., 2023). In Article 18, local wisdom is positioned as a moderating variable that strengthens the relationship between community empowerment and destination sustainability (Suariwedew, 2023).

Coastal areas are extensively discussed in Articles 20 and 25. Both highlight the management of the Tahura Ngurah Rai and Batu Lumbang mangroves, which face development pressure but still maintain conservation aspects through multi-party cooperation (Sutiarto et al., 2023; Swariga et al., 2025). Article 12 provides an overview of the socio-economic

transformation of Nusa Penida, where the community shifted from seaweed cultivation to the marine tourism sector (Rahadiarta et al., 2021).

In the context of tourist villages, Articles 23, 17, and 8 show the reality that destinations such as Panglipuran, Julah, and Taro possess strong cultural characteristics but must also adapt to challenges related to human resource capacity and modernization (Al Mubaroq et al., 2025; Rona & Widiastini, 2022; Wijaya et al., 2020). Article 22 adds a new dimension through a study of tenurial conflict in the TWA Batur area, reflecting the tug-of-war between tourism interests and the rights of indigenous communities (Suryawan, 2025). This diversity of contexts indicates that ecotourism management in Bali cannot be formulated in a single uniform model. Each region has unique challenges, so the management approach must adapt to its social structure, geographical conditions, and cultural character.

#### Characteristics of Ecotourism Management Research

When reviewed from the characteristics of each article, the majority of the research highlights the themes of community empowerment, environmental preservation, and the strengthening of local wisdom. Articles 9 and 18 show that local wisdom can strengthen the relationship between the community and the destination, directly impacting longterm sustainability (Adyatma et al., 2023; Suariedew, 2023). Article 23 describes that empowerment based on local participation is capable of increasing community income from tourism businesses such as homestays and handicrafts (Al Mubaroq et al., 2025).

Another fairly dominant issue is overtourism and gentrification. Articles 21 and 11 document their impacts, ranging from ecological pressure to changes in social structure due to rising land prices and the shifting role of local communities (Utama et al., 2024; Suyadnya, 2021). Article 7 reinforces these findings by presenting the voices of communities experiencing the erosion of cultural values due to the increase in mass tourism (Chong, 2020). Furthermore, the characteristics of the research also extensively discuss the collaborative governance approach. Articles 25 and 20 indicate that the pentahelix model can be a middle ground to overcome the capacity limitations of individuals and institutions (Swariga et al., 2025; Sutiarmo et al., 2023). This approach allows various stakeholders to share roles in ensuring destination sustainability.

#### Research Methods Applied

The majority of the articles, namely 22 out of 25, used the qualitative method. This approach is considered the most suitable for understanding social dynamics, power relations, and community behavior. Article 16 utilized a case study to interpret the power dynamics in community based tourism, while Article 22 used an ethnographic approach to understand tenurial conflict more deeply (Dolezal & Novelli, 2022; Suryawan, 2025). Articles 25 and 10 also relied heavily on participatory observation in examining the implementation of the pentahelix model and the value of Tri Hita Karana (Swariga et al., 2025; Wiwin, 2021). The quantitative method was used in Articles 9 and 6 through SEM and cluster analysis to review the relationships between variables and ecotourism market segmentation (Adyatma et al., 2023; Choi et al., 2020). Article 21 combined surveys and destination carrying capacity analysis to objectively interpret the impact of overtourism (Utama et al., 2024). The dominance of the qualitative method in ecotourism studies in Bali shows the researchers' focus on understanding field processes and experiences, rather than merely statistical figures.

#### Effective Strategies for Sustainable Ecotourism Management

Effective ecotourism management in Bali demands a cohesive strategy rooted in collaboration, local values, and strict regulatory enforcement, as highlighted by numerous studies. A crucial element is the adoption of the Pentahelix governance model, a collaborative

approach that integrates the interests of the government, community, businesses, academics, and the media into a single sustainable policy framework which is noted for its ability to overcome the capacity limitations of individuals and institutions and enhance overall destination effectiveness (Swariga et al., 2025; Sutiarmo et al., 2023). This strategy must simultaneously prioritize strengthening community capacity and participation (Al Mubaroq et al., 2025; Adyatma et al., 2023) to ensure equitable benefits and mitigate the power imbalances observed in community-based tourism models (Dolezal & Novelli, 2022). Furthermore, the integration of local wisdom, such as the value of Tri Hita Karana, serves as an essential moderator, reinforcing the relationship between empowerment and destination sustainability (Suariadew, 2023; Adyatma et al., 2023) by fostering harmony across the human, environmental, and spiritual dimensions (Wiwin, 2021). Finally, addressing recurring challenges like overtourism and gentrification (Suyadnya, 2021; Utama et al., 2024) requires the enforcement of adaptive regulations based on environmental carrying capacity and the recognition of indigenous communities' rights to prevent ecological degradation and tenurial conflicts (Suryawan, 2025).

## CONCLUSION

Based on the TCCM analysis of 10 reviewed articles, it can be concluded that research on ecotourism in Bali during the period 2008–2025 operates at the intersection of sustainable development theory, community participation, and deeply rooted local values. The variation in contexts, ranging from coastal areas, traditional tourist villages, to conservation areas, indicates that each destination has different ecological and social dynamics. The research characteristics affirm that issues such as community empowerment, overtourism pressure, gentrification, and conflicts over living space are the main points of attention in understanding destination management. The dominance of qualitative approaches indicates that researchers prefer to explore social processes and realities in depth to understand the shifts occurring in ecotourism destinations in Bali.

Effective management strategies for Bali in the future need to prioritize cross-sectoral collaboration while simultaneously strengthening cultural roots and local community capacity. The pentahelix governance model can serve as a model to help unite the interests of the government, community, business actors, academics, and media within a single, sustainable policy line. Furthermore, consistent enforcement of environmental regulations, limiting tourism activities based on the area's carrying capacity, and involving the community in decision-making processes are crucial steps to ensure destination management does not lose direction. Local values such as Tri Hita Karana must continue to be used as a guide, and not merely a cultural symbol, so that tourism can develop in alignment with environmental preservation and the welfare of the Balinese people. By consistently implementing these strategies, Bali has a great opportunity to develop ecotourism that is resilient, equitable, and continues to reflect the cultural character that defines its identity.

Tourism in Bali plays a vital role as a major economic driver, yet its rapid development has also generated significant environmental, social, and cultural challenges. The emergence of sustainable tourism, particularly ecotourism, offers a strategic approach to balancing economic growth with environmental preservation and community well-being. Previous studies demonstrate that ecotourism in Bali has contributed positively to community empowerment and conservation efforts. However, these studies also reveal persistent issues, such as power imbalances, overtourism, environmental degradation, and agrarian conflicts.

The variation in research findings indicates a gap in understanding an integrated and ideal model of ecotourism management. Many studies tend to focus on specific aspects—economic, social, or environmental—without sufficiently addressing their interconnections. This lack of integration risks undermining the long-term sustainability and competitiveness of Bali as an ecotourism destination rooted in local wisdom.

Through a comprehensive literature review, this study highlights the importance of adopting a holistic and integrated management approach that combines community participation, environmental conservation, and cultural values such as Tri Hita Karana. Strengthening collaboration among stakeholders through a pentahelix model, enhancing local capacity, and promoting sustainable innovation are key strategies for effective ecotourism development.

Ultimately, Bali has strong potential to serve as a global model of sustainable ecotourism. By aligning economic objectives with social equity and environmental stewardship, and grounding development in local wisdom, ecotourism can create long-term benefits for both the destination and its communities.

## V. CONCLUSIONS

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