



THE ROLE OF LOCAL COMMUNITIES IN PRESERVING NATURAL TOURISM : Systematic Literature Review

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Abstract

The role of local communities in the preservation of a community-based attraction is vital. This research focuses on the contribution of the community in preserving nature tourism and sustainable management efforts to increase the potential of the attraction. The search results are seven articles selected by Prisma Chart with the specified inclusion and exclusion criteria. The results show that the involvement of local communities in tourism development has a vital role in achieving the goal of sustainable tourism development. This research focuses on coordination and active participation between the government, tourism industry players and local communities. This research is expected to provide a deeper understanding of the role of local communities in nature tourism preservation as well as the application of sound governance principles.

Keywords: local community, nature tourism, effektivitiy, barrier.

1. INTRODUCTION

According to a report by Global Forest Watch, around 10 million hectares of forest have been lost annually worldwide since 2015. The latest data shows that the tropics lost 12.2 million hectares of trees in 2020. Primary forest loss in 2020 was 12% higher than the previous year and was the second consecutive year of severe primary forest loss in the tropics (Bhatt, 2022).

The conservation of natural tourism destinations has become an important issue due to the increasing number of tourists and their impact on fragile ecosystems. Tourism relies heavily on the beauty of landscapes and seascapes, as well as the relationship between people and nature (Runko Luttenberger & Gudelj, 2019).

Local communities must be involved in conserving natural tourism destinations, but they also face several challenges. To increase community participation, efforts should focus on providing tourism education and training for local communities, strengthening their involvement in decision-making, and creating key relationships and partnerships among all stakeholders (Mutanga, 2022).

Several studies highlight the importance of local community involvement in tourism development and conservation efforts. For example, research in Lombok's Mandalika tourism area found that community engagement positively influenced tourism sector performance (Laksmi et al., 2023). Similarly, a study in Halimun Salak National Park revealed that 66% of local household income was derived from nature tourism, demonstrating the economic benefits of conservation for local communities. (Ekayani et al., 2019).

Community participation and engagement are emerging as an essential factor in sustainable tourism development and conservation efforts. Studies highlight the importance of actively involving residents in the process of planning, developing and managing tourism (Magigi & Ramadhani, 2013). This engagement fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility towards natural resources, leading to better conservation outcomes.

Local communities play an essential role in conserving natural tourism destinations, as evidenced by several studies. Research shows that community involvement and participation are crucial for sustainable tourism development and natural resource conservation.

The application of the ecotourism concept in forest utilisation, for example, integrates nature conservation efforts with local economic development and active community participation (Pradana & Juliana, 2023).

In preserving nature tourism, the involvement of local communities is essential for sustainable tourism development and conservation efforts. Research has shown that when local communities actively participate in tourism planning and protected area management, the benefits they receive from tourism will increase, leading to increased support for conservation (Bello et al., 2016). The effectiveness of local community involvement is evident in various aspects of nature tourism preservation. Research shows that sustainable tourism practices contribute to environmental conservation while providing economic benefits to local communities (Bentley & Halim, 2024).

Local communities experience many benefits but there are challenges and contradictions in the effectiveness of local community engagement. Despite recognising the potential of ecotourism destinations, several studies report limited participation of local communities in ecotourism development and responsible tourism practices. Barriers such as lack of capital and knowledge in tourism activities hinder local community participation (Anaba et al., 2024). These limitations prevent communities from fully engaging with and benefiting from tourism initiatives, potentially leading to unsustainable practices. Political divisions between ethnic groups, clans and age groups can inhibit broad community participation in ecotourism development (Stephen, 2013).

Economic benefits and environmental sustainability are the main factors valued by the community in the development of ecotourism (Kummitha et al., 2021). Perceived negative consequences and place attachment also significantly influenced community participation in tourism development (Setiyorini et al., 2019).

Social entrepreneurship and business innovation are critical in empowering local communities for rural tourism development. These factors encourage community engagement, promote social inclusiveness, and create sustainable tourism initiatives. (Simpson, 2001).

Community engagement, education and resource access are indeed essential factors that influence the success of local conservation efforts in nature tourism destinations. Education and resource access also play an indispensable role. Bentley and Halim (2024) underline the importance of continuing education in sustainable

tourism practices (Bentley & Halim, 2024). Sunkar et al. highlights the relevance of social capital, including local networks and collective action, in empowering rural communities and enhancing conservation education for ecotourism development. (Sunkar et al., 2015).

2. RESEARCH METHODS

A Systematic Literature Review (SLR) has a rigorous and systematic methodology to identify, select and analyse relevant studies. This process usually involves searching scientific databases, applying inclusion/exclusion criteria, and in-depth analysis of the selected articles (Maniriho et al., 2023). The purpose of this systematic literature review (SLR) is to provide a comprehensive overview of the current state of Windows malware detection technologies, research topics, and future directions. The primary purpose of applying the SLR on the effectiveness and challenges of local communities in nature tourism conservation is:

Identifying factors that contribute to the effectiveness of community involvement in nature tourism conservation. Putranto and Kistanti (2024), for example, highlighted that community participation in the management of tourism objects in Janjanguran Village is outstanding because most of the mangrove tourism objects are managed by local community groups (Hanief et al., 2024). This shows the potential effectiveness of local communities in conserving natural resources for tourism.

Wang et al. (2016) offer insights into the political elements that can undermine citizen engagement, such as failures in inclusiveness, goal setting, empowerment, leadership, organisational fragmentation, & benefit sharing (Wang et al., 2016). These factors can significantly affect the ability of local community members to conserve nature tourism effectively.

2.1 Research Question

The questions in this study are divided into two parts to analyse the role of local communities in preserving nature tourism. The questions in this study are as follows:

- 1) Research Question 1 : How is the effectiveness of the role of local communities in preserving nature tourism?
- 2) Research Question 2 : what are the barriers of local communities in preserving nature tourism?

2.2 Selecting Database

This research uses the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method to provide an overview of the study conducted. The primary data in this systematic literature review was obtained from the EBSCO research database. Through this database, various academic journals relevant to the research topic being studied were searched.

2.3 Appropriate Search Term

Local communities are a key part of nature tourism development, and their participation and support are critical to achieving sustainable outcomes. Research shows that communities that make a living from tourism tend to have higher support for conservation and less dependence on natural resources (Holland et al., 2021). In this SLR research, all the literature to be reviewed came from 1 academic research database. The keywords used to search the research literature use Boolean syntax with the aim of combining various keywords such as AND and OR. The series of keywords used in this research are as follows: ("Effectivity" OR

“Effectiveness”) AND (“Local communities” OR “communities” OR “small communities”) AND (“Conserve” OR “Protect” OR “Save” OR “Retain” OR “Maintenance”) AND (“Nature tourism”); (“Barrier” OR “Obstacle” OR “Difficulties” OR “Challenges” OR “Issue” OR “Problem” AND (“Local communities” OR “communities” OR “small communities”) AND (“Conserve” OR “Protect” OR “Save” OR “Retain” OR “Maintenance”) AND (“Nature tourism”).

2.4 Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria

The inclusion criteria in this study consisted of different criteria as follows:

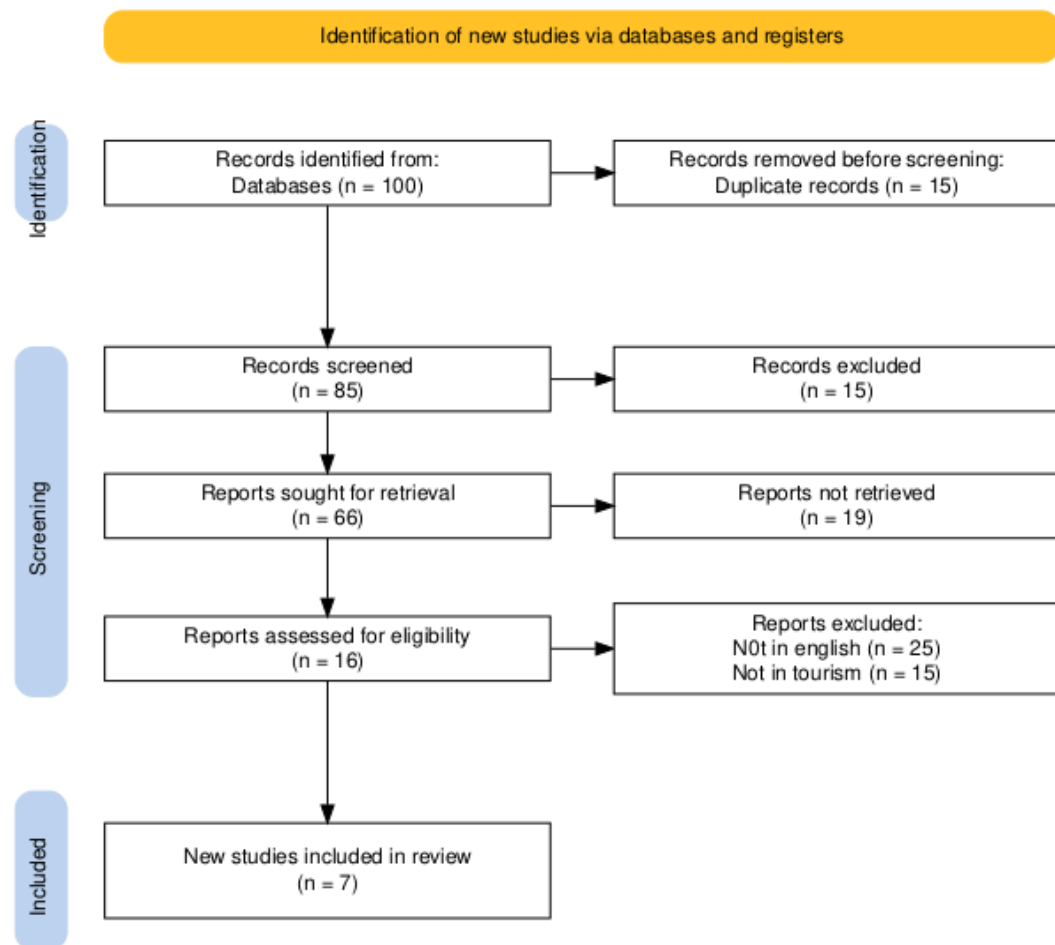
- 1) The research article focuses on the effectiveness and constraints of the role of local communities in preserving nature tourism.
- 2) Research articles based on the type of nature tourism destination
- 3) The research article is published in English
- 4) The research articles conduct empirical studies on the effectiveness and constraints of the role of local communities in preserving nature tourism.
- 5) The reviewed research articles have relevance to the research questions.
- 6) Accessible journals

Furthermore, the exclusion criteria in this study consisted of 2 criteria as follows:

- 1) Studies on literature review, scope review and others are ignored
- 2) Research articles that detected duplication were eliminated

2.5 Sample selection

The research articles reviewed in this study were obtained through string keyword searches on predefined research databases. The search results on one database identified a total of 100 articles that could be reviewed in this study. Next, a prism methodology was conducted to select 100 research articles that met the predetermined inclusion and exclusion criteria. The stages and flow of research literature screening can be seen more clearly in the following figure:



PRISMA Flowchart for the Literature Screening Process

At the PRISMA flow chart stage, 15 duplicate research articles were removed from the source database. Furthermore, checking journals, including academic journals, where the results of the check were removed as many as 19 research articles so that the relevant articles to be reviewed and further analysed were $n = 66$. Then, the author conducted an in-depth analysis of the 66 research articles. From this process, the number of research articles that were relevant to be reviewed and further analysed became $n = 7$ articles. Of the seven research articles, the theory used and the journal publisher. The final stage is to examine the effectiveness and constraints of local communities in preserving nature tourism.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

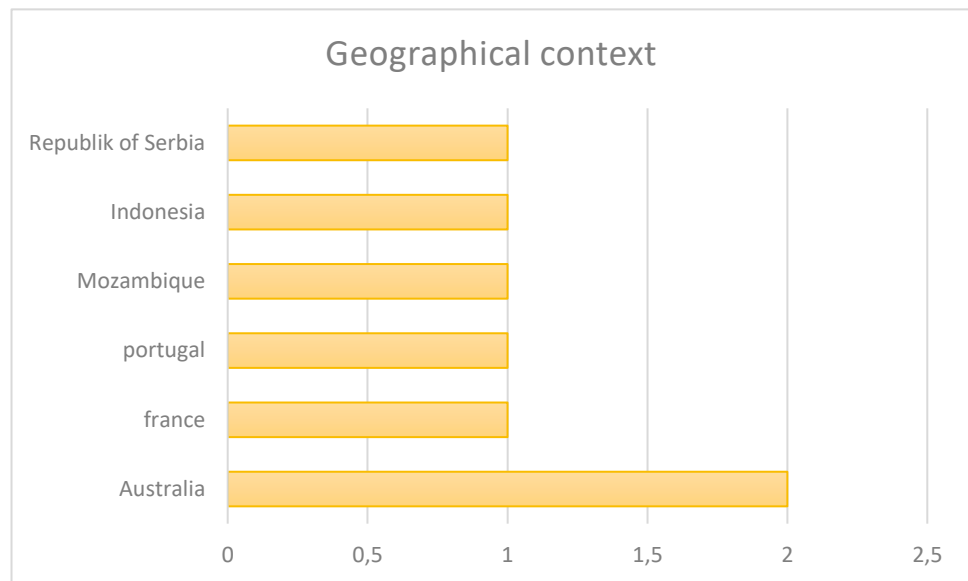
3.1 Result

A review of 7 research articles was conducted to determine the effectiveness and constraints of local communities in conserving nature tourism. The results of the analysis and review are presented in the following two sections: (1) Quantitative analysis was conducted to understand the geographic distribution and publishers of research journals related to the role of local communities in preserving nature tourism. (2) Qualitative synthesis analysis was conducted to identify the theories used in research articles related to the role of local communities in preserving natural tourism. (3) Qualitative synthesis analysis to

determine the effectiveness and constraints of the role of local communities in preserving natural tourism.

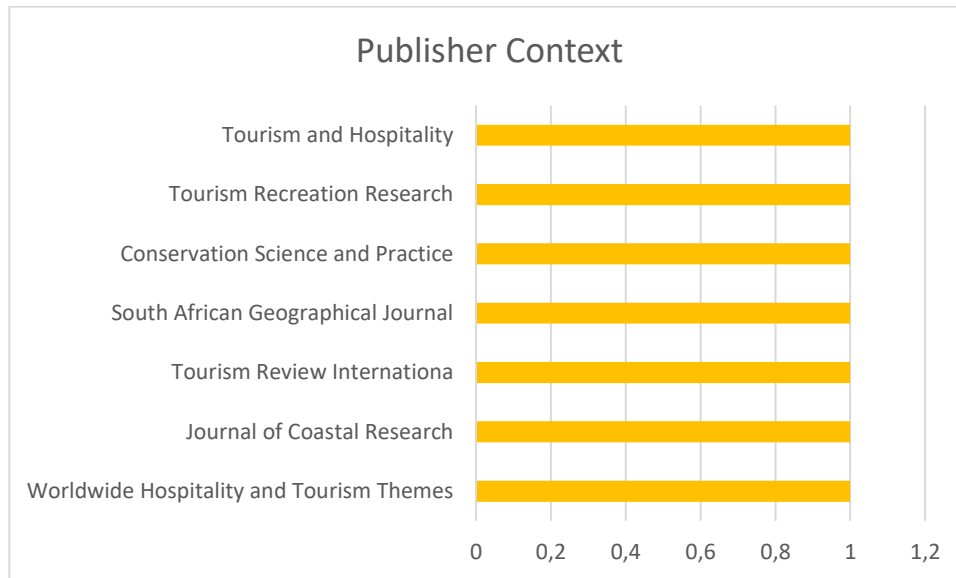
3.1.1 Geographical Context

The geographical context below presents the empirical research activities conducted. In the list of research, most of the research literature was conducted in Australia, with two types of research ((Dwyer, 2008; Sumanapala & Wolf, 2023). Furthermore, research literature conducted in France, as much as 1 study (Courrèges, 2018). The research literature conducted in Portugal includes as many as 1 study ((Bentz et al., 2013). Research literature conducted in Mozambique as much as 1 study (Ferreira, 2006). Research literature conducted in Indonesia as much as 1 study (Purwanto et al., 2021). Literature research conducted in the Republic of Serbia is 1 study (Obradović & Tešin, 2023).



3.1.2 Publisher Context

The geographical context below presents the empirical research activities conducted. In the research list, this study was published in the journal *Worldwide Hospitality and Tourism Themes* (Courrèges, 2018). Furthermore, the research was published in the *Journal of Coastal Research*. (Bentz et al., 2013). Research published in the journal *Tourism Review International* (Dwyer, 2008). Research published in the journal *South African Geographical Journal* (Ferreira, 2006). Research published in the journal *Conservation Science and Practice* (Purwanto et al., 2021). Research published in the journal *Tourism Recreation Research*(Sumanapala & Wolf, 2023). Research published in the journal *Tourism and Hospitality*(Ruiz et al., 2019)



3.1.3 Effectiveness Of Local Communities In Preserving Nature Tourism

In order to empower local communities in their efforts to conserve nature tourism, stakeholders have expressed their concerns regarding the clarity and practical implementation of the law, which may hinder the expected results. Despite the good intentions behind the Mount 2 Law, local communities may face challenges in effectively implementing conservation strategies due to limited resources, legal vagueness, and the need for more precise guidelines (Courrèges, 2018). Involving local communities can lead to better conservation practices, as they often have a deep understanding of local ecosystems and species; involving communities in decision-making processes can increase their commitment to conserving natural resources. Nature tourism can provide significant economic benefits to local communities, which can encourage them to engage in conservation efforts. Nature tourism can foster a sense of pride and identity among local communities, enabling them to conserve their natural heritage. However, the effectiveness of local communities in conserving natural tourism can be hindered by conflicts among stakeholders, lack of resources, and lack of support from government agencies (Bentz et al., 2013).

Local communities are essential stakeholders in tourism development. Their involvement in decision-making processes ensures that tourism initiatives are aligned with community values and environmental conservation goals. Effective stakeholder engagement can result in better natural resource management and improved sustainability. By educating visitors about local ecosystems and cultural heritage, communities can foster a sense of responsibility and encourage sustainable behaviour among tourists. Local communities can help mediate conflicts that arise between tourism development and conservation efforts. Their insights and experiences can facilitate dialogue among stakeholders, leading to more balanced and sustainable outcomes (Dwyer, 2008). The active involvement of local communities in conservation efforts often results in more effective preservation of natural resources. By integrating nature tourism with regional economic development, communities can benefit financially while conserving their natural environment. Their involvement in tourism can help promote and preserve cultural heritage alongside natural resources. Local communities can act as educators for tourists, sharing knowledge about ecosystems and the importance

of conservation which can enhance the overall tourism experience and promote conservation awareness (Ferreira, 2006). Communities actively involved in tourism management can promote sustainable tourism practices. By participating in the development of tourism policies and practices, residents can help reduce negative impacts on coastal ecosystems, such as overfishing, pollution and habitat degradation. Local communities can act as effective environmental stewards by raising awareness of the importance of marine conservation among tourists and other stakeholders (Purwanto et al., 2021).

Local communities play an essential role in the management and sustainability of nature tourism. Empowering local communities can increase their commitment to conserving natural resources. When local communities benefit economically from nature tourism, they are more likely to engage in conservation efforts. Revenue generated from tourism can be reinvested into local conservation initiatives, creating a direct link between tourism and environmental conservation. The integration of local cultural practices and knowledge into tourism can enhance the authenticity of the experience while promoting conservation. Recognising and valuing indigenous knowledge can lead to more effective management strategies that are aligned with cultural and ecological preservation (Sumanapala & Wolf, 2023). Local communities' positive attitudes towards tourism development indicate that residents are generally supportive of initiatives that promote tourism, which may lead to greater involvement in conservation efforts. Residents show awareness of the negative impacts of tourism, such as environmental degradation and pollution. This awareness can motivate communities to engage in conservation activities and advocate for sustainable practices that protect their natural environment. When communities have a say in how tourism is developed, they are more likely to support sustainable practices that align with their values and needs, thus increasing their effectiveness in conserving nature (Obradović & Tešin, 2023).

3.1.4 Local Community Barriers To Preserving Nature Tourism

Barriers faced by local communities in preserving nature tourism, such as limited access to resources: Communities may lack access to financial resources, training, and technology necessary for sustainable tourism practices. Conflicts between different stakeholders, such as government authorities, private tourism operators and local communities. Lack of education and awareness about the benefits of conservation and sustainable tourism can hinder community engagement. In some cases, tourism development can lead to the displacement of local communities or the erosion of their cultural heritage (Sumanapala & Wolf, 2023).

Local communities also have other barriers, such as Limited Resources. Many local communities may lack the financial and human resources necessary to implement sustainable tourism initiatives effectively. Limited funds and support can hinder their ability to develop and sustain environmentally friendly tourism practices. Implementation Challenges: Even with supportive legislation in place, practical implementation of preservation strategies can be complex. Local communities may struggle with the logistics of implementing sustainable practices, especially if they do not have adequate training or infrastructure (Courrèges, 2018). While local communities play an essential role in conserving nature tourism, their involvement can also face other barriers, such as Lack of Coordination and Cooperation. Conflicts among stakeholders, such as whale-watching operators, government agencies, and local communities, can hinder effective management and conservation efforts. Environmental Vulnerability:

Local ecosystems are highly vulnerable to changes such as climate change, pollution and invasive species. Lack of Awareness and Education: There may be a lack of awareness among local communities about the importance of sustainable practices and the long-term benefits of conserving natural resources (Bentz et al., 2013). Other barriers include External Influences, where external stakeholders, such as large tourism companies or government entities, can impose development plans that do not consider the interests of local communities and Regulatory Challenges, where complicated regulations and bureaucratic processes can create barriers for local communities wanting to engage in nature tourism. Navigating these regulations can be daunting, especially for smaller community-based initiatives (Dwyer, 2008).

Local communities face various barriers when their involvement is crucial in conserving nature tourism. External factors: government policies, industrial development, and large-scale tourism operations can undermine local conservation efforts, and if the economic benefits of tourism are not fairly distributed within communities, this can lead to dissatisfaction and reduced support for conservation efforts. Communities can feel marginalised if they do not see direct benefits from tourism, leading to resistance to conservation initiatives (Purwanto et al., 2021). Local communities play an essential role in conserving nature tourism but their involvement can be a barrier in itself. Without adequate support, their ability to preserve nature is severely limited. Many residents lack sufficient knowledge of sustainable tourism practices and the importance of conservation. The negative impacts of tourism, such as pollution and habitat destruction, can discourage local communities from supporting tourism development. If residents feel that tourism is damaging their environment, they may become resistant to tourism initiatives. Policy and Regulatory Challenges: Ineffective policies or regulations related to land use and tourism management can create barriers to sustainable practices. If local communities feel that policies do not support their conservation needs or goals, then they will be less likely to engage in conservation efforts (Obradović & Tešin, 2023).

3.2 Discussion

To empower local communities in their efforts to conserve nature tourism, Stakeholders have expressed their concerns regarding the clarity and practical implementation of the law, which may hinder the expected results (Courrèges, 2018). Involving local communities can lead to better conservation practices, as they often have a deep understanding of local ecosystems and species; involving communities in decision-making processes can increase their commitment to conserving natural resources. Nature tourism can provide significant economic benefits to local communities, which can encourage them to engage in conservation efforts (Bentz et al., 2013).

Local communities are essential stakeholders in tourism development. Their involvement in decision-making processes ensures that tourism initiatives are aligned with community values and environmental conservation goals. Effective stakeholder engagement can result in better natural resource management and improved sustainability (Dwyer, 2008). The active involvement of local communities in conservation efforts often results in more effective conservation of natural resources. By integrating nature tourism with regional economic development, communities can benefit financially while preserving their natural environment (Ferreira, 2006). Communities actively involved in tourism management can promote sustainable tourism practices. By participating in the

development of tourism policies and practices, residents can help reduce negative impacts on coastal ecosystems, such as overfishing, pollution and habitat degradation. Local communities can act as effective environmental stewards by raising awareness of the importance of marine conservation among tourists and other stakeholders (Purwanto et al., 2021).

Local communities play an essential role in the management and sustainability of nature tourism. Empowering local communities can increase their commitment to conserving natural resources. When local communities benefit economically from nature tourism, they are more likely to engage in conservation efforts (Sumanapala & Wolf, 2023). Local communities' positive attitudes towards tourism development indicate that residents are generally supportive of initiatives that promote tourism, which may lead to greater involvement in conservation efforts. Residents show awareness of the negative impacts of tourism, such as environmental degradation and pollution. This awareness can motivate communities to engage in conservation activities and advocate for sustainable practices that protect their natural environment. When communities have a say in how tourism is developed, they are more likely to support sustainable practices that align with their values and needs, thus increasing their effectiveness in conserving nature (Obradović & Tešin, 2023). The obstacles faced by local communities in preserving nature tourism include limited access to resources, conflicts between different stakeholders, lack of education and awareness, and lack of access to natural resources (Sumanapala & Wolf, 2023). Local communities also have other barriers, such as Limited Resources, funding and support, which can hinder their ability to develop and sustain environmentally friendly tourism practices and implementation challenges (Courrèges, 2018). Local communities play an important role in preserving nature tourism. Still, their involvement can face various other barriers, such as Lack of Coordination and Cooperation, Environmental Vulnerability and Lack of Awareness and Education (Bentz et al., 2013).

Other barriers include External Influences, where external stakeholders, such as large tourism companies or government entities, can impose development plans that do not consider the interests of local communities and Regulatory Challenges, where complicated regulations and bureaucratic processes can create barriers for local communities wanting to engage in nature tourism. Navigating these regulations can be daunting, especially for smaller community-based initiatives (Dwyer, 2008). Local communities face various barriers when their involvement is crucial in preserving nature tourism. Many of the obstacles they face are that the demand for direct income from tourism can result in practices that harm the environment, such as external factors, and the need to protect the environment (Purwanto et al., 2021). Local communities play an important role in conserving nature tourism, but their involvement can be a barrier. Without adequate support, their ability to preserve nature is severely limited. Many residents lack sufficient knowledge of sustainable tourism practices and the importance of conservation (Obradović & Tešin, 2023).

Here are specific policy solutions to enhance the effectiveness of local community involvement in nature tourism conservation:

Community-Based Tourism Training

1. Develop **certification programs** for local guides and hospitality providers in sustainable tourism practices.

2. Offer **technical training** in conservation skills, such as ecosystem monitoring, sustainable agriculture, and waste management.
3. Implement **language and cultural training** to improve local engagement with international tourists.

Legal Recognition and Rights of Local Communities

1. Ensure that **land-use policies** prioritize local community access to and management of natural tourism sites.
2. Strengthen **legal protections** for indigenous knowledge and cultural heritage within tourism activities.
3. Implement **community-based conservation agreements** that define local roles and responsibilities in environmental protection.

Tourism Revenue-Sharing Models

1. Introduce **eco-tax schemes**, where a portion of tourist fees directly funds community conservation efforts.
2. Mandate **corporate social responsibility (CSR) contributions** from large tourism businesses to support local environmental projects.
3. Develop **profit-sharing agreements** where a percentage of tourism revenue is reinvested into local infrastructure and conservation.

4. CONCLUSION

This systematic literature review research examines and reviews seven research articles that match the inclusion criteria set to answer the research question. Based on the analysis, the effectiveness of the role of local communities in conserving nature tourism is very important. The involvement of local communities can lead to better conservation practices, as they often have a deep understanding of their natural surroundings. Involving communities in decision-making can increase their commitment to conserving natural resources. They face obstacles or barriers when they are involved in the preservation of nature tourism. They include lack of training and education, limited funding and support, lack of coordination and cooperation, environmental vulnerability, lack of knowledge about tourism regulations, lack of awareness and other external factors.

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