CENTERING THE BAYAN YOUTH OF LOMBOK:
Local-Based Religious Cultural Tourism Development in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

Tourism development strategies are an important aspect of tourism development. Bayan Mosque in Lombok is important to develop as religious cultural tourism using a local approach. Applying qualitative methods, case study approach and field research this study aims to uncover the problems faced by the local community in developing cultural tourism; the local community has done to overcome these problems; the impact these efforts have had on the development of Bayan cultural tourism. The study revealed that the problems faced by the local community in developing Bayan religious cultural tourism include a lack of awareness among the local community regarding the potential of Bayan Mosque as a tourist destination, the absence of any institution managing the potential of the tourist destination; insufficient government attention to designing integrated cultural tourism within the community, and the scope of development efforts remains limited. Some young people in Bayan have made efforts such as supporting the emergence of local identity; developing visits to traditional villages around the Bayan Mosque; hearings with the Tourism Office for possible assis-

tance; forming a youth group that promotes tourism awareness; and involving the media in major events at the Bayan Mosque. The impact of these efforts has already led to a significant increase in tourist visits to the Bayan Mosque. These increasing visits are related to the efforts of the local community to involve the media in attracting tourists. It can be concluded that efforts to develop tourism must be comprehensive, including the media.

Keywords: Tourism; Cultural Conservation; Bayan Mosque; Traditional Village; Media

INTRODUCTION

Strategy for tourism development has been widely defined as a comprehensive planning and management framework that integrates economic, cultural, and environmental dimensions to achieve long-term sustainability (Hall, 2008; Inskeep, 1991). Scholars argue that strategic approaches are essential in ensuring that tourism not only contributes to economic growth but also protects cultural resources and strengthens community participation (Dredge, 2007). In particular, when tourism is linked to cultural and religious heritage, strategic planning becomes critical to balance authenticity, conservation, and visitor expectations (Prawiro, 2022). Therefore, tourism development strategy should be viewed as a negotiated and context-sensitive process rather than a purely technical instrument of economic planning.

Academic debates on tourism development strategy have shifted significantly over the past three decades, moving from growth-oriented frameworks to more sustainable and community-based paradigms. Early studies emphasized national planning and infrastructure development as central pillars of strategy (Hall, 2008). Later research, however, critiqued such approaches for neglecting local agency and cultural authenticity, leading to the rise of community-based and participatory tourism models (Lu et al., 2020; Scheyvens, 2011). More recent works highlight the importance of governance, networks, and collaborative arrangements in tourism development, particularly in contexts where multiple stakeholders—including local communities, governments, and private actors—must negotiate interests and responsibilities (Lane, 2011; Camargo, 2014). These scholarly debates underline that tourism development strategies are no longer seen as top-down planning tools but as dynamic processes shaped by local culture, institutional arrangements, and global tourism trends.

Cultural tourism has been increasingly recognized as a cornerstone of sustainable tourism due to its ability to preserve heritage while generating economic benefits. Scholars underline that cultural authenticity and community

ownership are critical elements for long-term success. Su et al. (2020) showed that heritage preservation in China requires not only physical conservation but also the safeguarding of intangible traditions (Lu et al., 2020). Wijesinghe et al. (2020) highlighted that in Sri Lanka, local communities benefited from cultural tourism only when decision-making was participatory (Wijesinghe, 2020). Richards and Du Cros (2021) further emphasized the risk of cultural commodification when heritage assets are packaged solely for tourist consumption (Richards, 2021). In contrast, Li et al. (2021) demonstrated that heritage tourism in Europe flourishes when authenticity is maintained through transparent interpretation practices (Li, 2021). Collectively, these works point to the fact that cultural tourism development sustains its appeal only when cultural integrity and local benefits are prioritized.

Religious cultural tourism has emerged as a distinctive subfield that integrates spiritual practice with cultural appreciation. Researchers consistently stress that religious sites require sensitive management to serve both worshippers and tourists. (Shinde, 2020) noted that in India, over-commercialization of sacred spaces risks alienating pilgrims, while Hsu C (2020) documented how Egypt's religious tourism struggles with balancing visitor numbers and the preservation of sanctity (Hsu et al., 2020). Jørgensen (2021) argued that successful religious tourism in Europe depends on clear zoning between sacred and tourist areas. Similarly, Goh and Ramli (2022) highlighted that Malaysia's religious destinations prosper when religious authorities are actively involved in planning processes (Goh, 2022). Darmawan et al. (2023) provided evidence from Indonesia, showing that maintaining spiritual authenticity is the cornerstone of sustainable religious tourism (Darmawan, 2023). Together, these works confirm that religious cultural tourism must prioritize spiritual integrity while also creating avenues for local benefits.

Despite the growing literature on tourism development strategies, studies that focus on religious-based cultural tourism remain limited, especially in the Indonesian context. Having diverse cultural and religious heritage Indonesia provides unique opportunities for tourism development, but also poses challenges of conservation, authenticity, and community participation (Hitchcock, 2007). The Bayan Mosque in North Lombok, as one of the oldest mosques in the region, represents not only a historical site but also a living cultural and religious tradition. Yet, the strategic development of this site as a cultural tourism destination has received little academic attention. This study addresses this gap by analyzing how local communities in Bayan design and implement tourism development strategies around the mosque, and how these efforts contribute to both cultural conservation and tourism growth.

The novelty of this research lies in linking tourism strategy discourse with the dynamics of local religious heritage management.

Based on the above description, this study focuses on exploring strategies for community-based religious cultural tourism development in Bayan, with emphasis on local initiatives and challenges. There are three interrelated research questions to explore the focus: (1) What problems are faced by the local community in developing Bayan Mosque as a cultural tourism destination? (2) What efforts have the local community tried to address these problems? and (3) What impacts have these efforts produced on the development of religious cultural tourism in Bayan? Those questions based on the assumptions that there are problems that local community facing in developing local potentials in shaping the trajectory of cultural tourism development. It also assumes that local communities have their own ways to solve the problems; and to some extent there must be some impacts come out from the efforts.

This study was conducted in Bayan, North Lombok, Indonesia, with a particular focus on the Bayan Old Mosque (*Masjid Kuno Bayan*). The mosque, built in the 16th century, is not only one of the oldest mosques in Lombok but also represents a unique intersection of Islamic and local Sasak traditions, making it a vital site of religious cultural heritage (Hitchcock, 2007; Prawiro, 2022). Despite its historical and cultural value, the site has not been fully developed as a cultural tourism destination.

The study employed a qualitative research methodology with a case study, which is appropriate for examining social phenomena in depth and within their real-life context (Creswell, 2018; Yin, 2018). A descriptive approach was used to capture community perspectives, local practices, and institutional dynamics in developing cultural tourism. Such an approach is suitable for exploring local strategies that emerge organically from community engagement rather than being externally imposed (Merriam, 2016). The data consisted of primary and secondary sources. Primary data were drawn from in-depth interviews with local community leaders, youth organizations, mosque caretakers, and government officials in Lombok. Secondary data included local government reports, media coverage, and previous studies on cultural tourism in Lombok. According to Flick (2018), combining multiple sources of data enables triangulation, thereby strengthening the credibility of the findings (Flick, 2018).

Data collection relied on three main techniques: in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis. Interviews were conducted using semi-structured guides, allowing flexibility to capture participants' lived experiences (Kvale, 2015). Informants for this interview were selected in the

principle of representativeness, and there are seven informants involved in this research. Tabel 1 below shows the list of the informants. Participant observation was employed during cultural and religious events at the Bayan Mosque and surrounding traditional villages, in line with ethnographic approaches that highlight cultural practices in situ (Angrosino, 2016). Document analysis involved reviewing written records, government documents, and media reports related to tourism and cultural development in Bayan.

Tabel 1. List of Informants

No	Name/Initials	Gender	Position
1	Br	Man	Tourist activist
2	Nd	Woman	Tourist activist
3	Shd	Man	Community leader
4	Sr	Woman	Woman community leader
5	Td	Man	Tourism Office
6	Rh	Man	Mosque management
7	Dn	Man	Local area management

Source: *Primary data*

The collected data were analyzed applying a thematic analysis approach, allowing the identification of patterns and themes emerging from the field (Braun S Clarke, 2019). The analysis followed the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2019), which includes data condensation, data display, and drawing/verifying conclusions (Miles, 2019). This approach enabled the researcher to link community narratives with broader issues of tourism development and cultural preservation.

MINDSET ABOUT WELFARE IMPACT OF TOURISM

Some interviews revealed that many residents perceive tourism as benefiting only a few actors, with little impact on household welfare. For example, as said by Sr, a woman community leader in Bayan:

> We were very familiar with the historic Bayan Beleq Mosque. But we didn't realize that this neglected mosque had economic potential due to its historical and cultural significance. I, as did the local people, wondered what could be done with a mosque that was in such disrepair.

The statement was strengthened by Dn, the local area management:

> In my opinion, the existence of this mosque is indeed a source of pride, as we, the people of Bayan, have a very ancient Islamic history. But who could have imagined that this historic mosque would benefit the surrounding community? Our livelihoods are still like this. For a mosque to attract tourists, it must be provided with various facilities. This is what we find difficult to imagine. What can we do and what can we gain?

The personal from the Tourist Office of North Lombok Regency, Td, also underlined the point:

> As a tourism authority, I understand why the community views Bayan's local tourism with skepticism that it will bring prosperity if properly managed. Good management requires the involvement of all parties. This is something the Bayan community has never witnessed before, so it's understandable they are unsure whether developing religious and cultural tourism at the Bayan Mosque will impact their well-being.

Based on the presentations from several informants, it is understandable why the community feels doubtful that the Bayan Mosque's potential as a local asset can provide prosperity for them because they have not yet lived it, have not experienced it, while the parties with the authority for tourism development have not given it proper attention, resulting in the tourist location not being managed properly. However, community involvement in managing tourist locations is very important in tourism development. In Zimmermann's model, this reflects a weakness in ancillary services, particularly community support. Studies in rural Indonesia and Southeast Asia show that when benefits are uneven, communities resist tourism development (Nepal, 2021).

Perception of distributive justice strongly influences whether local people become supporters or opponents of tourism (UNWTO, 2020; OECD, 2021). Research on community-based tourism in Bali also demonstrates that transparent revenue-sharing fosters stronger local involvement (Hitchcock, 2007). Thus, the Bayan case highlights the importance of embedding inclusive benefit-sharing mechanisms to shift local mindset from skepticism to ownership.

LIMITED UNDERSTANDING OF LOCAL POTENTIAL

As explained by Br, youth activist from Bayan:

Because Lombok is renowned for its natural beauty, both beaches and mountains, it seems that the rich potential for socio-cultural tourism has received less attention. This results in a gap in the development of cultural tourism compared to natural tourism.

Additional explanation of Td, as the side of tourism office:

According to the formal task, there is no intention to neglect cultural tourism. However, the agency's capabilities cannot satisfy all needs, as it prioritizes tourism that has already been developed. Therefore, the road map has not yet achieved the target of developing cultural tourism. Only Sade Village, Sukarara Village, and Banyumulek Village have been relatively developed.

The above data underlined that factually most local tourist operators rely only on natural landscapes, leaving cultural heritage, crafts, and local cuisine underdeveloped. In fact, cultural wealth with its various diversities is an additional aspect of comfort, attractions and amenities in carrying out tourism. According to Zimmermann in the context of tourism, attractions must be converted into consumable experiences. Similar findings from Yogyakarta reveal that without packaging cultural resources into structured products, destinations lose competitiveness (Nurozi, 2021). Asset-mapping approaches in Malaysian and Thai villages proved effective in identifying overlooked tourism resources (Radianti, 2024). Richards (2021) further shows that creative tourism—co-creating experiences with locals—enhances both visitor satisfaction and local pride (Richards, 2021). Thus, capacity building and cultural product development are crucial for Bayan to strengthen its tourism portfolio.

CHALLANGING PROMOTION FROM OUTSIDE LOMBOK

Informants noted that tourists prefer destinations like Bali and Flores due to stronger promotion and branding. As Td, the personal of Tourism Office of North Lombok Regency

We realized that local promotion wasn't very progressive. We were a bit surprised when the Labuan Bajo tourist destination, for example, was heavily promoted. We realized that we hadn't made the necessary steps with media efforts. Media promotion is a necessity these days. Given this situation, we must consider how to promote Lombok's rich heritage to the world.

Informants, Br and Na, added the explanation about the problem on promotion.

> Yes, Bayan's presence on digital platforms is minimal, and promotion relies mainly on word of mouth. Factually we have We use Instagram to spread information about the Bayan Mosque. Of course, because it's not a promotional platform and isn't paid, its reach is limited. It is only specific person who watch our platform.

So, it's understandable that the problems that arise stem from two directions: internal and external. Both directions influence each other. Internal promotion that hasn't been developed in a planned and widespread manner using simple media, compared to massive promotion with media that has a global reach, makes simple promotion appear to increasingly hinder the development of local potential. This relates to attractions positioning and ancillary marketing services. Zimmermann's model underlines that attractions must be supported by effective promotion to compete. Studies on Indonesian island tourism stress that branding and differentiation are decisive in competing with established destinations (Chin et al., 2017). Buhalis (2000) argues that niche positioning—rather than generic nature-based marketing—is key in competitive markets (Buhalis, 2000). Evidence from community tourism in Vietnam shows that crafting unique narratives allowed smaller destinations to draw attention despite limited resources (Nguyen, 2022). For Bayan, this means investing in unique storytelling around crafts and community culture.

In Zimmermann's framework, this is a failure in ancillary services—particularly communication infrastructure. Digital marketing has become central to destination competitiveness; destinations without online visibility are effectively "absent" from global tourism maps (Mitova et al., 2021). Show that user-generated content drives trust and engagement more than official campaigns (Hochstein et al., 2025). In Indonesia, found that micro-influencer collaborations significantly boosted small destinations' visibility (Candraningrum et al., 2022). Hence, Bayan urgently needs a systematic digital marketing strategy, leveraging social media storytelling, online booking platforms, and partnerships with travel bloggers.

INADEQUATE FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

The observation in situ showed that although Bayan Beleq Mosque is an important historical and cultural artefact but the facilities supporting the

tourist destination is very limited. Some facilities that often draw attention from visitors, such as environmental cleanliness, comfortable walking paths, clean water availability, and toilets, have yet to be addressed.

These observations were also acknowledged by an informant, Dn, who noted that there have been no serious efforts to better manage the Bayan Beleq Mosque tourist attraction. Br also stated that the condition of the Bayan Beleq Mosque tourist attraction remains rudimentary. There have been no attempts to renovate the mosque, which has been severely damaged, nor have there been any efforts to organize the surrounding area. Based on the observation results and explanations provided by informants, it can be confirmed that the Bayan Beleq Mosque tourist destination is a very important tourist destination that deserves development. Despite its under-management, tourist visits are already quite good. Better management would certainly boost the development of the tourist location and its community.

In the perspective of Zimmermann, the weakness of accessibilities and amenities in tourism destination will undermine the impressions and experiences of visitors, no matter how attractive the site. Research in Lombok and East Nusa Tenggara confirms that inadequate accessibility is a major barrier to sustainable tourism (Sari, 2024). ADB (2021) further shows that low-cost but targeted improvements—signage, rest stops, basic hygiene facilities—substantially increase visitor satisfaction and length of stay (Lee et al., 2020). Collaborative infrastructure initiatives involving local government, community groups, and private investors are therefore essential to strengthen Bayan's tourism readiness.

THE ROLE OF YOUTH IN DEVELOPING LOCAL TOURISM
Dissemination of Knowledge and Awareness-Raising Among Communities

One informant, Dn, stated that raising public awareness takes a long time because it involves thinking and awareness. Therefore, the approach taken by the younger generation is informal. For example, regarding the rules for entering the mosque area, which require wearing traditional clothing. To anticipate visitors not bringing the minimum traditional attire, officers provide *sarong*. Another informant, Br, added that the *sarong* was obtained by borrowing from local residents. The system is like a loan service, so the owner of the *sarong* will get financial results. Although not much, it is gradually raising awareness among residents that visitors to the mosque bring sustenance to the community that supports it. Picture 2 shows the visitors of Bayan Beleq Mosque wearing *sarong* with specific style, and traditional head

cap for man visitor. Nd, a youth female activist added more explanation:

> Involvement of community members was also done by asking them to become internal guide who accompany the visitor and explain about the historical locus. At first many people reject the job, but now there is a schedule for whom want to take part as guide.

Thus, the process of raising awareness about the importance of tourism development to provide welfare benefits is by providing community members with the experience of being involved. Ancillary services, particularly community support, are the backbone of sustainable tourism (Zimmermann, 2020). Raising awareness that tourism can generate equitable welfare is crucial to shift perceptions. Studies in Indonesian rural tourism demonstrates that community workshops and participatory planning increase local trust and ownership (Okazaki, 2008). Research from Thailand also shows that structured training empowers villagers to see themselves as active agents rather than passive beneficiaries (Kowitt et al., 2015). Hence, knowledge-sharing programs in Bayan should not only inform residents about potential benefits but also ensure that revenue- sharing models are transparent and inclusive.

Coordination and Capacity Building for Tourism Actors

One informant, Shd, as local community leader related to coordination and capacity building for tourism actors said:

> We believe we can't develop this traditional tourism industry on our own. Therefore, the youth, in particular, are trying to coordinate with the district tourism office and several tour operators to bring tourists they manage to visit the Bayan Beleq Mosque as part of their Lombok tours. For example, on the trip from Senggigi to Rinjani, they can also visit the Bayan Beleq Mosque.

Nd, another informant also said:

> Several tours have already included a visit to this oldest mosque in Lombok. For now, we are emphasizing the historical aspect of this mosque, as other supporting tourist attractions are not yet visible. So, some of the youths in our community tried to combine data, both from our side, such as written documents and oral sources from the eldest, as well as from academic documents.

Attractions and amenities are aspect that need professional management for

a good tourism destination. Strengthening local operators' skills in packaging cultural, culinary, and natural assets into consumable products is essential (Zimmermann, 2020). Evidence from Yogyakarta shows that guided training in storytelling and product diversification increased both tourist satisfaction and average spending (Trisoko et al., 2024). Richards (2021) argues that "co-created experiences" generate higher value than passive sightseeing (Richards, 2021). Moreover, case studies from Malaysia confirm that when artisans are trained to link crafts to tourist experiences, visitor engagement rises significantly (Ahmad et al., 2023). For Bayan, structured capacity-building programs will help operators develop authentic, competitive, and marketable tourism packages.

Strategic Promotion Applying Global Digital Marketing Platforms

In general, informants are aware about the need of digital media-based advertisement for promoting Bayan Mosque to global world. Dn, as local area management said:

> We realize that nowadays, it's impossible to offer anything, including tourist attractions, even good ones, without promoting them through digital media. Previously, it was considered sufficient to offer them through flyers and print media coverage. Now, with the development of digital media, digital media should be used. But this kind of media must be managed by young people. If we're like that, we can't keep up.

Br shared this:

> We have tried to utilize several platforms, such as Instagram, using the name "ktr.pelita_bayan" to spread information about Bayan to a global audience through digital media. The support from our friends has also been extraordinary, as they have also helped spread information about Bayan through their accounts, for example the account of "sekolah_adat_bayan". Indeed, creating a serious tour package offer using digital platforms requires special skills, but we haven't tried it seriously yet. Hopefully, we can do it in the future.

The informants' comments indicate a growing awareness among local communities of the importance of digital marketing efforts. Figure 3 is the example of performance of Instagram account as mentioned by informant. Although their current efforts are still minimal and don't involve much professional effort but their impact is important to note Mentioning ancillary marketing services is directly relevant here. Effective promotion is needed to

challenge competitors and increase visibility. Buhalis (2020) stresses that small destinations must adopt niche branding strategies that differentiate them from established hubs (Buhalis, 2000). Studies from Lombok show that highlighting unique selling points, such as traditional weaving and village festivals, effectively attracted domestic tourists (Sulfardin et al., 2024). Similarly, Nguyen (2022) shows how narrative- based campaigns helped remote communities in Vietnam gain recognition despite limited budgets (Nguyen, 2022). For Bayan, coordinated branding—emphasizing crafts, cultural traditions, and eco-friendly practices—can strengthen its market position.

Figure 1. Instagram Platform of @ktr.pelita_bayan and @sekolah_adat_bayan
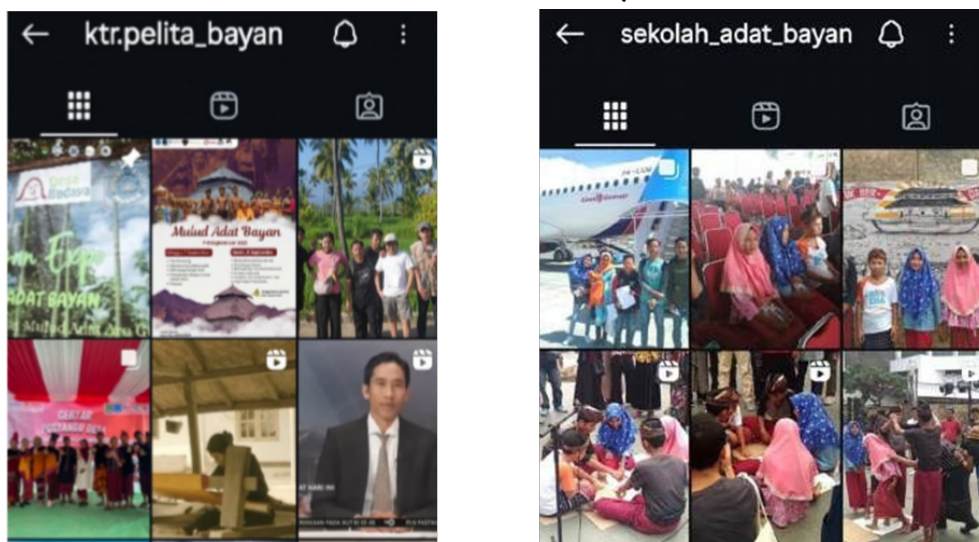
Source: *Instagram*

The minimal expose of Bayan in digital ecosystems is a critical weakness in communication-related ancillary services. According to Zimmermann's framework attractions are irrelevant without visibility (2020). Kiráľová S Pavlíčeka (2015) demonstrate that destinations with active digital presence achieve exponential growth in reach. Correia et al., (2025) emphasize that social media and user-generated content shape destination image more effectively than official advertisements Research in Indonesia also found that Instagram-based campaigns and influencer collaborations significantly boosted small-scale tourism destinations (Hochstein et al., 2025). Thus, Bayan should invest in digital branding, optimize Google Maps presence, develop multilingual websites, and collaborate with micro-influencers to extend its reach internationally.

Collaborative Infrastructure Development

Pertaining to the infrastructure development in Bayan, Td said:

> Supporting factors for attracting more tourists require serious networking efforts. There are some cooperations with other institutions for supporting Bayan development. For example, cooperation with University of Mataram in the program of the Community Service Program (KKN). In this program students helped create signage, including around the Bayan Mosque (Figure 5). The cooperation with Regional Drinking Water Company (PDAM) which provided water installation facilities and water tanks. The cooperation with Public Works Department resulted in toileting program. But they are not enough for supporting the local tourism isn't enough, because all of these programs are incentive programs. We must follow up on our own. This is our limitation. For further development, we must always strive for collaboration with.

Based on the above data, the point here is that infrastructure in Bayan Mosque surroundings as tourist destination is still limited. According to Zimmermann (2020) accessibility and amenities is something fundamental. Without basic infrastructure, attractions cannot deliver meaningful experiences. ADB (2021) found that even modest infrastructure improvements (roads, signage, hygiene facilities) enhanced visitor length of stay by up to 30%. Nalikan et al. (2025) argue that government-community-private sector collaboration ensures sustainability in infrastructure investment. Evidence from East Nusa Tenggara shows that community-driven tourism infrastructure reduced maintenance costs and fostered local pride (Hamid, 2025). For Bayan, infrastructure development should prioritize low-cost, high-impact improvements while ensuring participatory governance, so the community feels both ownership and responsibility.

The Impacts of Tourism Development Strategies

There are several social and cultural impacts from the various efforts undertaken by the younger generation in Bayan, for example, in the area of participation in the management of tourism at the Bayan Mosque. As stated by ShA, a community leader, who stated: "It's a slow process, but I see changes. For example, the community is starting to participate, for example, by lending sarongs for visitors to wear, acting as guides, and other roles that appear to

support tourism at the Bayan Mosque." Td, a official of the tourism office, stated that the effort to mandate the use of sarongs and head coverings for entry into the mosque grounds strengthens the identity of the Bayan community.

Economically, although not yet optimal, community involvement has generated some economic benefits. Sr, a female leader of the local community, stated that now, in addition to giving alms upon entering the mosque grounds, visitors rent sarongs and are accompanied by a local guide. Guests are almost always directed to visit the traditional house located next to the mosque. As guests, the hosts often offer hot drinks, such as local coffee. Visitors generally offer a small token of gratitude for the hospitality. It may not be much, but the good relationship makes us happy.

Another economic aspect, for example, was conveyed by Br:

> Although proceed slowly but our efforts in collaboration with some tourism agents supported the tourist visit to Bayan Beleq Mosque. So, it will support all economical profit of community members surrounding the mosque. For example, related to the existence of parking services, soft drink sellers and simple food, which according to him is a potential that can be developed.

The growing awareness among youth to mobilize local communities in safeguarding and developing tourism assets indicates a shift in collective mindset. This reflects Zimmermann's (1995) notion of *psychological empowerment*, where community members begin to perceive tourism as part of their agency and identity (Zimmerman, 1995). Similar findings are noted by (Nepal, 2021), who argue that youth-driven initiatives in coastal tourism areas often stimulate broader civic participation. In Lombok, such awareness aligns with community-based tourism models emphasizing local stewardship (Darmawan, 2025).

The creation of tourism packages by young people suggests the development of entrepreneurial capacities and practical skills in local tourism economies. This resonates with Zimmermann's (2000) framework of *behavioral empowerment*, where empowerment is expressed through proactive action (Zimmermann, 2000). Empirical studies in Indonesia show that youth involvement in package design increases the competitiveness of less-known destinations by highlighting unique cultural and natural assets (Sihombing, 2023). It also indicates that empowerment goes beyond awareness, translating into concrete economic activities.

The effort to produce video marketing content reflects adaptive responses to

the digital era in promoting destinations. According to Zimmermann (2000), empowerment also involves *control over resources*, including access to new communication technologies. Studies have found that social media and visual storytelling by local actors can significantly expand destination visibility and authenticity (Maares et al., 2021). In Bayan Lombok, these attempts show that young people are not only consumers of digital content but also producers, positioning themselves as agents in the global tourism discourse.

Related to the institutional and infrastructure improvement impact among Bayan community, Td, an official at the North Lombok Tourism Office, said:

> "The pioneering collaborations that have been undertaken by the community, for example with several regional companies and agencies such as the Regional Drinking Water Company and the Public Works and Public Housing Agency, universities, travel agencies, and visitors themselves, have fostered inter-institutional collaboration with the local community, enabling the development of these partnerships."

Br, as a local youth activist, also emphasized:

> Collaboration with various parties, although still in the initial stages and not yet fully developed, is crucial because it allows us to easily communicate our needs. Although the implementation is also very dynamic, we know which institutions or parties to turn to when we need something. That is the positive point of having collaborative relation to others, both institutional and personal.

Observation reveals that the infrastructure needed to support the development of tourism at the Bayan Beleq Mosque has not received sufficient attention. Sanitation facilities, such as water and toilet facilities, are very limited and inadequate. Despite this, the presence of infrastructure facilities, no matter how simple they are, demonstrates that efforts are being made by Bayan community members to improve infrastructure surrounding Bayan Mosque surroundings. This infrastructure improvement illustrates a form of political empowerment in which communities engage with decision-making processes that affect their environment. Research in similar rural tourism contexts reveals that when communities proactively articulate demands for infrastructure, it increases the likelihood of government responsiveness and sustainable development (Xiao et al., 2024). In Bayan Mosque surroundings, this signifies a transition from passive beneficiaries to active stakeholders in tourism governance.

The findings from Bayan Lombok highlight a dynamic process of empowerment that aligns closely with multidimensional framework (Zimmermann, 2000). The problems initially rooted in structural barriers—such as weak promotion, inadequate infrastructure, and limited local capacity—are progressively addressed through coordinated strategies and youth-driven initiatives. The impacts observed, ranging from heightened awareness to entrepreneurial ventures and advocacy for infrastructural improvement, suggest a transition from psychological empowerment (changing mindsets) to behavioral empowerment (concrete action) and ultimately to political empowerment (engaging institutions). These trajectories are consistent with studies on community- based tourism in Indonesia, where youth often serve as catalysts for collective mobilization and innovation (Nepal, 2021). In this sense, tourism in Bayan Lombok is not merely an economic sector but also a platform for social transformation, where communities redefine their relationship to local assets and external markets. However, sustaining these impacts requires continuous institutional support, inclusive participation, and equitable benefit distribution, as emphasized in broader debates on sustainable and community-based tourism (Scheyvens, 2011).

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study indicate that the development of tourism in Bayan Lombok is still confronted with multiple and interconnected challenges. The mindset of the local community often reflects skepticism toward tourism as a pathway for welfare improvement, showing that benefits are not yet visible in everyday life. This perception is compounded by the limited capacity of local tourism actors who are not fully aware of, or able to maximize, the unique potential of their surroundings. Moreover, external competition from the promotion of natural tourism destinations outside Lombok has created an overshadowing effect that reduces attention to local attractions. The weakness of local promotional efforts and the inadequate availability of infrastructure further aggravate these obstacles. Despite these barriers, this study finds that the seeds of empowerment are emerging at the community level through small but significant actions that signal opportunities for long-term transformation.

In relation to the wider scope of studies on tourism development and community empowerment, this research provides a distinctive contribution by situating Bayan Lombok as a case where empowerment is understood as both a process of mindset transformation and as a collective effort for local advocacy. Many previous studies have focused on structural or policy-oriented perspectives of tourism development, while this study emphasizes

the dynamics of agency at the community level. It shows how young people, families, and local actors initiate small interventions such as raising awareness, organizing collaborative discussions, producing promotional content, and advocating for infrastructural improvement. This places the study in the midst of ongoing academic debates that ask whether tourism can truly become a driver of equitable development when communities themselves are not only the beneficiaries but also the active agents of change. The Bayan case demonstrates that empowerment is not a static outcome, but a continuous process that links awareness, coordination, and collective resilience in the face of structural constraints.

Like most case studies, this research is not without limitations. The analysis is largely dependent on qualitative data derived from observation and interviews, which means that broader structural or policy-level influences are not deeply covered. The geographic scope is also limited, which restricts the extent to which the findings can be generalized to other contexts beyond Bayan Lombok. Nevertheless, these limitations open up promising avenues for further research. Future studies could undertake comparative analysis across multiple tourism destinations in Lombok and beyond, incorporate perspectives from policymakers and private actors, and explore how digitalization and global media can enhance local empowerment strategies. Expanding the scope in this way would enrich the understanding of how community-based tourism initiatives can be strengthened and how empowerment processes can translate into sustainable, inclusive, and widely shared development outcomes.

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