

The Potential of Livelihood Transformation as a Strategy for Ensuring Household Economic Stability in Jikumerasa Village

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ABSTRACT

The role of tourism in maintaining economic stability at the household and regional levels is significant. The pursuit of enhanced household income opportunities has prompted individuals to transition their livelihoods from traditional sectors, such as fisheries, agriculture, and trade, to the tourism sector. However, the tourism sector is characterized by inherent challenges, notably its seasonal nature. This is further compounded by a dearth of knowledge concerning the management of tourist attractions among relevant business actors. To obtain a comprehensive understanding of the livelihood transformation from agriculture, fisheries, and trade to tourism, this study employed a qualitative research method with a phenomenological approach. The study was conducted in Jikumerasa Village, Buru Regency, Maluku Province Indonesia, involving informants who had transitioned from agriculture, fisheries, and trade to tourism. A total of 11 individuals were interviewed, including farmers, traders, employees, and fishermen. To enhance the credibility of the findings, a triangulation technique was employed, involving the insights of the village head, community leaders, and the manager of the Baikolek Jikumerasa Beach tourist attraction. The results indicate that the transformation of rural community livelihoods to the tourism sector is a multifaceted process involving economic diversification, social capital development, and cultural preservation. The predominant challenge confronting rural households pertains to the stability of their household economy, particularly with respect to meeting the manifold and evolving needs of their members. For these reasons, the government are suggested to promote community involvement, allocate resources to infrastructure development, and encourage the adoption of sustainable practices. These measures, if implemented, have the potential to unlock the full economic potential of tourism, thereby fostering the development of a resilient and thriving rural economy. To this end, government intervention through programs and policies is imperative, encompassing management training, financing, and promotion, to ensure the economic stability of households and beach attractions is maintained over the long term.

Keywords: livelihood transformation, household income, tourist attraction, economic stability

INTRODUCTION

The pursuit of fulfilling household needs is often hindered and threatened by the absence of a reliable source of income. This phenomenon is observable across various societal strata, particularly within rural communities. Consequently, individuals are compelled to explore alternative means of generating income to meet their fundamental needs. One such sector that offers potential for addressing these needs is the tourism sector. The tourism sector, in particular, plays a pivotal and strategic role in the economic landscape of a region, exerting a significant influence on its aggregate economic growth. The tourism sector's substantial role is evident in its capacity to absorb labor and generate business opportunities, which are substantial in number. Consequently, the tourism sector has emerged as a focal point for researchers and observers of tourism strategic issues, as evidenced by studies such as Mbaiwa (2018) in Okavango region in Botswana, Africa, Luo & Bao (2019) in South China, and Qin & Leung (2021) in Nalu Village, China.

In the context of the government's role, the tourism sector in Indonesia has undergone substantial advancements over time. The number of tourists visiting Indonesia in April 2022 reached 111,060 visits, marking a 499.01% increase compared to the number of visits in April 2021, which stood at 172,270. The tourism sector's contribution to the Indonesian economy in 2022 was 4%. This finding underscores the pivotal role of the tourism sector in driving economic growth and employment opportunities within the region, in addition to its significant contribution to foreign exchange earnings (Prayudi, 2020). Consequently, the advancement of tourism in a given area must prioritize the multifarious benefits it brings to numerous individuals. Furthermore, the development of tourism, through the provision of tourist attractions and supporting infrastructure, is more prevalent in rural areas. However, it is important to note that rural areas themselves are characterized by high levels of poverty in Indonesia. Rural areas have been identified as a primary contributor to the overall poverty rate in Indonesia, surpassing urban areas in this regard. According to data from BPS Indonesia (2023), the rural poor constituted 12.29% of the population, while the urban poor accounted for 7.50%.

In light of this reality, the government has initiated a program to develop the tourism sector in rural areas, with the aim of reducing poverty through the establishment of tourist villages. The overarching objective of this initiative is to stimulate economic growth, enhance community well-being, eradicate poverty, address unemployment, preserve the environment and natural resources, and promote cultural advancement. To this end, each region and village must assess its potential for enhancement and development to ensure the provision of added-value benefits and high productivity, thereby enhancing the welfare of the local community. The development of tourism villages must prioritize the sustainability of the livelihoods of the village community by leveraging the potential resources owned by the village and community.

Nevertheless, the development of a village into a tourist village is contingent upon the presence of certain criteria. These include the existence of potential products and attractions, human resource support, community motivation, adequate facilities and infrastructure support, supporting facilities for tourism activities, and the availability of land suitable for development into a tourist destination (Utomo & Satriawan, 2017). A tourist village is defined as an area, whether rural or suburban, that possesses distinctive characteristics, rendering it a potential tourist destination (Noviarita et al., 2021; Zakaria et al., 2014). These villages typically possess a high degree of cultural and historical authenticity, with their residents maintaining traditional customs and practices. Moreover, these communities often exhibit a robust social structure that is deeply intertwined with their daily activities and economic livelihoods, which are predominantly reliant on natural resources as a primary source of household income.

The potential natural resources present in Jikumerasa Village, located in Buru Regency, Maluku Province, Indonesia have the capacity to serve as tourism development objects, particularly in the context of natural tourism, as exemplified by Jikumerasa Beach. The establishment of Jikumerasa Village as a tourist village has a positive impact on the local community, generating business opportunities that contribute to the enhancement of community livelihoods and the attainment of greater prosperity. The presence of Jikumerasa Beach has been demonstrated to influence the transformation of community livelihoods. Initially, the residents of Jikumerasa Village primarily engaged in agriculture and fishing as their primary means of income. However, with the advent of tourism in Jikumerasa Beach, there has been a notable shift in their economic activities, with many transitioning to food and beverage sales, among other sectors.

In consideration of these factors, a review of extant literature on the impact of tourism on community economic development reveals a body of research, including that conducted by Hamzah et al (2018), that suggests a positive correlation between tourism and employment and business opportunities. However, it is important to note that there are still individuals in proximity to tourist attractions who experience financial hardship despite the presence of these economic opportunities. Consistent with this finding, a study by Djabbar et al (2021) revealed that the presence of handicraft products in Bima Regency has had a transformative effect on local communities. This phenomenon is exemplified by the increase in community members who have pursued higher education and have attained a more stable household economic status. The financial underpinnings of this initiative stem from the existence of the home-based creative enterprise known as “Lentera Donggo”. A similar finding was reported by Sudarmayasa & Nala (2019), who studied the impact of tourism on household income and educational attainment in Samarinda City.

The evolution of rural settlements into tourist village areas has been a catalyst for socioeconomic development and regeneration, particularly in areas where traditional agricultural activities are in decline. Moreover, rural tourism has been posited as a substitute for mass (Ghaderi & Henderson, 2012). Daldjoeni & Suyitno (2004) further emphasized the potential of the tourism sector to enhance rural communities’ income and contribute to village economic development. However, the strategic development of rural areas as tourist destinations necessitates a comprehensive approach that considers socio-cultural characteristics, geographical features, agricultural business patterns, rural-urban economic linkages, institutional sectors, and residential area characteristics. This assertion is corroborated by the findings in Mahoni (2018) and Shantika & Mahaggangaa (2018), which demonstrated the impact of the tourism sector on education, employment, and income for the community.

The extant research on tourism demonstrates a substantial impact on the household economy of rural communities, particularly in terms of increased income, employment opportunities, and the establishment of new businesses. Conversely, the transformation from agriculture to tourism does carry considerable risks to the sustainability of rural livelihoods. The transformation’s consequences manifest in the form of income uncertainty, jeopardizing the long-term economic viability of households and communities.

This phenomenon is exemplified by the evolution of Jikumerasa tourism. The designation of this village as a tourist village has prompted a significant transformation in the community’s economic structure, with many individuals transitioning from traditional occupations such as agriculture and fishing to roles in tourism-related services. However, if this transformation is not managed effectively, it may lead to community-wide uncertainty due to the potential disruption to local livelihoods. In light of these challenges, the following research questions have been identified: (1) What are the characteristics of the livelihoods of the community in Jikumerasa Village?; (2) What is the current state of the Baikolet Beach tourism site in Jikumerasa Village?; and (3) What factors drive the community of Jikumerasa Village to transform their livelihoods?

METHODS

Qualitative research methods employing a phenomenological approach were utilized to address research problems. The phenomenological approach referred a research method that aimed to describe and analyze phenomena, events, social activities, attitudes, beliefs, perceptions, and thoughts of individuals or groups (Nadirah et al., 2022). In this context, it was assumed that humans actively understood the world around them as a life experience and actively interpreted these experiences.

This research was conducted at Baikolet Beach, Jikumerasa Village, Lilialy Sub-district, Buru Regency, Maluku Province, Indonesia from November 2023 to June 2024. The selection of this site was predicated on the recognition that Jikumerasa Village stood as a region replete with notable tourist destinations, characterized by its alluring natural beauty. The research utilized a dual approach, incorporating both primary and secondary data sources. Primary data was defined as information that was directly obtained from the field through observation, documentation, and structured interviews using a questionnaire to informants. Secondary data, on the other hand, was obtained through literature studies in the form of research reports, books, internet sources, and available official government documents (Sugiyono, 2019).

Data collection techniques employed included interviews, observation, and documentation. According to Sugiyono (2019), interviews were conducted by posing direct questions to informants, and informants' answers were then documented. The observation method entailed making direct observations of the object of study. In this study, the observation was conducted in several stages, including pre-research, during-research, and post-research observations that were incidental. Finally, the documentation stage was carried out by taking or making documents or notes considered necessary.

The informants included in this study were selected based on specific criteria, with the aim of ensuring a diverse range of perspectives. This study employed a purposive sampling technique (Sugiyono, 2016) to identify the informants. The key informants consisted of farmers, fishermen, and traders who resided in Jikumerasa Village and operated businesses in Baikole Beach tourism attraction. The latter category of informants was intended to select data sources or people who were considered to know best about what was expected. Consequently, the selected informants included the Head of Jikumerasa Village, community leaders (traditional leaders), and managers of Baikole Beach tourism attraction. These informants also served as a data validity checker using the data triangulation method. The source triangulation involved comparing observations with interviews, comparing public and private statements, and contrasting interview results with existing documents (Moleong, 2018).

This study followed several stages of data analysis proposed by (Moustakes, 1994) including:

- a) Organizing the data – conducted by creating transcripts on all interview results (including in the native language and in Indonesian).
- b) Decoding the data – conducted by making notes on data considered important and assigning codes to each line of interviews with footnotes.
- c) Reducing the data – conducted by eliminating elements unrelated to the research theme. The process of horizontalization entailed the grouping of statements that shared the same value or those that were irrelevant to the research theme or overlapping. This step ensured that no deviation occurred. The statements were then systematically collected into units of meaning, and a description was written about how the experience occurred using language that was easily comprehensible. This constituted the focal point of the research discussion, with the results of the research being addressed in the discussion section.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Characteristics of Livelihoods of Jikumerasa Village Community

The livelihoods of rural communities were characterized by intricate interactions between economic, social, and environmental factors that influenced their daily lives and long-term sustainability. A distinguishing attribute of rural livelihoods was their reliance on agriculture, which had historically served as the foundation of rural economies. However, it was observed that numerous rural regions were experiencing a process of “deagriculturalization”, characterized by the decline of conventional agricultural practices due to modernization and competition, resulting in the diversification of economic activities beyond agriculture (Papadopoulos, 2023). This transition was evident in numerous regions, where rural communities were increasingly engaged in non-agricultural activities such as tourism, construction, and services. These activities not only provided alternative sources of income but also enhanced overall economic resilience.

The transformation of livelihoods in rural areas was further influenced by the concept of livelihood capital, which encompassed the various forms of capital possessed by rural households, including human, social, physical, financial, and natural capital. According to Wang (2023), households with robust social networks and favorable social standing were more inclined to engage in entrepreneurial activities, thereby enhancing their economic conditions. This underscored the pivotal role of social capital in promoting entrepreneurial behavior and enhancing rural livelihoods. Furthermore, the diversification of livelihoods emerged as a pivotal strategy for adapting to evolving economic conditions and environmental challenges. In the context of rural tourism, a study emphasized that tourism should be regarded as a complementary activity that enhanced existing livelihoods rather than a standalone solution (Iorio & Corsale, 2010). This viewpoint was pivotal in elucidating how rural communities could leverage their distinctive resources and cultural heritage to devise sustainable tourism prospects that were economically viable for the local community.

The empirical findings in this study demonstrate that the community of Jikumerasa Village engaged in a variety of occupations to meet their household needs, including agriculture, fishing, trade, civil service, and voluntary work. However, the empirical findings also demonstrate that, despite their engagement in formal employment as civil servants, many of them also engaged in additional entrepreneurial activities, particularly in the domain of eucalyptus oil boiler production. This practice could be conceptualized as engaging in an additional economic activity to generate supplementary income. In addition to engaging in the distillation of eucalyptus oil, the community of Jikumerasa Village had identified a secondary revenue stream through the utilization of the Jikumerasa Beach tourism attraction. Individuals previously engaged in agricultural pursuits, fishing, and trade had transitioned to the tourism sector, becoming culinary entrepreneurs, and providing rental services for buoys and banana boats. The diversification of these activities was driven by the need to address the evolving demands of household life. The community's strategic shift towards tourism-related enterprises was also driven by the perception that these businesses hold greater promise and potential for ensuring the economic sustainability of their households.

Table 1. Changes in Jikumerasa Village Community Income

Occupation	Income	
	Before	After
Farmer	IDR 400,000 / month	IDR 600,000 / month
Trader	IDR 500,000 / month	IDR 600,000 / month
Fisherman	IDR 300,000 / month	IDR 600,000 – IDR 1,000,000 / month; and up to IDR 3,000,000 / month during holiday seasons.

Source: Research data, 2024

The informants explained that the decision to transition their livelihoods was influenced by a combination of factors, including enhanced financial security compared to their previous occupations, as well as competitive pressures from other vegetable traders.

I have been selling raw vegetables for 11 years, but now we can no longer sell vegetables to customers. Many customers prefer to buy vegetables that have been cooked. Moreover, from day to day, there are many mothers who also sell cooked vegetables (Mrs. Ida, 43 years old).

The aforementioned condition was further substantiated by the experience of a vegetable trader who transitioned to selling food and beverages at Baikolet Beach:

I originally traded vegetables, but my income decreased every day and sometimes no vegetables were sold. My customers prefer to order cooked vegetables online rather than buying raw vegetables.

The aforementioned informants' experiences demonstrate that income stability constituted the primary objective of individuals opting to alter their livelihoods. Several informants disclosed the necessity of allocating funds toward the rental fee of business kiosks. One informant explained that, despite the monthly rental fee, the revenue they obtained from this business significantly exceeded that of their previous occupation as a farmer. The monthly income from these kiosks had been sufficient to meet the financial needs of the family, including educational expenses for children and other household expenditures.

Furthermore, the livelihoods of the Jikumerasa Village community were influenced by the level of education and knowledge. Empirical evidence indicates that the average Jikumerasa Village community had received a satisfactory level of education, characterized by completion of high school and university. The impact of education on community management and development of production was a salient factor, with implications for household income. This underscored the notion that education and knowledge not only equipped individuals with the ability to think globally, but also fostered thoughtful decision-making. However, it was also important to recognize the complementary role of non-formal education, which was often imparted through parental work experience, in complementing formal education. The work experience of a household head could be applied and followed by family members.

Existing Condition of Jikumerasa Village Tourism

The existing conditions in tourist villages were indicative of a multifaceted interplay among socio-economic dynamics, cultural authenticity, and environmental sustainability. The concept of a tourist village was fundamentally predicated on the integration of local attractions, accommodation, and community life, which collectively engendered an authentic rural atmosphere that visitors found appealing (Nugroho & Triyono, 2022). However, the rapid influx of tourists had also led to significant changes in the spatial morphology of rural settlements, as evidenced by increasing land use intensity and potential loss of rural areas (Xi et al., 2015). This transformation often gave rise to a “core-periphery” pattern, where areas in closer proximity to tourist attractions experienced heightened density and development, potentially overshadowing traditional village lifestyles (Fafurida et al., 2023). This phenomenon raised concerns about the sustainability of development, as the original appeal and authenticity of villages might be compromised in the pursuit of economic gain (Xi et al., 2015).

Furthermore, community empowerment was a critical factor in the success of tourism villages, as local governments and communities must assume responsibility for the management and preservation of their environment (Kusumaningtyas et al., 2022). A notable challenge confronting the communities was their limited comprehension of the principles underlying sustainable tourism (Sandy et al., 2022). Effective management strategies, such as the Triple Bottom Line concept, underscored the necessity of balancing economic, social, and environmental factors to enhance community welfare while ensuring the sustainability of tourism practices. In addition, the involvement of local communities in the planning and development process was essential to align tourism initiatives with their cultural values and needs (Shan, 2023). This participatory approach fostered a sense of ownership among the community and helped preserve the unique cultural heritage that attracted tourists.

Conversely, the availability of facilities at coastal tourist attractions exerted a pivotal influence on the overall visitor experience and satisfaction, which in turn impacted the destination’s attractiveness and sustainability. Coastal tourism, which frequently encompassed a range of activities such as sunbathing, swimming, water sports, and cultural experiences, was heavily reliant on the quality and accessibility of its facilities, including accommodation, restaurants, transportation, and recreational facilities (Fafurida et al., 2023). The presence of well-maintained infrastructure not only enhanced the tourists’ comfort and convenience, but also contributed significantly to their overall satisfaction and likelihood to return to the destination (Khurong & Nguyen, 2017). A research indicated that tourists were more likely to revisit destinations where their expectations regarding facilities and services were met or exceeded, underscoring the pivotal role of quality infrastructure in fostering repeat visits.

In the context of Jikumerasa Village tourism, the database for the previous three years, which was under the management of the Jikumerasa Beach tourism attraction manager, indicated a 5,587-tourist increase in tourist visits in 2022 compared to previous years. This finding underscored the pivotal role that tourist attractions played in the tourism sector. However, it was imperative to recognize that the allure of a tourist attraction was contingent upon its promotion and highlighting. The development of beach tourism, which integrated various attractions and supporting businesses, was crucial for creating a cohesive and attractive tourist experience (Fafurida et al., 2023). Conversely, inadequate facilities had been shown to deter potential visitors. A case in point was the Lasiana coastal area in Kupang, where dissatisfaction with available facilities hindered its attractiveness as a tourist destination (E & Dewi, 2020).

This observation highlighted the necessity for sustained investment in infrastructure to address the escalating demands of tourism. Beyond the development of physical infrastructure, effective management of these facilities emerged as a pivotal element in ensuring a positive visitor experience. The implementation of effective management practices, with a focus on maintaining cleanliness, ensuring safety, and enhancing accessibility, had been shown to result in a substantial increase in tourist satisfaction. Coastal areas that maintained pristine beaches and ensure safety were more likely to attract visitors seeking recreation (Uduma & Onukwube, 2012). This phenomenon was exemplified by the Baikolet Jikumerasa Beach tourism facilities, which contributed to an increase in Village Own-Source Revenue (Pendapatan Asli Desa, PADes) of IDR 280,921,000 in 2018. This figure increased to IDR 300,018,000 in 2019. However, in 2020, the amount of PADes decreased by IDR 98,000,000 due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic and the existence of a social restriction policy.

However, following the conclusion of the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the management of Baikolet Jikumerasa Beach undertook a renewed effort to enhance the appeal of the site for visitors by

providing a range of tourist facilities. Among the facilities made available were miniature boats, banana boats, and swimming pillows. The available tourist infrastructure encompassed a parking area for two and four-wheeled vehicles, food and drink stalls, and 15 gazebos. Notably, the manager had established food and drink kiosks, which were available for rental to individuals or entities seeking to establish commercial enterprises. The rental fee for these kiosks was set at IDR 300,000 per month.

The consequences of facility availability extended beyond the satisfaction of tourists; they also impacted the long-term sustainability of coastal tourism. As tourism continued to expand, the pressure on local resources and ecosystems intensified, underscoring the need for a balanced development approach that incorporated environmental considerations (Pathak et al., 2021). The implementation of sustainable tourism practices, including the use of eco-friendly accommodation and the management of waste responsibly, could serve as effective mitigation strategies for adverse impacts while concurrently enhancing the overall visitor experience. Destinations that prioritized sustainability in the development of their facilities were more likely to attract environmentally conscious tourists, thereby diversifying their visitor base and increasing long-term viability. Community involvement in the development and management of tourist facilities was also a critical factor in ensuring the sustainability of household livelihoods. This participatory approach fostered a sense of local ownership and pride, which could translate into better maintenance and management of facilities (Lim et al., 2018).

The potential of livelihood transformation as a strategy for ensuring household economic stability

The transformation of rural communities' livelihoods to the tourism sector signified substantial shifts in economic strategies, social structures, and cultural practices. This transformation was frequently precipitated by the acknowledgement of tourism as a substitute for traditional agricultural livelihoods, which might become increasingly untenable due to factors such as climate change, market volatility, and urban migration. In many rural regions, tourism had emerged as a complementary activity that diversified income sources, increased economic resilience, and fostered community development. A study by (Iorio & Corsale, 2010) explained the integration of rural tourism into family livelihoods in Romania, demonstrating how families leveraged their cultural heritage and natural resources to attract visitors, thereby enhancing their economic well-being while preserving their traditional practices.

Furthermore, it was also important to note the role of social capital in this transformation, as social capital facilitated the transition from traditional livelihoods to a tourism-based economy. Social networks and community cohesion empowered rural residents to collaborate in developing tourism initiatives, share resources, and effectively promote their destinations (Diedrich et al., 2018). This transition not only generated new income opportunities, but also reinforced community bonds and fostered a sense of collective ownership over local resources. The evolution of highland ethnic communities in China exemplified this phenomenon, highlighting the potential of cultural capital to enhance livelihoods. The strategic implementation of ethnic tourism had been identified as a catalyst for diversifying economic activities, empowering communities to leverage their distinctive cultural heritage while concurrently enhancing their economic well-being (Y. Li et al., 2016). This approach had been shown to generate income while also empowering communities to preserve their cultural heritage, thereby creating a sustainable development model that respected local traditions and practices.

However, the impact of tourism on rural livelihoods was not uniform. The extent of its impact was contingent on various factors, including the specific local context, the availability of resources, and the capacity of the community to manage and utilize these resources. In this regard, the presence of physical assets, such as infrastructure and facilities, had been demonstrated to exert a substantial influence on household income derived from tourism, as evidenced by a study conducted in Jiuzhaigou, China (Ma et al., 2018). It had been demonstrated that rural attractions with superior access to transportation, accommodation, and recreational facilities tended to attract a greater number of visitors, thereby improving the economic prospects of surrounding communities. Conversely, rural areas with inadequate infrastructure might encounter challenges in leveraging tourism for economic benefit. This observation underscored the necessity for targeted investments in facilities and services, with the aim of fostering sustainable development. Sustainable rural tourism had been identified as a significant catalyst for enhancing the livelihoods of indigenous communities. In Lavij, Iran, rural tourism had been associated with improved livelihoods, providing communities with alternative sources of income and reducing their dependence on traditional agricultural practices (Kheiri & Nasihatkon, 2016). This diversification was of particular importance in areas facing challenges related to declining agricultural productivity due to environmental pressures or market forces. The integration of tourism into the economic strategies of

rural communities had been demonstrated to engender greater resilience and adaptability in the face of changing circumstances.

Concurrently, within the scope of this study, the emergence of Baikolet Jikumerasa Beach tourism had exerted a substantial influence on the livelihoods and economic well-being of the Jikumerasa Village community. In the past, the primary occupations of the community of Jikumerasa Village were fishing, trading, and agriculture. However, a notable shift in their economic activities had been observed, with a transition toward roles in the tourism sector, such as management and entrepreneurship. Empirical evidence further indicates that individuals engaged in traditional employment also engaged in supplemental tourism-related activities. This phenomenon suggested that the livelihood transformation had the capacity to attract individuals seeking to enhance their economic conditions or maintain the economic stability of their households.

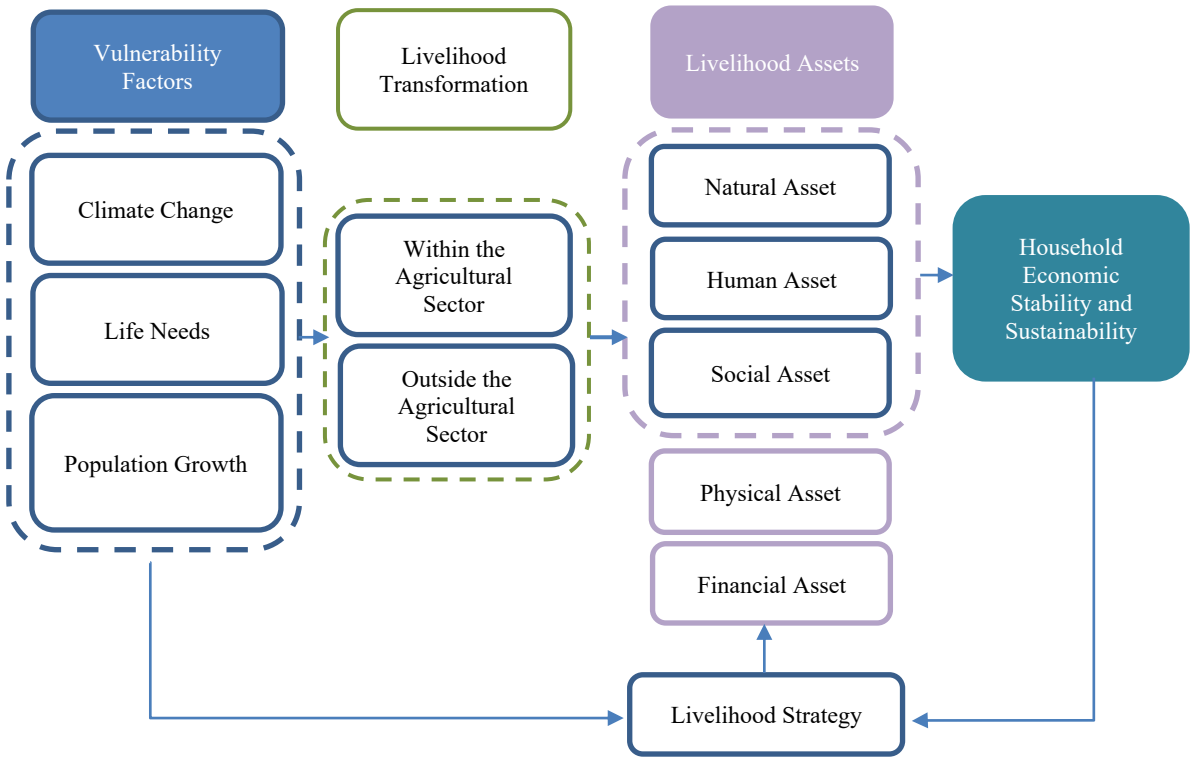


Figure 1. Livelihood Transformation and Household Economic Stability of Jikumerasa Village Community

The transformation of livelihoods was a phenomenon that could occur at all levels of society, irrespective of geographical location, whether in rural or urban areas. This phenomenon could be attributed to various factors, including vulnerabilities and threats to household income sources. This was also expressed by Singgalen et al (2023) who stated that transformation and diversification of people's livelihoods can occur when people face vulnerabilities in the form of shocks, trends and seasonality. A multifaceted set of factors had been identified as contributing to the livelihood transformation experienced by the Jikumerasa Village community. These include, but were not limited to, climate change, the increasing life needs, and population growth. These three factors had been identified as the primary drivers of livelihood transformation. Furthermore, the livelihood transformation that occurs could be from within the agricultural sector or from outside the agricultural sector. Empirical findings indicate that five livelihood assets were associated with economic stability in Jikumerasa Village. These assets encompassed natural asset, social asset, and human asset, which collectively contributed to maintaining economic stability. Conversely, physical asset and financial asset had not demonstrated a significant impact.

However, it was worth to acknowledge the seasonal nature of tourism, which engendered both challenges and opportunities for rural households. Many rural tourism households experienced income fluctuations based on the tourist season, prompting them to seek complementary livelihood strategies to

stabilize their income. These adaptations might include the resumption of traditional agricultural practices during periods of low tourist activity or the diversification of income-generating activities into areas such as handicrafts or local food production. A balanced integration of traditional and tourism-related livelihoods had been shown to enhance overall livelihood outcomes, as households developed the capacity to navigate the multifaceted dynamics inherent in seasonal tourism (Su, 2023). Furthermore, the transformation of rural livelihoods frequently entailed shifts in social structures and community dynamics. As tourism evolves, novel roles and responsibilities emerged within communities. Consequently, the involvement of local residents in planning and decision-making processes was significant to cultivate a sense of ownership and ensure that tourism development was aligned with community values and priorities.

In addition, the viability of tourism as a catalyst for enhancing rural livelihoods was contingent upon the effective management of natural and cultural resources. The implementation of sustainable tourism practices, which prioritized environmental preservation and cultural preservation, had the potential to establish a positive feedback loop. In this loop, the benefits that tourism brought to the region served to protect the resources that attracted visitors (H. Li et al., 2020). In other words, achieving a balance between economic and environmental objectives was important for ensuring the long-term sustainability of rural tourism. It was crucial to recognize the “role of seasonality” as a factor that could potentially impact the economic stability of rural households. It was therefore important to understand seasonal dynamics, especially in tourism-dependent areas, where fluctuations in visitor numbers could cause economic instability if not managed properly (Su et al., 2019).

CONCLUSION

The transformation of rural communities’ livelihoods to the tourism sector was a multifaceted process involving economic diversification, social capital development, and cultural preservation. The primary economic motivation that prompted the Jikumerasa Village community to transition their livelihoods from traditional occupations such as fishing, farming, and trade to the tourism sector was the pursuit of economic stability, manifested in the form of income. However, the tourism sector also posed challenges that necessitated meticulous consideration and management. The changing nature of household needs in Jikumerasa Village was another critical factor that must be understood and addressed. A salient factor pertained to the seasonal nature of tourism, which had the potential to act as a “boomerang” for business actors in the tourism sector. Furthermore, the competencies and proficiencies of communities in rural areas were not cultivated through educational or training programs specifically designed for tourism management. Consequently, during periods of economic stagnation, households might be susceptible to poverty. The results of this study are expected to encourage the potential for enhanced government collaboration with communities surrounding tourism sites. This collaboration is expected to contribute to the preservation of tourism sites as a vital source of household, village, and regional income. By fostering community participation, allocating resources to infrastructure development, and advocating for sustainable practices, rural regions can leverage the potential of tourism to establish resilient and prosperous economies that honor and celebrate their distinct cultural heritages. Furthermore, it is also important to acknowledge that the pursuit of tourism-based livelihood strategies is not solely about economic returns; it is also about empowering communities to shape their future while preserving their rich heritage and environment.

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