

Inclusive Tourism under Fragmented Governance: Structuration, Participation, and Rural Inequality in Bira Village, Indonesia

Irwan^{1*}, Akhmad Roja Badrus Zaman²

¹Department of Sociology, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Sawerigading University of Makassar, Jl. Kande, Makassar, 90151, Indonesia

²Orientalisches Seminar, Philologische und Philosophische Fakultät, Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg Germany, Werthmannstraße 12, Freiburg im Breisgau, 79098, Germany

*Correspondence e-mail: irwanunsa212@gmail.com

Received: April 15, 2025 | Revised: March 7, 2026 | Accepted: April 20, 2026 | Online Publication: April 28, 2026

ABSTRACT

Tourism development ideally requires the integrated participation of all social groups and institutional actors. Yet, in Bira Village, Bonto Bahari Subdistrict, Bulukumba Regency, tourism practices remain fragmented across structural levels. This study examines patterns of community involvement in sustainable tourism management, analyzes empowerment mechanisms that influence the emergence of inclusive tourism, and evaluates how structural and community-based approaches interact within the inclusive tourism village framework. Using a qualitative case study design, the findings identify three patterns of community participation—autonomous, structurally initiated, and subordinated—each shaped by unequal access to the rules and resources that structure tourism governance. Applying Giddens's structuration theory as an analytical lens, the study demonstrates how local actors negotiate institutional constraints while simultaneously reproducing them through everyday practices. The results reveal that inclusive tourism requires not only broadening participation but also addressing the redistribution of access, authority, and economic benefits within the governance system. The study concludes that inclusive tourism in Bira Village becomes attainable when fragmented institutional arrangements are coordinated through integrated governance and participatory empowerment.

Keywords: inclusive, inclusive tourism village, integrative, sustainable tourism, tourism village

INTRODUCTION

Tourism, within the context of Indonesia, constitutes a pivotal sector contributing significantly to national economic growth. Data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) consistently show an increase in foreign exchange earnings from tourism—USD 11.206 billion in 2016, USD 13.139 billion in 2017, and USD 16.426 billion in 2018 (BPS, 2018). These figures underscore tourism's strategic role in socioeconomic development and justify policies that position tourism as a key mechanism for advancing community welfare. Such national trends are mirrored in local regions, including Bira Village in Bonto Bahari Subdistrict, Bulukumba Regency, South Sulawesi. During the 2021 Eid al-Fitr holiday period, Bira Beach received approximately 6,000 visitors, generating IDR 155,775,000 in locally sourced revenue (Luthfi et al., 2023).

In theory, this scale of tourism activity should enable Bira Village to evolve into a sustainable and inclusive tourism destination—one capable of reducing poverty and broadening livelihood opportunities. Empirical studies support this expectation: tourism development combined with strong human resources has been shown to increase employment opportunities in Bali (Jayanthi & Utama, 2021), while tourism activities in Pulau Merah, Banyuwangi, have been found to directly enhance household income levels (Fairuza, 2017). Within the existing literature on rural and community-based tourism, inclusivity is therefore often conceptualized through indicators such as participation rates, income generation, and employment creation. Yet, the empirical reality in Bira Village diverges sharply

from these propositions. Despite its status as one of South Sulawesi's most popular destinations, 21% of Bira's 3,585 residents remain below the poverty line (BPS Kabupaten Bulukumba, 2021), and many vulnerable households continue to rely on social assistance outside national social protection programs. These data reveal a structural disconnect between the rapid expansion of tourism and the limited socioeconomic gains experienced by the community.

Understanding this disparity requires situating tourism within its broader regulatory and sociological frameworks. Indonesian Law No. 10 of 2009 conceptualizes tourism as an institutionalized system involving interactions among communities, entrepreneurs, government, and local authorities. Tourism also serves as a site of intercultural encounter that shapes social, economic, and cultural dynamics (Suryadana, 2013). Soemanto likewise emphasizes tourism as a systemic activity integrating individuals, groups, and institutions. Sociologically, these interactions are embedded in broader structures of power, meaning, and resource distribution (Soemanto, 2010). Cohen argues that tourism is simultaneously a micro-social and macro-social phenomenon—encompassing motivations, interactions, institutions, and social impacts (Cohen, 1984)—thereby necessitating a sociological lens for understanding its uneven effects in places like Bira.

While the symbolic meanings attached to tourism—entrepreneurial opportunity, modern identity, prestige—help explain patterns of individual participation, a micro-level symbolic interactionist approach alone cannot fully illuminate the structural disparities observed in Bira. The concept of social inclusion provides a more encompassing framework. Inclusive tourism, rooted in the principles of social inclusion, emphasizes equitable access to opportunities, decision-making, and benefits for all social groups, particularly the marginalized (Noorsetya et al., 2020). Research on inclusive development underscores the role of institutional support, village-owned enterprises (BUMDes), and participatory governance in fostering collective agency (Atkinson et al., 2002; Berkel & Møller, 2002). However, much of this scholarship tends to treat governance arrangements and resource distribution as enabling backgrounds, rather than as central objects of analysis. Conversely, social exclusion—defined as systematic barriers that limit participation (Chen & Francis-Tan, 2021; Rawal, 2024)—captures Bira's central paradox: tourism thrives economically while structural barriers prevent local communities from accessing its benefits.

Beyond its economic dimensions, inclusion involves questions of power, recognition, and belonging (Allman, 2013). Historical examples such as disability inclusion policies in Nordic countries demonstrate the need for both structural frameworks and cultural normalization (Barron, 2015). In tourism contexts, this implies that inclusion is not merely about community “participation,” but about equitable governance, redistribution of resources, access to decision-making, and institutional recognition. This perspective highlights an important research gap: limited attention has been given to how multi-level governance fragmentation and unequal control over resources actively produce patterns of inclusion and exclusion within community-based tourism settings.

To analytically capture these dynamics, this study employs the integrative paradigm (Ritzer & Goodman, 2004), which synthesizes social definition, social facts, and social behavior perspectives. Epistemologically, this study is grounded in an interpretive–critical sociological perspective, which understands social reality as relational and processual, and as constituted through the dynamic interplay between structure and human agency. Central to this paradigm is Giddens's structuration theory (Giddens, 2013), which conceptualizes social life through the interdependence of agency and structure. Unlike expository theory use, structuration theory is applied here as an analytical lens to examine how rules (regulations, norms, governance procedures), resources (allocative resources such as capital and land; authoritative resources such as bureaucratic authority), and the duality of structure (how community actions reproduce or transform institutional conditions) shape tourism governance and community inclusion in Bira. Blumer and Goffman complement this analysis by elucidating how local actors interpret and enact tourism-related roles within structural constraints (Blumer, 1986; Goffman, 2021).

Applying these theoretical tools allows the study to move beyond descriptive accounts of community participation and toward a deeper analysis of *why* participation is unevenly distributed—identifying how governance fragmentation, institutional dualism, and unequal resource access systematically shape community involvement. In this sense, the study contributes to the state of the art by repositioning inclusive tourism as a socio-structural and political process, rather than merely a procedural or participatory one. In this regard, inclusive tourism in Bira must be understood as a redistributive and political challenge, rather than merely a procedural or participatory one.

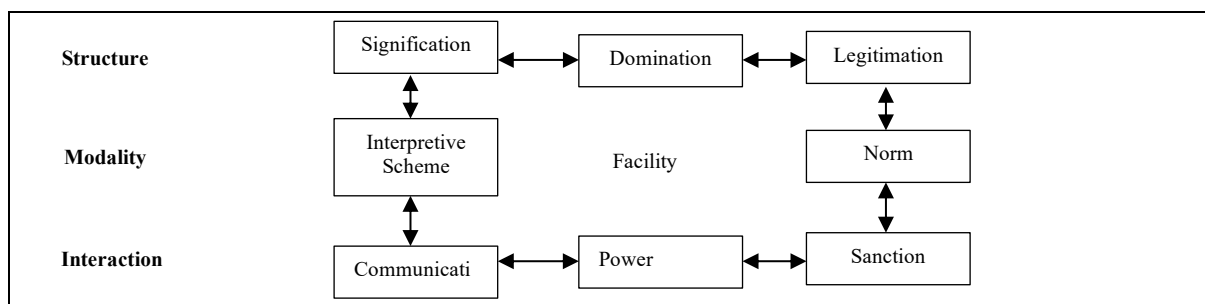


Figure 1. Dimensions of the Duality of Structure

Guided by these conceptual foundations, this study aims to: (1) identify patterns of community involvement in sustainable tourism management in Bira Village; (2) examine empowerment strategies employed by structural and community actors; and (3) assess how structural and community-based empowerment can be integrated to advance inclusive tourism. Through these aims, the study contributes to sociological discussions by demonstrating that inclusivity in rural tourism is shaped not only by participation but by the redistribution of resources, institutional coherence, and community access to power. Practically, the findings offer policy-relevant insights for designing more equitable and integrated multi-level tourism governance in rural destinations such as Bira Village.

METHODS

This study adopts a qualitative case study design to explore the interplay between community participation, empowerment pathways, and the structural configurations of tourism governance in Bira Village, Bonto Bahari District, Bulukumba Regency. A case study approach is particularly suited to capturing the layered and context-bound social processes that shape how tourism is experienced, negotiated, and contested in rural settings (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Yin, 2017).

Fieldwork was conducted over a six-week period between July and August 2022, involving repeated visits to key socio-spatial nodes within the village—such as the coastal tourism zones, weaving cooperatives, village administrative centers, and informal market clusters. This extended engagement enabled the researchers to observe both routine and peak-period tourism activities, as well as the everyday interactions among residents, local entrepreneurs, and government authorities.

Table 1. Profile of Research Informants (Anonymized)

Informant Code	Social Role / Position	Gender
Inf1-Des	Village Government Official	Male
Inf2-UMKM1	Micro-entrepreneur (Food Vendor)	Female
Inf3-UMKM2	Clothing Vendor	Male
Inf4-HS	Homestay Owner	Male
Inf5-Guide	Community Tourism Guide	Male
Inf6-Youth	Youth Representative	Male
Inf7-Women	Women's Group Representative	Female
Inf8-Toper	Traditional Weaver	Female
Inf9-Toper	Traditional Weaver	Female
Inf10-Clean	Informal Tourism Worker (Cleaning Services)	Male
Inf11-Food	Street Food Vendor	Female
Inf12-Trans	Local Transport Provider	Male
Inf13-Shop	Souvenir Shop Owner	Female
Inf14-Admin	Tourism Site Administrative Staff	Male
Inf15-UMKM3	Micro-entrepreneur (Beverage Stall)	Female
Inf16-Comm	Community Leader	Male
Inf17-BUMDes	Village-Owned Enterprise (BUMDes) Manager	Male
Inf18-Dinas	Regency Tourism Office Staff	Male

Data were gathered from 18 purposively and snowball-selected informants representing a diverse spectrum of actors within the tourism landscape: village officials, homestay owners, micro-

entrepreneurs, food vendors, community guides, traditional weavers, youth and women's representatives, tourism-site managers, and a staff member from the Bulukumba Regency Tourism Office. To enhance transparency and substantiate the claim of informant heterogeneity, a summarized profile of the informants is provided in Table 1, including their anonymized codes, social roles, and gender.

The heterogeneity of this group ensured the inclusion of voices across different social positions, resource access levels, and institutional proximities—critical for examining patterns of inclusion and exclusion (Creswell & Poth, 2017).

The unit of analysis for this study comprises the social processes through which participation, empowerment, and governance arrangements take shape in Bira's tourism sector. The unit of observation includes individual and collective practices, decision-making interactions, informal and formal economic activities, and the spatial organization of tourism-related areas such as ticketing gates, vendor corridors, and weaving centers.

Data collection relied on three integrated techniques. First, semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with all informants, each lasting between 45 and 90 minutes, focusing on experiences of participation, governance dynamics, and the perceived benefits and burdens of tourism. Second, participant and non-participant observations were carried out to document economic practices, regulatory enforcement, artisanal production processes, and community engagement in tourism spaces. Third, document analysis included regional tourism planning and regulatory documents, including the Regional Tourism Development Masterplan (RIPPARDa) (Dinas Pariwisata, Pemuda dan Olahraga Kabupaten Bulukumba, 2021), regional tourism regulations (Peraturan Daerah Kabupaten Bulukumba Nomor 2 Tahun 2022 Tentang Desa Wisata, n.d.), BPS statistical records, and village planning documents

Data analysis followed the interactive model of Miles and Huberman, beginning with thematic coding to reduce and organize the data, followed by the construction of matrices and relational diagrams to visualize actor networks, flows of authority and resources, and variations in participation practices. Conclusions were drawn iteratively and continuously tested against empirical evidence throughout the analysis process (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Credibility was strengthened through multiple forms of triangulation: methodological triangulation (interviews, observations, documents), source triangulation (across officials, entrepreneurs, marginalized households, and tourism authorities), and temporal triangulation (observations conducted at different times and days). These triangulation strategies enabled the researchers to identify not only the overt patterns of participation but also the underlying structural constraints, resource asymmetries, and governance dualisms that shape the contours of inclusion and exclusion within Bira's evolving tourism economy (Hanson-DeFusco, 2023; Valencia, 2022).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Tourism as an Emerging Economic Aspiration

Tourism in Bira Village has evolved into a transformative economic force, gradually supplanting the traditional, fishing-based economy that once defined the community's livelihood system (AB, 2023). This transformation signifies a reorientation of local economic practices toward service-oriented and experience-based industries, integrating Bira into broader circuits of regional and national tourism economies (Namotemo et al., 2021). Within this shift, tourism functions as a multidimensional domain where production, consumption, and cultural expression intersect, generating new forms of labour division and value creation at the village level (Nur et al., 2024).

The development of tourism in Bira encompasses diverse economic activities that extend beyond conventional hospitality services. Micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) have proliferated in areas such as culinary services, homestays, local transportation, agriculture, and the production of traditional woven sarongs. These enterprises represent not only economic diversification but also localized innovation in adapting to fluctuating tourist demands. Informant Inf2-UMKM1 (interview, 8 August 2022) observed that local entrepreneurs near the Glass Bridge and Zero Kilometer Monument independently established small stalls to serve visitors, thereby embedding entrepreneurship within community-driven spatial initiatives. Similarly, Inf2-UMKM2, a clothing vendor operating along the main route to White Sand Beach, underscored that participation in tourism-related enterprises has

become increasingly accessible, noting that any resident, regardless of social background, may initiate a business with formal authorization from the Tourism Office.

From the perspective of structuration theory, these developments illustrate how local actors mobilize *allocative resources*—such as land adjacent to tourist flows, small amounts of capital, and social networks—to reposition themselves within the emergent tourism economy (Danilović Hristić et al., 2024). Formal licensing requirements issued by the Tourism Office function as *rules of legitimation*: they define who is officially recognized as a “legal” economic actor in tourism spaces. At the same time, the willingness of officials to grant permits to small vendors indicates that these rules are not purely restrictive; rather, they can also be enabling, creating structured pathways for community participation. This reflects the *duality of structure*: regulatory rules constrain and shape entrepreneurial action, yet are also reproduced and normalized through everyday compliance and negotiation by local actors (Chatterjee et al., 2019).

Tourism in Bira thus operates as both a material opportunity structure and a *symbolic object* (Blumer, 1986). For many residents, engagement in tourism is not merely an income-generating activity, but a marker of modernity, progress, and social prestige. The proliferation of MSMEs and homestays, and the willingness of residents to reorient their livelihoods away from fishing, signal a deep reconfiguration of local aspirations (Singgalen et al., 2019). At the same time, as subsequent sections show, these opportunities are structured by unequal access to rules, resources, and decision-making authority—raising critical questions about who is able to convert tourism from aspiration into durable economic security.

Structural Disintegration in Tourism Governance

The contribution of Bira’s tourism to regional and provincial revenue—spanning Bulukumba Regency and South Sulawesi Province—is empirically evident. Beyond direct earnings from entrance fees, tourism has stimulated the expansion of complementary sectors such as restaurants, kiosks, micro and small enterprises, budget accommodations, hotels, and agricultural industries encompassing food crops, horticulture, and fisheries. These intersectoral linkages suggest that tourism functions as a systemic economic driver whose multiplier effects extend far beyond the confines of leisure consumption (Ariyani & Fauzi, 2024; OECD, 2020).

In this context, the logical expectation is that local governance mechanisms should evolve in tandem, consolidating infrastructure, management capacity, and regulatory coherence to sustain tourism’s developmental trajectory. Yet, structural disintegration remains apparent within the governance framework regulating Bira’s tourism sector. Here, *structure* denotes the ensemble of institutional arrangements—policies, regulations, bureaucratic hierarchies, and organizational roles—that collectively organize tourism governance. These structures operate simultaneously at micro and macro levels, linking community actors to formal governmental agencies and policy regimes. Rather than functioning as an integrated system, however, these strata often operate in isolation, producing a fragmented policy environment that weakens institutional synergy and accountability (Lawasi et al., 2025).

This disintegration is perhaps most visibly manifested in overlapping jurisdictions and fiscal arrangements. The coexistence of regency-level and provincial-level authority over key tourism sites has produced contradictory rules and blurred lines of responsibility. As a result, tourism-related initiatives tend to emerge as sporadic, project-based interventions—such as short-term promotional campaigns or isolated infrastructure projects—rather than as components of a coherent development framework (Harsanto et al., 2025). From a structuration perspective, this fragmentation indicates a misalignment among the three modalities of structure—*signification*, *domination*, and *legitimation*. Tourism is discursively framed as a strategic driver of inclusive development (*signification*), yet the actual distribution of authority and fiscal control (*domination*) and the formal rules governing revenue sharing and participation (*legitimation*) do not support that narrative in practice (Kinseng, 2017).

This misalignment has direct sociological consequences. It constrains effective governance, generates uncertainty for local entrepreneurs, and erodes the alignment between state structures and community practices. The absence of clear, integrated rules and stable resource flows undermines trust in institutions and weakens the perceived legitimacy of tourism as a vehicle for collective welfare. In Giddens’s terms, the structural disintegration in tourism governance disrupts the recursive production of social order,

creating a context in which community agency is exercised within a highly uneven and unpredictable structural environment.

Instability in Industrial Relations: Cultural Labour at the Margins

Bira Village possesses not only natural attractions but also a rich reservoir of cultural capital embodied in its long-standing weaving tradition. The craft of producing sarung tenun—a locally woven textile deeply embedded in communal identity—constitutes a vital dimension of cultural tourism in the area. Weaving cooperatives located near the village office and along the main route to Bira Beach function as both economic units and cultural institutions that sustain intergenerational knowledge transmission. They exemplify how artisanal production operates within a hybrid economy where cultural heritage and tourism intersect, generating both symbolic and material value (Muñoz et al., 2025).

However, the stability of this artisanal economy has become increasingly precarious. Informant Inf8-Toper, a second-generation weaver, reported that escalating raw material costs and the scarcity of skilled labour pose significant constraints on production sustainability. Dependence on imported yarns and dyes exposes the industry to price volatility and supply chain disruptions, eroding profitability and diminishing weaving's appeal as a viable livelihood—particularly for younger generations who increasingly seek employment in civil service or formal service-sector jobs.

From the vantage point of structuration theory, this scenario reveals how changes in *allocative resources* (access to affordable materials, stable demand, and market channels) reshape the conditions of cultural labour. While tourism discourse and policy often celebrate “local culture” as a resource to be mobilized for development, the institutional and market structures governing weaving do not provide sufficient resources to sustain it. The result is a form of *structural marginalization*: cultural labour is symbolically recognized but materially unsupported.

This intergenerational disengagement signals a deeper rupture in the industrial relations underpinning the village's tourism economy (Macarimbang, 2025). The children of traditional artisans—now absorbed into bureaucratic or service-sector positions—no longer perceive weaving as economically or socially rewarding. Consequently, the continuity of the craft is threatened, indicating a gradual disarticulation of cultural labour from the circuits of tourism production. In Bourdieu's terms, the conversion of cultural capital (weaving skills, cultural symbols) into economic capital is blocked or heavily constrained by market and institutional structures. As such, cultural inclusion at the level of representation is not translated into economic inclusion at the level of livelihoods.

Conflict Potential in Tourism Management: Vertical Asymmetries and Fiscal Exclusion

The rapid expansion of tourism in Bira Village has increasingly exposed latent tensions that have evolved into manifest forms of social conflict, particularly concerning the governance and management of tourism sites and land use (Nur et al., 2025). These conflicts are not merely administrative disputes but symptomatic of deeper structural asymmetries within the multi-level governance system. The most visible manifestation lies in the contestation between the Village Government, Bulukumba Regency Government, and South Sulawesi Provincial Government over fiscal authority and the distribution of tourism-generated revenues.

At the operational level, visitors to Bira Beach are required to pay an entrance fee of IDR 15,000 per person at the main gate. Roughly twenty meters beyond, an additional fee of IDR 2,500 is imposed for access to the Zero Kilometer Monument, the Glass Bridge, and the Protected Forest Area. This dual-ticketing mechanism reflects overlapping institutional jurisdictions: the first post is managed by the Bulukumba Regency Government, while the second falls under the administrative control of the South Sulawesi Provincial Government. For visitors, this system produces confusion and the perception of being “charged twice”; for local residents, it symbolizes higher-level institutions appropriating the economic value of their territory (Muin, 2024).

This dual-ticketing arrangement, which reflects overlapping institutional jurisdictions between regency- and provincial-level authorities, is illustrated schematically in Figure 2 to clarify the spatial and administrative dimensions of fiscal exclusion in Bira Village.

Crucially, the Village Government, despite possessing territorial authority and bearing responsibility for social and environmental management, remains excluded from the allocation of these entrance fee revenues. As noted by Inf1-Des (interview, 8 August 2022), this exclusion is perceived as a structural injustice that undermines the village's autonomy and fiscal sovereignty. Here, the *rules of domination*

(control over revenue streams and regulatory authority) are concentrated at regency and provincial levels, while the village is structurally positioned as a peripheral actor with limited *authoritative resources*.



Figure 2. Dual-Ticketing Structure and Governance Zoning in Bira Village. The scheme outlines the regency- and provincial-level entrance mechanisms, tourist flow dynamics, and the institutional exclusion of the village government from tourism revenue allocation

In terms of social inclusion, this configuration exemplifies how exclusion operates not merely through the absence of participation, but through patterns of *redistribution*: who controls revenue, who decides on its allocation, and who bears the externalities of tourism. The vertical conflict dynamic in Bira demonstrates that the governance of tourism is also the governance of resources and power. Without structural mechanisms to redistribute revenue and decision-making authority, inclusive tourism remains normatively invoked but materially absent.

Openness to New Knowledge and Capacity Building: Reflexive Agency and Structural Limits

Despite these structural asymmetries, residents of Bira Village have shown a steadily expanding openness toward acquiring new forms of knowledge, particularly those linked to tourism management, entrepreneurship, and creative industries. This orientation toward learning reflects an evolving social consciousness that aligns with regional development priorities and institutional frameworks. Policies such as the Regional Tourism Development Masterplan (RIPPARDa) and regional bylaws (Perda) on tourism enacted by the Bulukumba Regency Government have provided structural legitimacy for community-based participation, framing tourism not only as an economic driver but also as a pedagogical domain.

Community empowerment programmes—although not exclusively designed for tourism—have intersected with tourism-related objectives in several ways. Capacity-building activities have included entrepreneurship training, environmental awareness programmes, and technical workshops facilitated at the village level. These initiatives have gradually reshaped the collective *habitus* of local actors, cultivating adaptive competencies necessary to engage with a modernized tourism economy. They indicate a subtle yet significant shift from subsistence-oriented livelihoods toward a learning-oriented social structure (Sidik, 2025).

Informant Inf8-Toper noted that weaving workshops, especially those targeting young women, have played a central role in cultural and economic empowerment efforts. However, structural constraints—limited market access, unstable demand, and high raw material costs—continue to impede labour sustainability in the weaving sector. This suggests that while *signification* (the discursive framing of knowledge and entrepreneurship as pathways to progress) has shifted, the *domination* and *resource* modalities have not sufficiently adjusted to support these emerging capacities. In other words, reflexive agency is growing, but remains partially “trapped” within structural conditions that limit its transformative potential.

Patterns of Community Engagement in the Management of Sustainable Tourism

Empirical observations reveal that residents increasingly conceptualize tourism not simply as a sectoral enterprise, but as an existential domain of livelihood reproduction, social recognition, and modern identity formation (Andari et al., 2023). Tourism has become woven into the moral economy of families, gender relations, and intergenerational aspirations. This transformation marks a shift from subsistence-based orientations toward reflexive engagements with market rationalities, in which tourism serves simultaneously as a material opportunity and a symbolic horizon of progress (Singgalen et al., 2023).

Within this context, three analytically distinct yet interrelated modalities of participation emerge: autonomous, collaborative, and subordinated forms of engagement. To synthesize these empirically observed patterns, Table 2 summarizes the three modes of community participation under fragmented tourism governance based on differential access to resources, authority, and economic benefits.

Table 2. Patterns of Community Participation under Fragmented Tourism Governance in Bira Village

Dimension	Autonomous Participation	Collaborative Participation	Subordinated Participation
Typical Actors	Informal vendors, homestay owners, independent guides	BUMDes members, trained MSMEs, community groups linked to government programs	Elderly workers, informal helpers, marginal vendors
Access to Resources	Self-mobilized, limited, unstable	Partial access via programs and institutions	Minimal or none
Decision-making Authority	Informal, individual	Shared but structurally constrained	Absent
Economic Benefits	Direct but volatile	Moderate and selective	Marginal and irregular
Institutional Recognition	Low	Moderate	Absent
Structural Vulnerability	High	Medium	Very high

Within this context, *Autonomous Participation* is characterized by individual or collective initiatives that arise independently of bureaucratic mediation. Examples include self-organized homestay owners, food vendors, and informal guides who regulate their practices through customary norms of fairness and reciprocity. Here, actors draw upon locally available resources (family labour, existing social ties, strategic locations) and interpret formal rules flexibly to maintain their economic activities. Autonomous participation reflects strong agency but is vulnerable to market volatility and policy changes, given its limited integration into formal governance structures.

Second, Collaborative Participation with Institutional Structures. This modality involves alignment between community actors and local state institutions, including the village government and regency-level agencies. Collaborative participation is visible in joint initiatives such as infrastructure improvements, tourism promotion, and formal training programmes. In these instances, *rules of legitimation* and *rules of signification* are negotiated and co-produced, allowing community members to access certain structural resources (e.g., training, information, limited funding). However, the scope of collaboration is often bounded by the wider governance fragmentation and unequal control over high-value resources such as tourism revenue and land.

Third, Subordinated Participation. The third modality is characterized by informal, unremunerated, and structurally contingent involvement, particularly among the poor and elderly. These actors contribute to tourism by assisting vendors, maintaining cleanliness, or selling low-value goods at the margins of tourism spaces. Their contributions are socially necessary but structurally invisible: they are rarely counted in official statistics, consulted in planning processes, or prioritized in benefit-sharing mechanisms.

As one elderly informal worker explained:

“*Saya biasanya membantu bersih-bersih di sekitar lapak kalau wisatawan ramai. Tidak ada bayaran tetap. Kadang dikasih uang, kadang tidak. Tapi tetap saya kerjakan, karena ini kampung kami sendiri.*” (I help clean around the stalls when tourists come. There is no fixed payment. If someone gives me money, I accept it. If not, I still help because this place is our village). (Inf10–Elderly Informal Worker, Bira Village, 9/8/2022)

Similarly, a small food vendor noted:

“Saya cuma jual jajanan kecil. Tidak punya izin lapak, jadi kalau ada petugas saya pindah saja. Hasilnya sedikit, tapi yang penting bisa beli beras untuk hari itu” (I only sell small snacks near the beach. I don’t have a permit, so I just move when officers ask me to. I earn very little, but at least I can buy food for the day). (Inf11–Food Vendor, Bira Village, 10/8/2022)

In terms of structuration, subordinated participation represents agency exercised under severe constraints, where access to both allocative and authoritative resources is highly restricted.

From a sociological standpoint, these three modalities exemplify how *structured agency* operates in community-based tourism settings. Drawing on Blumer (1986) and Giddens (1984, 1991), participation in Bira can be read as a communicative practice through which individuals not only pursue livelihoods but also construct social identities and moral claims. Yet, the extent and quality of participation are decisively shaped by structural configurations—rules, resources, and power relations—that distribute opportunities unevenly across social groups. In other words, inclusion and exclusion are produced not only by who participates, but by the terms under which participation occurs.

Empowerment Strategies for Advancing Inclusive Tourism in Bira Village

Empowerment within Bira’s tourism landscape cannot be reduced to a technical intervention aimed solely at poverty alleviation. Rather, it constitutes a complex sociological process through which actors reflexively engage with institutional structures to reconstitute their capacities and social positions. Following Giddens’s structuration theory (1984, 1991), empowerment emerges not as an externally granted status, but as an outcome of the dialectical interplay between agency and structure.

Empirical evidence from Bira shows two intersecting empowerment pathways. The first is structural empowerment, mediated through governmental mechanisms at village and regency levels—such as the Community Empowerment Agency and Village-Owned Enterprises (BUMDes) (Hilmawan et al., 2023). These institutions provide frameworks, programmes, and, to a limited extent (Vel & Bedner, 2015), resources intended to support community-based economic initiatives. In principle, they embody formal recognition of the community’s role in tourism development.

The second pathway is agentic empowerment, embodied by civil society organizations, informal associations, weaving cooperatives, and self-organized economic groups. These actors appropriate existing rules and resources to carve out spaces of relative autonomy—whether by establishing informal kiosks, negotiating with local authorities, or forming cooperative arrangements to access markets. Such practices resonate with Giddens’s conceptualization of structuration, wherein the reproduction of social systems occurs through the recursive interplay of authoritative and allocative resources.

However, empowerment in Bira remains largely formalistic. Structural programmes often emphasize compliance with administrative procedures rather than facilitating genuine redistributive change in access to capital, land, or markets. In the absence of mechanisms to alter underlying resource asymmetries, empowerment risks becoming a “thin” form of inclusion—where communities are invited to participate but remain distant from core decision-making and benefit-sharing processes. This highlights the need to move beyond an empowerment discourse centred on capacity-building alone, toward one that addresses redistribution and power.

Integration Strategies: From Participation to Inclusive Tourism

The integration of empowerment strategies in Bira Village unfolds within a complex interplay of structural frameworks and localized social practices. In Giddens’s (1984) terms, the structural and the interactional are not separate levels but a *duality of structure*—a recursive relationship in which institutional arrangements both enable and constrain social practices, even as those practices continuously reproduce and transform the structures themselves.

The Regional Tourism Development Masterplan (RIPPARDa) 2021–2025 and Regional Regulation (Perda) No. 2 of 2021 function as key structuring modalities. They codify principles of equity, kinship, sustainability, participation, and local wisdom, and emphasize Community-Based Tourism (CBT) as a normative model. These legal instruments constitute *rules of signification* (defining what counts as “good” tourism), *rules of domination* (allocating authority and resources), and *rules of legitimation* (specifying appropriate forms of participation and benefit-sharing).

In practice, village institutions such as BUMDes and the Community Empowerment Agency translate these abstract principles into local initiatives. They exemplify *institutionalized agency*, as they both draw upon and reproduce formal structures through decision-making, collaboration, and adaptation. Yet, as the empirical sections have shown, existing integration remains partial. Revenue from key tourism sites is still largely controlled by higher-level institutions; the poorest residents remain on the margins of formal economic circuits; and informal contributions to tourism are not adequately recognized or rewarded.

Viewed through the lens of social inclusion, integration in this context cannot be equated with administrative coordination alone. Inclusive tourism in Bira requires at least three shifts: *first*, From Participation to Redistribution (Raymond et al., 2022). This ensures that institutional arrangements governing tourism revenue, land use, and market access are redesigned to distribute resources more equitably across social groups and governance levels. *Second*, From Formal Recognition to Substantive Access: Moving beyond the symbolic inclusion of communities in policy documents toward concrete mechanisms that expand their access to capital, information, and decision-making forums. *Third*, From Fragmented Governance to Co-produced Structuration: Developing coherent governance arrangements in which village, regency, and provincial institutions work in genuinely collaborative, rather than competing ways—sharing not only responsibilities but also benefits.

In this sense, inclusive tourism in Bira Village is best understood not as a static end-state, but as an evolving socio-structural formation generated through the continuous interplay of rules, resources, and reflexive human agency. It depends on the capacity of local actors and institutions to engage in what Beck, Giddens, and Lash (1994) term as *reflexive modernization*: a process in which communities and governance systems critically reassess and reorganize their own foundations.

CONCLUSION

This study reveals that community involvement in the tourism sector of Bira Village is shaped by complex interactions between local agency and multi-level governance structures. Three distinct patterns of participation were identified—autonomous, collaborative, and subordinated—each reflecting different degrees of access to rules, resources, and institutional recognition. While autonomous actors mobilize locally available assets to seize entrepreneurial opportunities, collaborative participation emerges where formal structures provide partial openings for engagement. In contrast, subordinated participation illustrates how the poorest residents remain structurally constrained, contributing to tourism informally without gaining substantive benefits.

The findings demonstrate that the persistence of poverty and inequality in Bira Village is not primarily due to a lack of participation, but rather to the unequal distribution of authoritative and allocative resources within the tourism governance system. Fragmented institutional arrangements—marked by overlapping jurisdictions between village, regency, and provincial authorities—produce governance disarticulation that limits community access to fiscal benefits, decision-making power, and sustainable livelihood opportunities. The dual-ticketing system and exclusion of the village government from revenue allocation exemplify forms of vertical structural exclusion that inhibit inclusive development.

Empowerment strategies currently implemented in Bira remain largely procedural and top-down, emphasizing administrative compliance rather than substantive redistribution. Although residents exhibit growing reflexive agency—manifested in the adoption of new skills, entrepreneurship, and cultural innovation—the structural environment does not yet provide sufficient institutional support to transform these capacities into enduring economic gains. Village institutions such as BUMDes and community empowerment agencies hold potential to mediate these gaps, but their effectiveness depends on greater coherence in governance and more equitable allocation of resources.

This study therefore concludes that inclusive tourism in Bira Village cannot be achieved through participation alone. It requires an integrative transformation of governance structures that aligns rules, authority, and resource distribution across institutional levels. Inclusive tourism becomes attainable only when structural fragmentation is reconciled through collaborative, multi-level governance; when local communities gain meaningful access to capital, markets, and decision-making forums; and when cultural and informal labour are recognized as integral components of the tourism economy. Ultimately, inclusive tourism must be understood as a socio-structural process—one in which communities and institutions jointly reconfigure the conditions of participation, distribution, and empowerment. This study contributes to the literature on inclusive and community-based tourism by demonstrating that

inclusion cannot be reduced to participation or economic outcomes alone. Its novelty lies in revealing how multi-level governance fragmentation and unequal control over authoritative and allocative resources actively structure patterns of participation, exclusion, and inequality in rural tourism contexts.

Acknowledgements. The authors express their sincere gratitude to the Government of Bira Village, local business actors, traditional weaving artisans, and community members for their time, insights, and cooperation. Appreciation is also extended to the Bulukumba Regency Government, particularly the Department of Tourism, Youth, and Sports, for data access and administrative support. The authors thank all informants—including homestay owners, vendors, micro-entrepreneurs, site managers, women’s groups, youth, and elderly participants—whose perspectives enriched the study. This research was independently funded, and the authors declare no financial or non-financial conflicts of interest.

Conflict of Interest. The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Declaration of Generative AI Use. During the preparation of this work, the authors used Grammarly to assist in reviewing grammar, language clarity, and overall writing quality. After using this tool, the authors carefully reviewed and edited the content as needed and take full responsibility for the accuracy, originality, and integrity of the manuscript.

CRedit Contribution. I: Conceptualization, Writing – Original Draft Preparation; ARBZ: Supervision, Writing – Review & Editing, Validation, Translation (Manuscript Preparation and Language Refinement).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- AB, A. (2023). Economic Recovery Efforts through Tourism in the Bira Beach Area, Bulukumba Regency. *Journal La Bisecoman*, 4(1), 17–23. <https://doi.org/10.37899/journallabisecoman.v4i1.882>
- Allman, D. (2013). The Sociology of Social Inclusion. *SAGE Open*, 3(1), 2158244012471957. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244012471957>
- Andari, R., Kusumah, A. H. G., & Ningsih, C. (2023). The Role of Local Champion in Achieving an Integrated Rural Tourism: A Case Study of Alamendah Tourism Village, West Java. *Sodality: Jurnal Sosiologi Pedesaan*, 11(3), 291–304. <https://doi.org/10.22500/11202350271>
- Ariyani, N., & Fauzi, A. (2024). Unlocking Sustainable Rural Tourism to Support Rural Development: A Bayesian Approach to Managing Water-Based Destinations in Indonesia. *Sustainability*, 16(13), 5506. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su16135506>
- Atkinson, T., Cantillon, B., Marlier, E., & Nolan, B. (2002). *Social Indicators: The EU and Social Inclusion*. OUP Oxford.
- Badan Pusat Statistik Indonesia. (2018). *Jumlah Devisa Sektor Pariwisata—Tabel Statistik*. <https://www.bps.go.id/id/statistics-table/2/MTE2MCMY/jumlah-devisa-sektor-pariwisata.html>
- Barron, K. (2015). Social Inclusion as a Theoretical Concept and a Social Practice. In R. Traustadóttir, B. Ytterhus, S. T. Egilson, & B. Berg (Eds.), *Childhood and Disability in the Nordic Countries: Being, Becoming, Belonging* (pp. 133–148). Palgrave Macmillan UK. https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137032645_9
- Blumer, H. (1986). *Symbolic Interactionism: Perspective and Method*. University of California Press.
- BPS Kabupaten Bulukumba. (2021). *Kabupaten Bulukumba dalam Angka Bulukumba Regency in Figures*. BPS Kabupaten Bulukumba.
- Chatterjee, I., Kunwar, J., & Hond, F. den. (2019). Anthony Giddens and structuration theory. In *Management, Organizations and Contemporary Social Theory*. Routledge.
- Chen, J., & Francis-Tan, A. (2021). Setting the Tone: An Investigation of Skin Color Bias in Asia. *Race and Social Problems*, 14, 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12552-021-09329-0>
- Cohen, E. (1984). The Sociology of Tourism: Approaches, Issues, and Findings. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 10(Volume 10, 1984), 373–392. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.so.10.080184.002105>
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2017). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*. SAGE Publications.

- Danilović Hristić, N., Pantić, M., & Stefanović, N. (2024). Tourism as an Opportunity or the Danger of Saturation for the Historical Coastal Towns. *Sustainability*, 16(10), 4080. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su16104080>
- Dinas Pariwisata, Pemuda dan Olahraga Kabupaten Bulukumba. (2021). *Rencana Strategis Dinas Pariwisata, Pemuda dan Olahraga Kabupaten Bulukumba Tahun 2021–2026* [Rencana Strategis (Renstra)]. Pemerintah Kabupaten Bulukumba.
- Fairuza, M. (2017). *Kolaborasi antar Stakeholder dalam Pembangunan Inklusif pada Sektor Pariwisata (Studi Kasus Wisata Pulau Merah di Kabupaten Banyuwangi)*. 5.
- Giddens, A. (2013). *The Consequences of Modernity*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Goffman, E. (2021). *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group.
- Hanson-DeFusco, J. (2023). What data counts in policymaking and programming evaluation – Relevant data sources for triangulation according to main epistemologies and philosophies within social science. *Evaluation and Program Planning*, 97, 102238. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.evalprogplan.2023.102238>
- Harsanto, B. T., Yamin, M., Rosyadi, S., Tobirin, T., Rahmawati, T., Nastiti, D. W., Wahyuningrat, W., & Fitriah, E. (2025). Governance Deadlock in Coastal Tourism: Disentangling Jurisdictional Overlaps Between Local Government and Military Authority in Indonesia. *Veredas Do Direito*, 22(3), e223264–e223264. <https://doi.org/10.18623/rvd.v22.n3.3264>
- Hilmawan, R., Aprianti, Y., Vo, D. T. H., Yudaruddin, R., Bintoro, R. F. A., Fitrianto, Y., & Wahyuningsih, N. (2023). Rural development from village funds, village-owned enterprises, and village original income. *Journal of Open Innovation: Technology, Market, and Complexity*, 9(4), 100159. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.joitmc.2023.100159>
- Jayanthi, N. K. E., & Utama, M. S. (2021). Analysis of the Tourism Sector and Quality of Human Resources' Effect on Economic Growth, Income Disparity, and Poverty Levels in Regency/City in Bali Province, Indonesia. *Russian Journal of Agricultural and Socio-Economic Sciences*, 114(6), 52–63. <https://doi.org/10.18551/rjoas.2021-06.06>
- Kinseng, R. A. (2017). Structugency: A Theory of Action. *Sodality: Jurnal Sosiologi Pedesaan*, 5(2). <https://doi.org/10.22500/sodality.v5i2.17972>
- Lawasi, Moh. A., Kenda, N., Yusnikusumah, T. R., Pratama, B. B., Pratiwi, D., Septina, A. D., & Asrawijaya, E. (2025). Forest-Based Ecotourism in Indonesia: A Comprehensive Review of Policy Challenges, Diverse Practices, Stakeholder Engagement, Conservation Efforts, and Socioeconomic Aspects. *Geojournal of Tourism and Geosites*, 60(2 supplement), 1041–1056. <https://doi.org/10.30892/gtg.602spl02-1478>
- Luthfi, A., Putra, I. M. A. W. W., Roziqin, A., Naufal, M. F., Hidayat, A. R., & Widjaja, Y. A. (2023). Government's Role in Managing Marine Tourism in Tanjung Bira Bulukumba Regency: Collaborative Governance Perspective. *Jurnal Public Policy*, 9(3), Article 3. <https://doi.org/10.35308/jpp.v9i3.7543>
- Macarimbang, D. N. T. (2025). Cultural Continuity and Sustainability: The Role of Youth in Preserving Meranaw Traditional Handicrafts. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science*. <https://rsisinternational.org/journals/ijriss/articles/cultural-continuity-and-sustainability-the-role-of-youth-in-preserving-meranaw-traditional-handicrafts/>
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative Data Analysis: An Expanded Sourcebook*. SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Muin, A. (2024, May 9). *Viral Wisatawan Batal Masuk Pantai Bira karena Pungli*. IDN Times Sulsel. <https://sulsel.idntimes.com/news/sulawesi-selatan/viral-wisatawan-batal-masuk-pantai-bira-karena-bayar-tiket-dua-kali-00-ghkww-j321f7>
- Muñoz, K. E. (Kyle), Robinson, R. N. S., & Marston, G. (2025). Reframing tourism labour: Alterity and the global south. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 112(C). <https://ideas.repec.org/a/eee/anture/v112y2025ics0160738325000568.html>

- Namotemo, H., Kour, F., Dilly, A., Akerina, F., & Amahorseja, A. (2021). Strategy for Micro and Small Businesses Development in the Fisheries Sector in North Halmahera Regency, Indonesia. *Indonesian Journal of Business and Entrepreneurship*, 7(1), 63–63. <https://doi.org/10.17358/ijbe.7.1.73>
- Noorsetya, B., Dinata, C., & Chayatin, U. (2020). Social Inclusion dan Penguatan Kelembagaan Sosial dalam Otonomi Penanggulangan Kemiskinan Pedesaan. *Dinamika Governance : Jurnal Ilmu Administrasi Negara*, 10(1), Article 1. <https://doi.org/10.33005/jdg.v10i1.1639>
- Nur, A. C., Aslinda, A., & Cante, S. R. (2024). Collaboration of Various Parties: Breakthroughs in Improving the Welfare of Rural Communities. *Pakistan Journal of Life and Social Sciences*, 22(2).
- Nur, A. C., Rukmana, N. S., & Sulmiah, S. (2025). *Strategi Adaptif BAPENDA dalam Meningkatkan PAD: Antara Dukungan Kebijakan dan Hambatan Tata Kelola di Kabupaten Bulukumba | Nur | Seminar Nasional LP2M UNM*. <https://ojs.unm.ac.id/semnaslemlit/article/view/80633>
- OECD. (2020). OECD Tourism Trends and Policies 2020. *OECD Tourism Trends and Policies, 2020*. <https://doi.org/10.1787/6b47b985-en>
- Peraturan Daerah Kabupaten Bulukumba Nomor 2 Tahun 2022 Tentang Desa Wisata, Nomor 2 Tahun 2022 Perda Kabupaten Bulukumba. Retrieved https://ppid.bulukumbakab.go.id/web/uploads/audios/audio_65055446d752d.pdf
- Rawal, N. (2024). (PDF) Social Inclusion and Exclusion: A Review. *ResearchGate*. <https://doi.org/10.3126/dsaj.v2i0.1362>
- Raymond, C. M., Cebrían-Piqueras, M. A., Andersson, E., Andrade, R., Schnell, A. A., Battioni Romanelli, B., Filyushkina, A., Goodson, D. J., Horcea-Milcu, A., Johnson, D. N., Keller, R., Kuiper, J. J., Lo, V., López-Rodríguez, M. D., March, H., Metzger, M., Oteros-Rozas, E., Salcido, E., Sellberg, M., ... Wiedermann, M. M. (2022). Inclusive conservation and the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework: Tensions and prospects. *One Earth*, 5(3), 252–264. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.oneear.2022.02.008>
- Ritzer, G., & Goodman, D. J. (2004). *Modern Sociological Theory*. McGraw-Hill.
- Sidik, F. (2025). The Village Fund, Village Tourism Development, and Its Impact on Income Inequality in Rural Indonesia: How do Village Elites Shape It? *Tourism Planning & Development*, 22(1), 111–137. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21568316.2024.2430487>
- Singgalen, Y. A., Nugroho, A. Y. A., Suharsono, & Nantingkaseh, A. H. (2023). Regional Tourism Development in Pringsewu Regency: Perspective on Community-Based Tourism and Sustainable Livelihood. *Sodality: Jurnal Sosiologi Pedesaan*, 11(2), 130–142. <https://doi.org/10.22500/11202341256>
- Singgalen, Y. A., Sasongko, G., & Wiloso, P. G. (2019). Ritual Capital for Rural Livelihood and Sustainable Tourism Development in Indonesia. *Jurnal Manajemen Hutan Tropika*, 25(2), 115–115. <https://doi.org/10.7226/jtfm.25.2.115>
- Soemanto, R. B. (2010). *Sosiologi Pariwisata* (306.48; Vol. 1, Issue 306.48, pp. 1–32). Universitas Terbuka. <https://repository.ut.ac.id/4659/>
- Suryadana, L. (2013). *Sosiologi Pariwisata: Kajian Kepariwisata dalam Paradigma Intergratif-Transformatif menuju Wisata Spiritual*. Humaniora.
- Valencia, M. M. A. (2022). Principles, Scope, and Limitations of the Methodological Triangulation. *Investigacion y Educacion En Enfermeria*, 40(2), e03. <https://doi.org/10.17533/udea.iee.v40n2e03>
- Vel, J. a. C., & Bedner, A. W. (2015). Decentralisation and village governance in Indonesia: The return to the nagari and the 2014 Village Law. *Journal of Legal Pluralism and Unofficial Law*, 47(3), 493–507. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07329113.2015.1109379>
- Yin, R. K. (2017). *Case Study Research and Applications: Design and Methods*. SAGE Publications.