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INSPIRE AND IGNITE: ENABLING FACTORS FOR EARLY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN SABAH, MALAYSIA

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Abstract

Community-based tourism (CBT) is renowned worldwide as a sustainable economic development and a means of improving rural communities' welfare and standard of living. Successful CBT greatly depends on local communities' readiness and active participation in ensuring equal distribution of CBT benefits. This study investigates the readiness of rural communities to engage in CBT under the management of Moyog Agrotourism and Tourism Park (MANTAP), a locally empowered organisation. The theoretical concept is framed by social exchange theory and the tourism development model is adjusted to match the local context. The study employs a cross-sectional approach, examining native perspectives on the early stages of CBT development in upper Moyog areas. Using the qualitative method, the findings reveal substantial local support for the CBT development. The study underscores the importance of demonstrating tourism benefits early on, as well as strong leadership and project legitimacy, which foster credibility and access to tourism resources. Native people who can picture themselves gaining benefits and be part of the tourism planning show more apparent support for tourism development in rural Penampang areas.

Keywords: Community-based tourism, qualitative, rural areas, community willingness, Penampang, Sabah

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INTRODUCTION

As the idea of sustainable development began to evolve in tourism, the issue of involving local communities in destination development planning and policies received increasing attention (Dodds et al., 2018). Community participation is a crucial component of sustainable tourism development, particularly in community-based tourism (CBT). Tourism development through CBT focuses on the involvement of local communities (Woyo & Musavengane, 2023). This demonstrates that the capability of local communities to manage new or existing tourism is an important factor in determining whether or not tourism sites can sustain themselves in the long term. Capability is the ability, expertise, competence, and capacity possessed by individuals or groups to jointly manage potential, solve problems, and design goals to be achieved together (Hatipoglu et al., 2020; Dodds et al., 2018). The participation of local communities in various tourism activities in the surrounding environment brings various benefits, especially in the economic sector (Mwesiumo et al., 2022; Qin et al., 2021). This benefit is what motivates the community to get involved in tourism.

Community participation in tourism means the involvement of the community in the process of identifying a problem and tourism potential in their environment, selecting solutions for solving problems, implementing solutions for solving trouble, and being able to evaluate them (Qin et al., 2021). Participation should stem from the community's own will and awareness, preventing any element of coercion. Community participation in tourism, in general, consists of two types, namely real- and abstract-form participation (Mayaka et al. 2018). According to Sastropetro (1986), the concept of community participation in tourism is classified into three dimensions based on its type. First, thought participation refers to the involvement that takes the form of ideas or constructive thinking. Secondly, energy participation refers to the act of physically contributing to the success of a plan. Third, material participation is the involvement of a person or group in the form of money, property, or goods to achieve joint efforts. Clear and specific benefit distribution, power sharing, regulation, and local leadership facilitate community involvement in CBT projects (Dodds et al., 2018; Woyo & Musavengane, 2023).

Sabah, the second largest state in Malaysia, is known as the Land Below the Wind and is situated in northern Borneo. Sabah views community-based tourism (CBT) as one of its key strengths, given the abundance of its natural diversity and beautiful beaches, and has more than 30 indigenous groups in this state (Sabah Tourism Board, 2024). Penampang District Strategic Development Plan (2024-2035) sets up five development cores, namely: (1) establishment of major business centres; (2) local economic generation; (3) development of prosperous communities; (4) clean and green environments; and (5) effective management. The Penampang District, situated in close proximity to the Kota Kinabalu city centre, presents a significant advantage in attracting tourists. The

Penampang District offers numerous fascinating locations for nature- and agrotourism-based tourism attractions. Despite this high potential, many tourists are unaware of the Upper Penampang attraction due to a lack of accommodation options and underdeveloped tourism products.

This study contributes to the existing knowledge on developing Penampang areas, known as upper Moyog areas, by examining the dynamics involved in navigating the early stages of rural CBT development projects. The study holds significance, especially considering that the Penampang district council has become a municipal council in 2024. The present study aims to address the following research question: what strategies can players employ to effectively navigate the early stages of a significant CBT development project with a focus on sustainability and local empowered leadership? The study offers practical solutions for early tourism development and contributes to theoretical implications that can inspire additional research in the field of early tourism destination development.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual framework for early tourism development

Researchers commonly acknowledge that tourist development has both beneficial and detrimental outcomes (Chi et al., 2018; Kang & Lee, 2018). These impacts are believed to have three aspects: economic, social, and environmental. Several research have examined the connections between residents' perception of positive and negative consequences of tourism and their views of tourism based on the social exchange theory (SET) (Chi et al., 2018; Kang & Lee, 2018). The findings of this research indicate that residents who have a higher perception of positive consequences from tourism are more likely to support tourism (Pimid et al., 2023). According to Ehigiamusoe (2020), there is a direct correlation between the strength of negative tourist impacts reported by individuals and their level of support. Despite its apparent usefulness in understanding people's responses to tourism growth, the SET has been recognised by scholars as having significant theoretical shortcomings (Qin et al., 2021). SET places excessive importance on individual rationality by focusing on the self-interest of individuals and disregarding the interests of the community (Chi et al., 2018).

Due to the limitations of the SET theory in explaining residents' attitudes towards tourism development, researchers have proposed integrating it with other concepts to gain a more comprehensive understanding of residents' attitudes (Qin et al., 2021). Thus, this study includes the life-cycle of tourism development model by Getz (1992). The aim is to provide better understanding of residents' support for early tourism development in this region. The seven life-cycles of tourism development are: exploration, involvement, development, consolidation, stagnation, decline, and rejuvenation (Getz, 1992). Exploration describes small number of explorers with little or no tourism infrastructure.

Involvement stage shows local investment in tourism, advertising, and emerging market area. Development stage shows the increase of visitor number, man-made attraction, and heavy advertising. Consolidation, stagnation, and decline depict the slowing down of tourism activities, whereas rejuvenation indicates new attraction might replace previous tourism lures. Using a framework in Figure 1, we examine the early development of MANTAP tourism and how the native people view this tourism plan in upper Moyog areas.

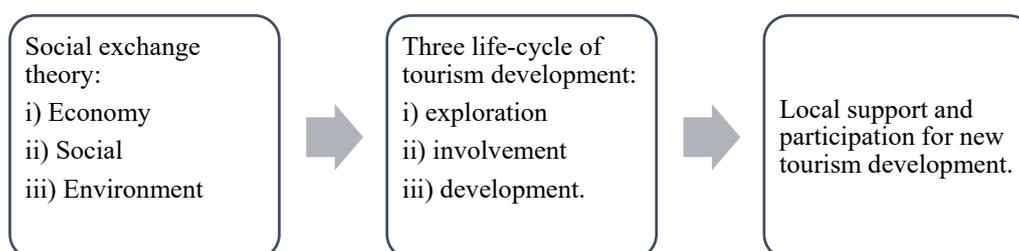


Figure 1: Conceptual framework for a new tourism development.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research design

The study was conducted at Penampang upper areas in Sabah. It employed a qualitative method using interviews to participants who attended the talk of Moyog Agro-Industry and Tourism Park (MANTAP) in May 2024 at D'Arch Hotel, Donggongon, Sabah. It applied a purposive approach by inviting local people who were interested to develop their lands as MANTAP development plan. There were 30 respondents who registered for the talk, but only 23 respondents came during the actual event. The talk showcased two important topics: (1) development potential of nature- and agriculture-based tourism in the upper Moyog area and (2) approval procedure for development plan (DP) and building plan (BP). This study is aligned with human ethics (non-clinical study) with a research approval code IBTP/2024/28-MAC/0001-MEI.2024-MEI.2027.

Interview and focus group discussion

Using qualitative method and a cross-sectional study, 23 interviews were conducted to each participant who present in the talk. The interviews used open- and closed- ended questions. Guidelines for collecting lists, short answers, and narratives (i.e., open ended questions) often suggest continuing interviews until saturation is achieved (Weller et al., 2018). Focus group discussion (FGD) was conducted during the talk after interviews. The plenary talks were moderated by Dr. Marcela Pimid, from the Universiti Malaysia Sabah. The FGD was important to examine each participant's understanding about the talk and gauge their concerns about possibilities, challenges, and potential solutions to solve tourism development plans. Focus group discussion is defined as a carefully planned

series of discussions designed to elicit perceptions about a defined area of interest in a permissive, non-threatening environment, in order to generate detailed insights of topics in a resourceful and timely manner (Larson et al., 2000). Group interaction can stimulate ideas from participants that may not have been available on an individual basis (Larson et al., 2000). Examples of questions in Table 1:

Table 1: Interview and focus group discussion

Examples of questions	
Section 1:	Respondent's demographic background: gender, age, ethnicity, education, occupation, and work experience in a tourism venture.
Section 2:	The local community's willingness to participate in tourism. a) Would you be interested in hosting tourists in your home as part of a tourism service? Please explain your answer. b) Please write your plans to develop your lands as part of MANTAP tourism plans. c) Do you have any financial resources available to invest in tourism accommodations? If so, please indicate.
Section 3:	Local perspectives on the attractions, benefits, and challenges of tourism. a) What are your main concerns about the MANTAP tourism development in your village? b) How do you think MANTAP tourism development will affect your village's social, economic, and environmental aspects? c) What natural attractions in your village do you think should be promoted for tourism? d) What challenges do you see in developing tourism accommodations in your village?

Qualitative analysis

The transcripts obtained from interviews and FGD were analysed using inductive content analysis (ICA) as described by Vears and Gillam (2022). In contrast to thematic analysis, which aims to contribute to the theoretical literature, ICA is useful when the researcher seeks a practical answer or application of the findings to develop practice guidelines for early tourism development, such as in the upper Moyog areas. The study applied manifest content, with a focus on the visible or apparent content that could be inferred from immediate text (Vears & Gillam, 2022). Inductive content analysis follows five stages: (1) read and familiarise with the transcripts; (2) organise data into a broad picture or category; (3) develop subcategories and fine codes; (4) compare and refine all subcategories; (5) synthesise and connect the categories to explain the phenomenon under study. Researchers combined the content categories and subcategories to provide a comprehensive understanding of the tourism development in the upper Moyog area. The results of interview and focus group discussion were compared and contrasted for triangulation purpose (Xin et al., 2020).

RESULTS

Demographic profile of respondents

The interviews generated 23 completed closed- and open-ended questions. Males made up the majority of the interviewees, accounting for 69.6% (n= 16), while females made up 30.4% (n= 7). The respondents are all native Kadazan or Dusun people. A majority of them were more than 51 years old. The respondents had mixed educational backgrounds, such as completed secondary high school, certificates, degrees, masters, and PhDs. The informants had different occupations, such as owning personal businesses, being retired, government staff, farmers, and private sector workers. Despite the high potential for tourism development in upper Moyog areas, many respondents (56.5%, 13 people) had no tourism experience.

Results of open-ended interview questions

Inductive analysis shows the exploration, involvement, and development of the MANTAP tourism plan in early stage (Table 2). The first stage indicates the importance of identifying multiple tourism benefits. Native people perceptions focus on job employment, increased income, road improvement, and better environmental protection. They request a proper planning using Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). Despite positive opinion of tourism development, they anticipate an increase of garbage. The respondents suggest construction of guesthouse, glamping, herbal, garden, hiking track, photo station, open hall for traditional dance, and music performances as attraction for MANTAP tourism. Early tourism development should share the efforts that will be implemented in the future, standard operating procedure (SOP), and registration requirements of local authorities with the residents. The reason for an early awareness creation is that MANTAP tourism plan requires support from local residents. The third stage shows the importance to provide courses, advisory services, and funding for tourism beginners. This includes to identify the space, location, and potential of the village people who have interests and commitments in participating tourism activities but they have no funds.

Table 2: Results of inductive analysis

Themes	Sub-themes and excerpts of inductive coding
Stage 1. Explore: Identify the multiple tourism benefits	
Socioeconomic benefits	R1: Upgrade existing village roads and increase the number of village roads open to the villagers. Agricultural roads should not be the sole focus of road improvement. R4: Reduce the rate of unemployment by working on your own land, which can prevent young people from migrating abroad to earn a living. Reduce unhealthy activities if the youth are busy developing their respective economies.

Themes	Sub-themes and excerpts of inductive coding
	R16: Job opportunities, increased income, community entrepreneurship. R20: Hoping it can improve the development of the Upper Moyog Penampang tourism industry.
Environmental impacts	R4: Flora and fauna are more preserved for their natural beauty. R9: There must be proper planning & EIA compliance. R14: The upper Moyog areas are better known and the environment is better protected. R17: The amount of garbage may increase. R22: MANTAP tourism development will be able to preserve the environment better if it is done without large-scale development.
Stage 2. Explore and involve: Identify local needs and plans	
Local plans for tourism development	R2: Homestay, guesthouse, camping site and hiking trail. R4: Construction of guesthouse, glamping, herbal, garden, hiking track, photo station, open hall for traditional dance, and music performances. R7: Make a building to be placed as a result of traditional handicrafts and sales. Cultivate herbal plants. R22: Create a recreational place related to the environment, especially the Moyog river (Mongkusilad). Suitable for development of homestay, camping site, and guesthouse.
Early tourism development	R1: The tagal system is used as a rural tourism theme. In addition to picnic and pedestrian (hiking) places. R2: Infrastructure, communication and public facilitation have to be set up. R8: Share with the residents the efforts that will be implemented in the future. R17: Entrepreneurs need to know the SOP and requirements of local authorities. This plan also requires support from local residents.
Stage 3. Explore, involve, and develop: Forge a support network	
Broad implementation	R4: Introduction of tourism benefits in the village. Need to give awareness to the youth to open up their minds to cultivate their own lands. Also, it is important to give a workshop on how to start and give basic knowledge about the activities being undertaken. R6: Preparation of local plans, invigorating strategy for tourism, and cooperation with local authorities. R11: Group mutual cooperation through women's cooperatives and youth development. R22: Develop tourism places based on nature. Make homestay and guesthouse. Introduce local food, plant paddy fields, cook and prepare local food.
Government roles	R4: Provide courses, advisory services, and funding for tourism beginners.

Themes	Sub-themes and excerpts of inductive coding
	R10: Provide expert assistance in terms of briefings, courses and infrastructure in the community.
	R11: Identify the space, location, and potential of the village people who have interests and commitments but they have no funds.
	R17: Simplify license approval matters.
	R21: Set up special committee at district level to help potential village candidate.

For confidentiality, R# denotes each respondent code used during the data collection.

Source: Author data (2024)

Results of focus group discussion

The focus group discussion was conducted in two stages. The first session was ‘Development potentials of Moyog Agroindustry and Tourism Park in upper Moyog areas, Penampang.’ The invited panel speaker was Ts. Mr. Alexander G. Gumisi, a trained engineer of more than 26 years. The speaker has worked 12 years in Penampang district council before he moves to Keningau district council. The speaker thoroughly explained about the potentials of developing the Moyog areas by sharing various product attraction and ongoing tourism activities in several villages located in Moyog areas. There are Integrated Agricultural Development Project (IADP) such as the development of the Agricultural Station Babagon (15.4 hectares) that produces quality agricultural yield and promotes agro-tourism. The Moyog areas are blessed with beautiful river and natural forests that offer memorable experiences of picnic, nature, and swimming along the Moyog river.

Importantly, Sabah Structure Plan (SSP 2033) has suggested that Penampang becomes a prime region for conservation tourism. A focus group discussion was first conducted in November 2023 to outline Penampang Development Plan (2023-2035). Several recommendations were raised in this plan such as to develop township, water theme park, herbal and floral garden, downstream product innovation, and empower local entrepreneurs who can run quality homestay and guesthouse activities (Sampil, 2023). There were existing tourism activities conducted in Moyog areas such as: Homestay Taman Dolime; Diana homestay and camping site; Kamagi Riverside, Retreat, and Recreation; Tampasak Eco Trill Hiking; Tintap Riverside View; and Poropok homestay.

Further question and answer session during the present FGD revealed that participants required assistance in identifying suitable product development for their lands. A few participants already initiated tourism activities but planning to expand their activities. They also highlighted the lagging tourism revenues after the COVID-19 pandemic. Hence, this session underscores the importance of identifying tourism product, increasing tourism skills, and learning marketing strategies.

The second session discussed an approval procedure for development plan (DP) and building plan (BP) for Moyog Agroindustry and Tourism Park. The lecture was delivered by Madam Darlene Robert Golumis, an engineer from the District Office of Penampang. Panel highlighted that the Moyog areas held wonderful nature-based attraction for tourists. Unfortunately, not many efforts were done to explore and promote this area. It was critical that the land owners needed to work concurrently with consultant for any CBT project to be implemented successfully. Here, consultants are professional and certified architecture that helps prepare interim and detail development plans for the land owners. Thorough assessment for each application involves Sabah Town and Regional Planning Department, Fire and Rescue Department of Sabah, Sabah Public Works Department, and Sabah local authorities (i.e., Pihak Berkuasa Tempatan). During this talk, two consultants known as Bisoni Architect and JK Architect were also invited to share their consultation experiences in preparing and solving issues of DP and BP.

In the second session, many matters raised by the participants related to financial costs in getting DP and BP done and the rates for hiring consultants. The panels reassured the participants that budget should not be a problem and anyone can get a free consultation before they decide in doing DP and BP. It is also important to note that improper conduct of DP and BP leads to failure in getting valid development license from the Sabah authority. A good suggestion has been proposed for the MANTAP management team to apply for a less stringent license procedure from the Sabah authority. This session reveals that both finance and license are critical matters for the tourism development to take place in this region.

DISCUSSION

Using a social exchange theory (Chi et al., 2018; Kang & Lee, 2018) and life cycle tourism development (Getz, 1992), a unified approach for examining the links between local support for tourism was established and confirmed in the context of early tourism development. The present results demonstrated that local inhabitants' positive perceptions of tourism had a considerable impact on their support for tourism. Strategies incorporating the stakeholder views are proposed to implement MANTAP tourism plan in upper Moyog areas.

Local support correlate with perceived tourism benefits

In this study, all participants are 100% native Kadazan Dusun people and the majority of respondents (56.5%; 13 people) are yet to experience actual tourism benefits. However, their supportive attitudes are commendable. Qualitative studies must incorporate demographic backgrounds (e.g., age, race, and working experience) of the respondents because their identities shape their unique experiences, beliefs, and behaviours (Jensen et al., 2013). Further investigation

shows early awareness creation conducted through the plenary talks has effectively inspired the participants to participate in this tourism venture. Native-born residents have a high awareness of both positive and negative impacts of tourism (Dedeoğlu et al., 2021). People's attitudes towards tourism development vary depending on whether or not they benefit from tourism, indicating the present study has consistent findings with the SET concept (Qin et al., 2021; Chi et al., 2018).

Notably, the Moyog Agroindustry and Tourism Park (MANTAP) is in infancy development, but the participants able to relate high tourism potential benefits by observing ongoing tourism activities in this region. In particular, 56.5% of respondents have no experience in tourism, but they are able to relate nature-based tourism potentials in this area. Most participants state the promising attraction of nature-based products such as natural river and pristine forest, including agricultural-based products. The nature-based attraction offered by the MANTAP tourism, such as 'Babagon Riverside Village Chalet and Campsite' and 'Kamagi Riverside Retreat and Recreation' offer countryside healing for many tourists who want to escape busy city lives. Previous studies support this notion; Engaging with nature can alleviate stress, promote relaxation of the autonomic nervous system, and boost happy emotions (Kou et al., 2024; Komppula et al., 2017).

The native people have encouraging views about tourism advantages in this region. Nevertheless, as tourist influx proliferate with the development of tourism, they anticipate that this business will increase the amount of garbage. The results imply native residents exhibit sensitivity to socio-economic effects to which they are exposed, albeit in indirect ways. Worldwide negative impacts of tourism development are illustrated well by many scholars – at early stage, tourism diminishes environmental problems, but exacerbates it as tourism activities intensify (Ehigiamusoe et al., 2020).

The way forward: Implications for Moyog rural area development

This section explains what strategies are required to succeed early tourism planning in upper Moyog areas. How can this place offer a whole atmosphere of countryside authenticity? In the near future, the implementation initiatives of Moyog Agroindustry and Tourism Park help fulfilled the Sabah Structure Plan 2033 and Penampang District Strategic Development Plan (2024-2035).

With the increasing popularity of CBT as a panacea for rural poverty and unemployment (Woyo & Musavengane, 2023), the level of poverty declines in areas where CBT thrives in terms of economic, social, and environmental benefits. Interestingly, the development of tourism MANTAP projects highlights that demonstrating tourism benefits is the first critical action required before other actions are implemented. The findings indicate that the native people must be able to envision themselves as part of the tourism beneficiaries and understand

how the development will impact their village as a whole. This criterion is followed by evaluating their needs and plans to develop their land for the MANTAP programs. These two crucial determinants should be followed by investigating how strong leadership can promote followership in early tourism planning. Demonstrating tourism benefits and good leadership are project legitimacy, which confers credibility, trust, stakeholder support, and access to essential resources for tourism operational purposes (Mwesiumo et al., 2022). More importantly, the current findings reveal that native people oppose tourism ideas because they do not understand their role in the overall tourism planning, underscoring the urgent need to establish 'benefit awareness' prior to implementing other tourism initiatives in the early stages of tourism development.

The development concept of MANTAP tourism aspires for the community to take charge of and have ownership over tourism activities, with the primary focus being to benefit the community itself. Therefore, the results indicate that MANTAP should adopt community-based tourism (CBT), as it is still in its early stages of tourism development. The identification of early tourism benefit awareness, local needs and plans, and strong leadership in the present study is well supported by global CBT projects (Hatipoglu et al., 2020; Dodds et al., 2018). Several pertinent factors of successful CBT are local management and empowerment of community members, collaboration and partnerships that facilitate connections to the tourism market, the establishment of environmental and community objectives, and support from enablers such as the government, funding institutions, and the private sector (Hatipoglu et al., 2020; Dodds et al., 2018). In the Upper Moyog area, CBT will transcend the sharing of culture and traditional knowledge between the native people here and tourists in the context of local customs, beliefs, and livelihoods. The local-tourist interaction can promote the preservation of native values while generating revenue for village residents.

Tourism development in upper Moyog areas can be materialised by incorporating native people attitudinal and perspectives in developing the CBT. The attraction in MANTAP areas can be developed using mixed tourism products, but it should be developed based on 'one village one product' (OVOP) concept to prevent competing with another village (Koswara et al., 2020). Product development must consider the strength of each village in terms of local support, village attraction, and native people ability to handle tourism services. Most respondents propose handicrafts, homestay, guesthouse, camping site, glamping, herbal garden, traditional dance, music performance, and hiking trail. The Moyog river areas are known for Tagal system (i.e., prohibition in the Dusun language) to protect aquatic river species. This is an added product value to nature-based product that can be offered in this region.

Apart from instilling project legitimacy, the development of the MANTAP project will greatly benefit from forging a support network (Mwesiumo et al., 2022). Tourism planning comprises seven life cycles, namely exploration, involvement, development, consolidation, stagnation, decline, and rejuvenation (Getz, 1992). This study shows the three stages—exploration, involvement, and development—of MANTAP tourism in the upper Moyog areas. The first stage is exploration, which involves identifying multiple tourism benefits provided by the MANTAP plan. In this study, why is it important to identify tourism benefits and then only explore local needs and plans? The interview findings indicate that the native people are highly concerned about the benefits they expect from the anticipated tourism activities. On-site visits show that natives' resistance is higher when they are unable to see how they can benefit from tourism development in their villages. The advantages of tourism include social development such as the expansion of road access, increased job opportunities and incomes, and community entrepreneurship. Environmental advantages encompass safeguarding flora and fauna, adhering to proper planning and EIA regulations, and avoiding large-scale tourism.

The second stage is exploration and local involvement. The strength of MANTAP tourism plans is that the implementation is spearheaded by leaders who have extensive experience in development and financial management without relying on the local authority assistance at the early tourism development. The informants emphasise the importance of communicating the tourism benefits and plans to their villages prior to the actual implementation. They demonstrate efforts to understand the standard operating procedure (SOP) and local authority requirements necessary for tourism development. These findings indicate three important enabling factors: the strength of locally empowered leadership; a collaborative approach that seeks to involve local residents in the decision-making process through active information sharing; and that the tourism initiatives meet all necessary regulations and standards. Notably, well-defined benefit distribution, power sharing, regulation, and local leadership contribute to successful CBT implementation (Dodds et al., 2018; Woyo & Musavengane, 2023).

The third stage entails exploration, involvement, and development stages after the initiation of MANTAP plans. This stage signals the importance of a strong support network for the MANTAP development (Figure 2). In this light, there are three enabling factors: working with local authorities; fostering group mutual cooperation through women's cooperatives and youth development; and establishing a special committee at the district level to assist potential native people who have land for development but lack funds. A robust support network directly benefits the community by providing expert assistance in areas such as tourism skills, advisory services, license approval, and funding support for novice tourism operators. This result speaks volumes about the availability, capacity, and

resources owned by the local people in this region, particularly in terms of funds and knowledge of how to do tourism business in the early development stage. When communities lack knowledge about tourism, have financial constraints, and have negative perceptions of tourism businesses, it distorts local participation and the positive impacts of CBT development (Azwar et al., 2023).

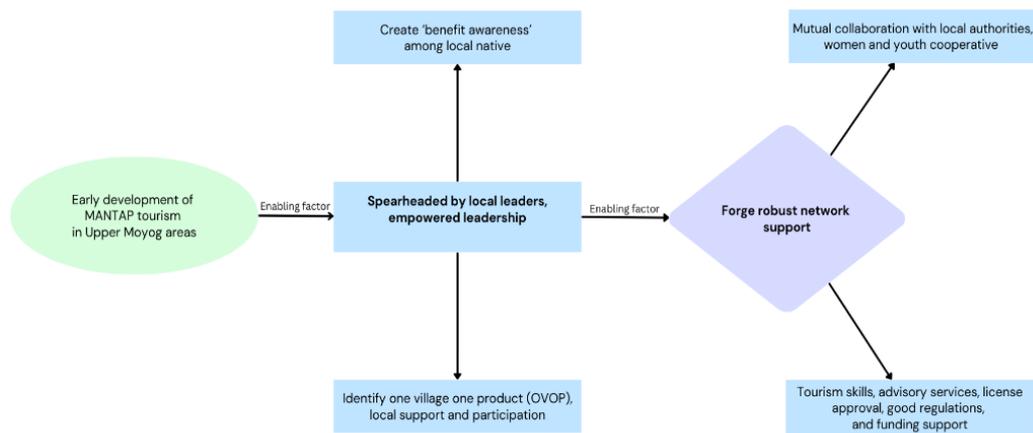


Figure 2: Enabling factors to navigate early development of MANTAP tourism in upper Moyog areas.

Source: Author data (2024)

CONCLUSION

Despite the fact that 56.5% of the Kadazan Dusun study participants have yet to experience tangible benefits from tourism, their supportive attitudes are notable. The Moyog Agroindustry and Tourism Park (MANTAP), still in its early stages, showcases the potential for high tourism benefits. The study emphasises the importance of sustainable tourism projects that promote economic, social, and environmental sustainability (SET concept). This study underscore two important practical implications. First, demonstrating tourism benefits early on is crucial for gaining native people's support and involvement. Second, strong leadership and project legitimacy, which foster credibility and access to resources, are also essential. The MANTAP tourism concept aims for community ownership and management of tourism activities, focusing on benefiting the local population. In the upper Moyog areas, CBT can protect native values while generating revenue, with traditional activities and nature-based products enhancing the tourism offering. Establishing a support network and inclusive planning processes are vital for the implementation of the MANTAP project. Future work will focus on implementing CBT concepts derived from this study to inspire more native people involvement in the MANTAP plans.

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