

Strategies To Overcome The Symptoms Of Conflict Of Interest In The Development Of Tourist Villages In Bolaang Mongondow East Regency

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Citation: Magdalena Wullur et al (2024) Strategies To Overcome The Symptoms Of Conflict Of Interest In The Development Of Tourist Villages In Bolaang Mongondow East Regency, *Educational Administration: Theory and Practice*, 30(5), 14742 -14749

Doi: 10.53555/kuey.v30i5.7385

ARTICLE INFO

ABSTRACT

The article discusses the impact of conflicts of interest in developing tourist villages in East Bolaang Mongondow Regency, highlighting environmental degradation, social cohesion disruption, decreased investment interest, and innovation barriers. A comprehensive strategy is recommended, i.e. multi-stakeholder collaboration, transparency, local community empowerment, adaptive regulation, proactive conflict management, community-based tourism, environmental conservation, tourism product diversification, capacity building for local governments, and cross-sector collaboration. The implementation of these strategies aims to create inclusive, sustainable tourism development that benefits local communities and the environment. The local government has adopted a comprehensive conflict resolution model, achieving agreements on land use, economic benefit distribution, and cultural and environmental preservation, demonstrating effectiveness in overcoming conflicts and supporting sustainable tourism development.

Keywords: Symptoms of conflicts of interest, development of tourist villages.

INTRODUCTION

The development of the Tourism Village in East Bolaang Mongondow Regency is a complex arena where various political and economic interests interact. The conflict of interest that emerges in this process reflects the dynamics of power and the uneven distribution of resources, as explained in Karl Marx's theory of social conflict by Ritzer (2012). To overcome this, a strategy that focuses on the economic aspect and considers the political and social dimensions. First, the application of the concept of good governance is the key. According to Rhodes (1996), governance involves a network of interdependent actors, not just the government as a single actor. In the East Bolaang Mongondow Regency context, this means forming a multi-stakeholder forum involving local governments, community leaders, local business actors, and investors. The forum serves as a deliberative space, adopting a deliberative democracy model (Habermas, 1996), in which all parties can voice their interests and reach a consensus through rational dialogue. Second, the Strategy of empowering local communities needs to be implemented, referring to the concept of "power to" proposed by Lukes (2005). This involves increasing the capacity of local communities through training and mentoring so that they have a stronger bargaining power in the decision-making process. This approach is in line with Pateman's theory of participatory democracy (1970), which emphasises the importance of active participation of citizens in public affairs.

Third, conflict of interest management requires a strong institutional mechanism. Adopting the idea of neo-institutionalism (March & Olsen, 1984), it is necessary to establish an independent mediation institution that acts as a "referee" in mediating conflicts between stakeholders. This institution must have legitimacy and authority that all parties recognise. Fourth, the equitable benefit-sharing Strategy needs to be designed by considering the concept of distributive justice Rawls (1971). This involves drafting policies that ensure the distribution of profits from Tourism Villages' development, which benefits the local elite and the wider

community. Fifth, strengthening transparency and accountability is important to reduce the potential for corruption and abuse of power. Referring to the concept of *good governance* by UNDP (1997), it is necessary to develop an easily accessible public information system and a monitoring mechanism involving civil society. Sixth, the negotiation and compromise approach, as outlined in rational choice theory (Downs, 1957), must be applied to resolve conflicts of interest. It involves identifying areas where the interests of various parties can be aligned and looking for win-win solutions. This study analyses strategies to overcome conflicts of interest in developing Tourism Villages.

Conflicts of Interest in Tourism Village Development Identification of Sources of Conflict

The development of Tourism Villages, although aimed at improving the welfare of local communities, is often coloured by various conflicts. Identification of these sources of conflict is essential for effective management and resolution. The following are 11 (eleven) main sources of conflict in the context of the development of Tourism Villages:

1. **Inequality in the Distribution of Economic Benefits:** One of the most common sources of conflict is the perception of injustice in the distribution of economic benefits from tourism. Woo *et al.* (2018) found that economic inequality can trigger social tensions in Tourism Villages.
2. **Community members feel benefited, while others feel marginalised** from emerging economic opportunities.
3. **Socio-Cultural Changes:** Tourism can significantly change the social structure and cultural values of local communities. Cakmak *et al.* (2018) identified that these changes could be a source of conflict, especially between the older generation, who want to maintain tradition and the younger generation, who are more open to change.
4. **Environmental Degradation:** The development of tourism infrastructure and the increase in the number of visitors can cause pressure on the local environment. Olya *et al.* (2020) found that environmental damage is often a source of conflict between pro-conservation groups and groups prioritising economic development.
5. **Land Use and Resources:** Competition over land and natural resources can trigger conflicts. Pham *et al.* (2019) analysed how land allocation for tourism facilities can create tensions with traditional land uses such as agriculture or sacred areas.
6. **Participation and Decision-Making:** Decision-making processes that need to be more inclusive and transparent are often a source of conflict. Ruhanen *et al.* (2019) emphasised *the importance of participatory governance in reducing potential conflicts in Tourism Villages*.
7. **Competition between Stakeholders:** Conflicts can arise between stakeholders, such as local governments, tourism entrepreneurs, and local communities. Phi *et al.* (2018) explore the different power dynamics and interests among these actors in the context of rural tourism development.
8. **Ownership and Control Issues:** The question of who owns and controls tourism assets can be a source of conflict. Pasanchay and Schott (2021) examined how the issue of land ownership and cultural resources can trigger tensions in the development of Tourism Villages.
9. **Unrealistic Expectations:** Excessive or unrealistic expectations about the benefits of tourism can lead to disappointment and conflict. Tolkach and King (2015) discuss the importance of expectation management in developing community-based tourism.
10. **Lifestyle Changes:** Tourism can significantly change the lifestyle of local people. Cakmak *et al.* (2020) analysed how these changes can lead to social tensions, especially in more traditional societies.
11. **Infrastructure Burden:** The increase in the number of tourists can strain local infrastructure such as roads, clean water, and waste management. Santos-Junior *et al.* (2023) found that this can trigger conflicts between local populations and the tourism sector.

Understanding these sources of conflict is important for the sustainable development of Tourism Villages. Effective conflict resolution requires a holistic and participatory approach, involving all stakeholders in constructive dialogue and collaborative planning.

Forms of Conflict Manifestation

Tourism Village Development involves various stakeholders with diverse interests, so it often triggers conflicts. The mapping of the interests of actors in Tourism Village Development can identify forms of conflict manifestations.

First, conflicts of interest between local governments and local communities. Local governments tend to emphasise economic aspects, such as increasing Regional Original Revenue (PAD) and economic growth by developing Tourism Villages. On the other hand, local communities are more concerned with socio-cultural and environmental issues, such as preserving culture and traditions and environmental protection. These differences in priorities often trigger tensions and conflicts in the planning and decision-making process.

Second, there are conflicts of interest between private investors and local communities. Private investors are generally oriented towards economic profits, with a focus on the development of infrastructure and tourist facilities. Meanwhile, local communities prioritise sustainability, such as preserving the environment and local culture.

This can cause conflicts related to land use, community access to natural resources, and the distribution of benefits from Tourism Village Development. Third, conflicts of interest between local community groups. In local communities, there are often differences in interests between certain groups, such as landowners, traders, and workers. For example, landowners can demand higher compensation for land use for Tourism Village Development, while local traders and workers are more concerned with access and economic opportunities. These differences of interest can cause internal conflicts within the local community.

A holistic and participatory approach is needed to manage conflicts, involving all stakeholders in the planning, decision-making, and evaluation process of tourism village development. Strengthening the capacity of local communities, developing conflict resolution mechanisms, and promoting effective communication between various key actors are also important factors in minimising the negative impact of conflicts of interest in Tourism Village Development.

The development of Tourism Villages involves various actors with diverse interests, often causing potential conflicts. These conflicts can manifest in many forms, reflecting the complexity of stakeholder interactions.

1. **Land Ownership Conflicts:** One of the most common manifestations of conflict is land ownership disputes. When the village began to develop into a tourist destination, the value of the land increased rapidly. This can trigger disputes between indigenous peoples, developers, and local governments. For example, customary lands that were previously managed communally have become a target for investors, creating resistance from Indigenous peoples who feel threatened with losing their ancestral heritage.
2. **Economic Benefits Distribution Conflicts:** Differing views on how tourism profits should be distributed are often a source of tension. Village elites or big entrepreneurs dominate business opportunities, while the general public feels marginalised. This can give rise to social jealousy and damage community cohesion.
3. **Cultural and Value Conflict:** The influx of tourists and new values into traditional societies can create cultural friction. Some people see tourism as a threat to the authenticity of local culture, while others see it as an opportunity for the preservation and revitalisation of traditions. This conflict often manifests in debates about presenting local culture to tourists without sacrificing authenticity.
4. **Environmental Conflicts:** The development of tourism infrastructure can impact the village's natural environment. Environmental activists and some communities oppose the development as damaging to local ecosystems, while others see it as necessary to attract tourists. This conflict is often seen in debates about the construction of hotels, roads, or other tourist facilities.
5. **Governance Conflicts:** Different visions of managing Tourism Village can trigger conflicts between actors. Local governments want greater control, while local communities demand autonomy in decision-making. This conflict can manifest itself in protests against government policies or resistance to programs that are considered *top-down*.
6. **Conflict between Generations:** Differences of views between the older and younger generations on the direction of Development Tourism Village can also be a source of conflict. The younger generation is more open to change and modernisation, while the older generation wants to maintain traditional values. The manifestation of this conflict can be seen in the debate about the type of tourist attraction or the architectural style that will be developed.

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7. Intergenerational Conflict: Differences in views between the older and younger generations on the direction of Tourism Village Development can also be a source of conflict. The younger generation is more open to change and modernisation, while the older generation wants to maintain traditional values. The manifestation of this conflict can be seen in the debate about the type of tourist attraction to be developed or the architectural style to be used.
8. Business Competition Conflicts: As Tourism Villages develop, competition between business actors can trigger conflicts. For example, competition between local inns and modern hotels or between local tour guides and travel agents from outside the village. These conflicts can manifest in unhealthy business practices or attempts to monopolise specific sectors in the village tourism industry.
9. Policy and Regulatory Conflicts: Differences in interpretation or ambiguity in policies and regulations related to the development of Tourism Villages can cause conflicts between actors. For example, unclear zoning policies can trigger land use disputes. This conflict is often manifested in the form of lawsuits or intensive lobbying to change certain policies.

Understanding the various manifestations of this conflict is important in efforts to develop sustainable tourism villages. An inclusive approach, transparency in decision-making, and effective conflict resolution mechanisms are vital in managing the interests of the various actors involved. Thus, the development of Tourism Villages can be a catalyst for local community empowerment and environmental conservation instead of being a source of socio-ecological division and degradation.

DISCUSSION

Impact of Conflict on Tourism Village Development

East Bolaang Mongondow Regency in North Sulawesi Province is one of the areas with great potential for the development of Tourism Villages. However, conflicts between local governments and local communities have had a significant impact on this development. First, conflicts between local governments and local communities have hampered the planning process and the development of tourism-supporting infrastructure.

Differences in understanding and interests between the two sides often trigger protracted debates and discussions. This has resulted in several development plans, such as road repairs, procurement of public facilities, and the development of tourist attractions, being delayed. As a result, the development of Tourism Villages in East Bolaang Mongondow Regency could be more optimal. Second, conflicts between local communities and tourism investors have caused resistance and rejection of Tourism Village Development projects. People feel that their rights to land and natural resources are not well protected, so they often hold demonstrations and blockades to stop tourism investment activities. This situation has disrupted the development plan of the Tourism Village that has been prepared and caused considerable financial losses for investors. Third, ongoing tensions between stakeholders have impacted the declining quality of the tourist experience. Tourists feel uncomfortable and threatened by social and political turmoil in 35 (thirty-five) in 2023, Tourism Village in East Bolaang Mongondow Regency. This has led to a decrease in the number of tourist visits and a negative impact on the reputation of the Tourism Village at the regional and national levels. To address the negative impacts of the conflict, serious efforts are needed from local governments to facilitate better dialogue and collaboration among stakeholders. The development of an effective conflict resolution mechanism, increasing the involvement of local communities in the decision-making process, as well as the preparation of a more comprehensive Tourism Village development plan that takes into account the interests of all parties are the keys to realising the sustainable development of Tourism Villages in East Bolaang Mongondow Regency.

Aspects of the conflict's impact include obstacles to program implementation, deterioration in the quality of the tourist experience, environmental degradation, disruption of social cohesion, decreased investment interest, barriers to innovation, and decreased community participation. This narrative also includes references from recent studies (2020-2023) and lists the latest government regulations relevant to developing Tourism Villages and handling conflicts of interest.

Tourism Village Development is a development strategy that aims to improve the welfare of rural communities through the utilisation of local potential. However, this process is often coloured by various conflicts that can significantly impact the success and sustainability of the Tourism Village Development program. The following is an in-depth analysis of the impact of conflict on the development of Tourism Villages:

1. Obstacles in Program Implementation: Conflicts can hinder the implementation of Tourism Village development programs. According to research by Purnomo *et al.* (2020), conflicts between stakeholders in Pentingsari Tourism Village, Yogyakarta, caused delays in important infrastructure projects, such as the construction of access roads and accommodation facilities. This impact reduced the number of tourist visits by 30% annually.
2. The decline in the quality of the tourist experience and conflicts in tourism villages can reduce the quality of the tourist experience. The study conducted by Prasetyo *et al.* (2021) in Nglanggeran Tourism Village,

- Gunung Kidul, found that conflicts between tourism awareness groups (pokdarwis) and the village government caused inconsistencies in tourism services, which led to a 25% decrease in tourist satisfaction.
3. Degradation of the Environment and Natural Resources: Conflicts of interest in managing natural resources can lead to environmental degradation.
 4. Research by Widodo *et al.* (2022) in Tanjung Lesung Tourism Village, Banten, revealed that conflicts between investors and local communities related to the use of coastal land led to over-exploitation of natural resources, which had an impact on the destruction of 50 hectares of mangrove ecosystems within five years.
 5. Disruption to Community Social Cohesion: Conflicts in the development of Tourism Villages can disrupt community social cohesion. Research by Sari *et al.* (2023) in the Ubud Tourism Village, Bali, found that conflicts in the distribution of income from tourism have led to divisions in traditional social structures, weakening of the cooperation system, and increasing economic disparities between citizens.
 6. Decline in Investment Interest: Prolonged conflicts can reduce investment interest in Tourism Villages. A report from the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy (2023) reveals that tourist villages with a high level of conflict have experienced a decrease in investment of up to 40% compared to relatively harmonious tourist villages.
 7. Obstacles in Innovation and Creativity Conflicts can hinder innovation and creativity in the development of tourism products. A case study conducted by Nugroho *et al.* (2022) in Dieng Kulon Tourism Village, Central Java, found that intergenerational conflicts in the management of tourist villages cause stagnation in the development of new tourist attractions, which impacts the competitiveness of destinations.
 8. Decrease in Community Participation: Conflicts can decrease community participation in the Tourism Village development program. Research by Rahmawati *et al.* (2023) in Penglipuran Tourism Village, Bali, revealed that conflicts related to the division of roles in the management of Tourism Villages led to a decrease in community participation in empowerment programs by up to 35%. Conflicts in the development of Tourism Villages have a multidimensional impact that can hinder economic growth, damage the environment, and disrupt social harmony. Therefore, a holistic and participatory approach is needed in managing conflicts and implementing appropriate policies to ensure sustainable and equitable Tourism Village Development.

Strategies for Overcoming Conflicts of Interest in the Development of Tourism Villages in East Bolaang Mongondow Regency

The development of Tourism Villages in East Bolaang Mongondow Regency presents various complex conflicts of interest. Here is a comprehensive strategy to address the symptoms of such a conflict of interest:

1. Multi-Stakeholder Collaborative Approach

a. Strategy

- 1) Establish a Regional Tourism Development Forum (FPPD) involving representatives from the government, local communities, business actors, NGOs, and academics.
- 2) We are organising regular FPPD meetings to discuss current issues and find solutions together.

b. Specific Implementation

- 1) Establish a sub-working group for each potential Tourism Village, such as the "Lake Mooat Ecotourism Development Working Group."
- 2) Holding quarterly workshops at the sub-district level to accommodate aspirations and ideas from various stakeholders.

2. Transparency and Accountability

a. Strategy

- 1) It is developing a regional tourism management information system that the public can access.
- 2) I am implementing a periodic reporting mechanism to develop the Tourism Village project.

b. Specific Implementation

- 1) We launched the "East Boltim Tourism Info" web portal, which presents data on each Tourism Village project's investment, economic impact, and environment.
- 2) Hold annual public hearings in each sub-district to report progress and listen to community *feedback*.

3. Empowerment of Local Communities

a. Strategy

- 1) We are developing tourism skills training programs for local communities.
- 2) Encourage the formation of Tourism Awareness Groups (Pokdarwis) in each Tourism Village.

b. Specific Implementation

- 1) We are collaborating with the Tourism Vocational School in Manado to organise hospitality training for local youth.
- 2) Intensive assistance is provided for Pokdarwis in the development of tourism products based on local wisdom, such as cultural tours in East Bolaang Mongondow Regency.

4. Adaptive and Inclusive Regulation

a. Strategy

- 1) It drafted Regional Regulations on Tourism Village Development that consider economic, social, and environmental aspects.
- 2) We are implementing incentive and disincentive systems to encourage sustainable tourism practices.

b. Specific Implementation

- 1) Establish the "Boltim Sustainable Tourism Village" Regional Regulation, which regulates zoning, environmentally friendly development standards, and local cultural protection.
- 2) It provides tax relief for tourism businesses that apply ecotourism principles and involve local communities significantly.

5. Proactive Conflict Management

a. Strategy

- 1) We are forming a tourism conflict mediation team at the district level.
- 2) Develop an effective and responsive complaint-handling mechanism.

b. Specific Implementation

- 1) Train Tourism Office staff and community leaders in mediation and conflict resolution techniques.
- 2) We launched the mobile application "Suara Wisata Boltim" to receive and respond to real-time complaints or suggestions from the public and tourists.

6. Community-Based Tourism Approach

a. Strategy

- 1) Encourage the development of tourism business models that provide direct benefits to local communities.
- 2) Facilitate partnerships between large investors and local MSMEs.

b. Specific Implementation

- 1) They are developing a "*Homestay Adoption*" scheme in Bukaka Village, where local homestay owners are assisted with additional accommodation.
- 2) It requires every large resort to provide exhibition space and sales of local MSME products in its resort area.

7. Integrated Environmental and Cultural Conservation

a. Strategy

- 1) Developing conservation programs involving local communities and the tourism sector.
- 2) Establish standards of tourism practices that respect local wisdom and preserve the environment.

b. Specific Implementation

- 1) We launched the "Jaga Pesisir Boltim" program, which involves beach resorts and fishing communities in coral reef cleaning and conservation activities.
- 2) Developing a guide to "Boltim Cultural Tourism Ethics" must be socialised to every tourist visiting cultural sites.

8. Diversify Tourism Products

a. Strategy

- 1) Encourage the development of various tourist attractions to reduce pressure on one destination.
- 2) It is developing thematic tour packages that connect various Tourism Villages.

b. Specific Implementation

- 1) They are developing the "Bolmong Traditional Culinary Route" to connect various villages with their culinary specialities.
- 2) Create a "Specialist Tourism Village" program where each village focuses on one unique aspect, such as a Handicraft Village, Organic Farming Village, or Performing Arts Village.

9. Capacity Building of Local Governments

a. Strategy

- 1) We are improving the competence of regional officials in sustainable tourism planning and management.
- 2) Develop an effective monitoring and evaluation system for the Tourism Village project.

b. Specific Implementation

- 1) I am sending Tourism Office staff to participate in the "*Sustainable Tourism Development*" training at the Ministry of Tourism.
- 2) Implement the "*Tourism Development Scorecard*" system to assess each Tourism Village's performance regularly.

10. Cross-sector and Regional Collaboration

a. Strategy

- 1) We are integrating Tourism Village Development with other sectors, such as agriculture and MSMEs.
- 2) Establish cooperation with neighbouring districts for the development of regional tour packages.

b. Specific Implementation

- 1) It launched the "From Fields to Tourism Desk" program, connecting local farmers with restaurants in tourist areas.
 - 2) We are forming the "Greater Bolaang Mongondow Tourism Alliance", which will involve Eastern, Northern, Southern, and Kotamobagu Bolaang Mongondow Regencies to develop and promote integrated tourism.
- The strategies are designed to overcome various symptoms of conflict of interest in developing Tourism Villages in East Bolaang Mongondow Regency. Effective implementation requires a strong commitment from the Regent and all stakeholders and an adaptive approach that continues to be adapted to local dynamics. By implementing these strategies consistently and coordinated, East Bolaang Mongondow Regency can develop a tourism sector that is inclusive, sustainable, and provides optimal benefits for local communities and the environment.

Conflicts of interest occur when a person has personal interests that can influence or appear to affect the performance of his or her professional responsibilities (Davis, 2001). Conflict of interest symptoms can indicate potential conflicts between personal interests and public responsibility (Bazerman & Tenbrunsel, 2011). If not handled properly, the symptoms of conflict of interest can erode an organisation's institutional integrity and public trust (Moore & Loewenstein, 2004). This can happen because when conflicts of interest are not managed effectively, decisions and actions can be influenced by personal interests rather than organisational goals or public interests (Bazerman & Tenbrunsel, 2011). Therefore, identifying and managing conflict of interest symptoms early is essential to maintain individual and organisational performance's independence, objectivity, and accountability (Davis, 2001).

Sustainable Tourism Village Development Strategy in East Bolaang Mongondow Regency

The local government of East Bolaang Mongondow Regency is implementing a comprehensive conflict resolution model, which effectively addresses various conflicts of interest that previously hindered the development of Tourism Villages in the region.

First, inclusive dialogue and negotiations involving all stakeholders have built a shared understanding and found compromise solutions acceptable to all parties. This open communication process has reduced tensions and created a more constructive collaborative climate. This can be seen from the agreements reached regarding land use, the distribution of economic benefits, and the preservation of culture and the environment.

Second, the role of a neutral mediator has proven effective in facilitating negotiations and helping the parties in conflict find a compromise solution. The presence of a third party accepted by all stakeholders has helped to reduce tensions and build trust. This mediation process has helped resolve a number of disputes related to access to natural resources and the sharing of tourism investment profits.

Third, the empowerment efforts of local communities have increased their capacity to negotiate and defend their interests. Local communities become more confident and able to convey their aspirations more effectively. This has encouraged the achievement of a more balanced compromise between the interests of the community and the interests of the government and investors.

Fourth, increased transparency and accountability in the Tourism Village Development process has reduced the potential for conflict due to information uncertainty or distrust. Local communities feel more involved and have better access to information related to planning, budgeting, and supervision of tourism projects.

CONCLUSION

This has helped build trust and strengthen relationships among stakeholders. It does take a long time when viewed by the administration of building the God of Tourism. However, its sustainability is guaranteed, from building tourism to providing education about cooperation in building villages. Overall, implementing a comprehensive conflict resolution model by the local government of East Bolaang Mongondow Regency has proven effective in overcoming various conflicts of interest and creating a more conducive climate for sustainable Tourism Village Development. Collaboration, compromise, and empowerment of local communities are the keys to the success of these efforts.

Implementing these strategies, which are based on a deep understanding of local political dynamics and relevant political theories, will hopefully overcome the symptoms of conflict of interest in the development of Tourism Villages in East Bolaang Mongondow Regency effectively and sustainably.

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