

Empowering local communities engagement: Rural tourism and business innovation for SDGs desa

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Article History

Received on 6 November 2023

1st Revision on 20 November 2023

Accepted on 5 December 2023

Abstract

Purpose: This study investigates the role of social entrepreneurship and business innovation in empowering local communities for rural tourism development within the framework of sustainable development goals (SDGs).

Research methodology: A comprehensive review of the existing literature on social entrepreneurship, business innovation, and rural tourism development is conducted. The study also involved qualitative interviews with key stakeholders and community members in the selected villages, followed by thematic analysis of the data.

Results: The findings reveal that Social entrepreneurship plays a crucial role in fostering community engagement, promoting social inclusivity, and creating sustainable tourism initiatives. On the other hand, business innovation enables local communities to differentiate themselves, enhance visitor experiences, and improve the overall competitiveness of rural tourism destinations.

Limitations: This study acknowledges certain limitations, including the selection of a limited number of case study villages and potential bias in qualitative interviews. Further research is needed to explore the generalizability of the findings across different contexts.

Contribution: This study contributes to the understanding of the synergistic relationship among social entrepreneurship, business innovation, and rural tourism development. These findings provide insights for policymakers, community leaders, and practitioners in designing effective strategies to empower local communities and promote sustainable tourism within the SDGs Desa framework.

Novelty: The novelty of this study lies in its comprehensive examination of the combined influence of social entrepreneurship and business innovation on rural tourism development in the context of sustainable development goals (SDGs Desa). This highlights the potential of these concepts to drive positive change and create inclusive and resilient rural tourism destinations.

Keywords: *social entrepreneurship, business innovation, rural tourism development, Village Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs Desa), community empowerment*

How to Cite: Sulaiman, E., Fitralisma, G., Fata, M. A., & Nawawi, R. (2024). Empowering local communities engagement: Rural tourism and business innovation for SDGs desa. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism and Entrepreneurship*, 5(1), 31-44.

1. Introduction

Rural tourism has gained increasing attention as a means to promote sustainable development and empower local communities. This involves attracting visitors to rural areas, providing them with unique

experiences, and generating economic opportunities for the local population. However, rural communities often face challenges in capitalizing on their natural (Jaafar, Md Noor, Mohamad, Jalali, & Hashim, 2020) and cultural assets due to limited resources (Bennett, Borders, Holmes, Kozhimannil, & Ziller, 2019), lack of infrastructure (Du Plessis & Mestry, 2019), and limited access to markets (Ameraldo, Saiful, & Husaini, 2019).

The concept of social entrepreneurship has emerged as a powerful tool for addressing these challenges. Social entrepreneurship focuses on creating innovative and sustainable solutions to social and environmental problems while generating economic value (Bansal, Garg, & Sharma, 2019). By harnessing the entrepreneurial spirit within local communities, social entrepreneurship can facilitate community engagement, promote social inclusivity (Roslan, Hamid, Ijab, Yusop, & Norman, 2022), and foster sustainable tourism initiatives (Aryaningsih, 2020).

In addition to social entrepreneurship, business innovation plays a crucial role in enhancing the competitiveness of rural tourism destinations (Xiong, Zhang, & Lee, 2020). Through innovative practices, local communities can differentiate themselves, improve visitor experiences, and create unique offerings that attract tourists (Adamo, Ferrari, & Gilli, 2019). Business innovation can encompass various aspects, including product development (Dahmani et al., 2021), marketing strategies (Purchase & Volery, 2020), and the adoption of new technologies (Costa & Matias, 2020).

The motivation behind this study stems from the need to understand the interplay between social entrepreneurship, business innovation, and rural tourism development within the context of sustainable development goals (SDGs Desa). The SDGs Desa framework emphasizes the importance of community-driven initiatives for sustainable rural development. By investigating the role of social entrepreneurship and business innovation in empowering local communities for rural tourism, this study seeks to contribute to the achievement of SDGs Desa and promote inclusive and resilient rural tourism destinations.

The research problem addressed in this study revolves around identifying the specific ways in which social entrepreneurship and business innovation can empower local communities and drive sustainable rural tourism. By examining the synergistic relationship between these concepts, this study aimed to provide insights and recommendations for policymakers, community leaders, and practitioners to design effective strategies that foster community empowerment and promote sustainable tourism within the SDGs Desa framework.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Social Entrepreneurship Theory

Social Entrepreneurship Theory is a conceptual framework that seeks to understand and explain the role of entrepreneurs in creating positive social changes (Bansal et al., 2019; Santos, 2012). It focuses on the intersection of business principles and social impact (Vallaster, Kraus, Lindahl, & Nielsen, 2019), emphasizing the use of innovative and sustainable approaches to address social and environmental challenges (Bansal et al., 2019).

At its core, the Social Entrepreneurship Theory recognizes that traditional for-profit models may not adequately address complex social problems (N. Meyer, 2021). Therefore, social entrepreneurs adopt a hybrid approach by applying entrepreneurial principles to pursue both financial sustainability and social impact (He, Liu, Phang, & Luo, 2022). They aim to create systemic solutions that go beyond charity or philanthropy, and instead focus on long-term social and environmental transformation.

Key Concepts and Principles of Social Entrepreneurship Theory

1. **Social Mission:** Social entrepreneurs are driven by a strong sense of social mission, seeking to address societal issues such as poverty, inequality, environmental degradation, healthcare access, education, or community development (Abebe, Kimakwa, & Redd, 2020). They aim to create positive social values and improve the well-being of both individuals and communities.

2. **Innovation and Creativity:** Social entrepreneurship emphasizes the need for innovative and creative solutions to social problems (Halдар, 2019). Entrepreneurs develop new approaches, products, services, or business models that challenge the status quo and offer unique and sustainable solutions to societal challenges.
3. **Sustainability and Financial Viability:** Social entrepreneurs recognize the importance of financial sustainability to ensure the long-term impact of their initiatives (Al-Qudah, Al-Okaily, & Alqudah, 2022). They leverage market mechanisms and revenue-generating activities to support their social mission, often adopting hybrid business models that combine revenue generation and social impact.
4. **Stakeholder Engagement and Collaboration:** Social entrepreneurship involves engaging and collaborating with various stakeholders, including community members (Kelly, Steiner, Mazzei, & Baker, 2019), government agencies, NGOs, investors, and business partners. Building strong relationships and partnerships is crucial for mobilizing resources, accessing expertise, and creating a collective impact (Savarese, Huybrechts, & Hudon, 2021).
5. **Systems Thinking and Systems Change:** Social entrepreneurs adopt a systems thinking approach, recognizing the interconnectedness of social, economic, and environmental issues (Iacovidou, Hahladakis, & Purnell, 2021). They aim to address root causes and create systemic changes by challenging the existing structures, policies, and norms.
6. **Measurement and Evaluation:** Social entrepreneurs emphasize the importance of measuring and evaluating their social impact (Gali et al., 2020). They employ metrics and indicators to assess the effectiveness of their interventions, ensuring accountability and evidence-based decision-making.

Social Entrepreneurship Theory in the Context of Rural Tourism Development: In the context of rural tourism development, Social Entrepreneurship Theory provides insights into how social entrepreneurs can empower local communities, promote inclusive growth, and create sustainable tourism initiatives (Chatterjee & Dsilva, 2021). This highlights the importance of community engagement, resource mobilization, and innovative approaches to address the unique challenges faced by rural areas, such as limited resources, infrastructure, and access to markets.

Social entrepreneurship in rural tourism involves initiatives that aim to enhance the well-being of rural communities (Dahles, Khieng, Verver, & Manders, 2020), preserve local culture and heritage (Apostolopoulos et al., 2020), and promote sustainable practices (Marin-Pantelescu, Tăchiciu, Căpușneanu, & Topor, 2019). This may include activities such as community-based tourism, eco-tourism, social enterprises, or initiatives that foster entrepreneurship and skill development among local residents.

By adopting the principles of Social Entrepreneurship Theory, rural tourism stakeholders can design and implement strategies to create economic opportunities, improve livelihoods, and protect the natural and cultural assets of rural areas. This can contribute to the overall development and empowerment of local communities while ensuring the long-term sustainability of rural tourism destinations.

2.2 Innovation Theory

Innovation theory refers to a body of literature that examines the process, drivers, and outcomes of innovation within organizations and societies (Lee & Trimi, 2021). It explores how new ideas, technologies, products, processes, and business models are developed and adopted to bring about positive changes and improve performance. The Schumpeterian theory emphasizes the role of entrepreneurship and creative destruction in driving innovation and economic development (Emami Langroodi, 2021). This highlights the importance of entrepreneurial activities, such as introducing new products, processes, or business models, in creating market disruptions and driving economic growth.

The diffusion of innovation theory, developed by sociologist Everett Rogers, focuses on the adoption and spread of innovation within social systems (Rogers, Singhal, & Quinlan, 2014). It identifies different types of adopters, such as innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority, and laggards, and examines the factors influencing the rate of adoption, including the characteristics of the innovation and adopters, communication channels, and social networks. The open innovation theory suggests that organizations can benefit from external sources of knowledge, ideas, and technologies to

drive innovation (Chesbrough, 2004). This emphasizes the importance of collaboration, partnerships, and open ecosystems in accessing and leveraging external expertise and resources.

Systems theory views innovation as an interconnected and complex process that involves interactions between various actors, organizations, and environmental factors (Midgley & Lindhult, 2021). It recognizes the interdependencies and feedback loops within innovation systems and highlights the need for holistic approaches to understanding and managing innovation processes, including human resource development (Ghorbani & Khanachah, 2020).

In conclusion, innovation theory provides insights into the generation, diffusion, and adoption of new ideas, technologies, products, and processes within organizations and societies. It encompasses various concepts, models, and theoretical approaches that help researchers and practitioners understand and harness the drivers, processes, and outcomes of innovation for positive change and growth, must change strategies to adapt to the current pandemic conditions (Reniasi, Akbar, & Rudianto, 2019).

2.3 Hypothesis Development

2.3.1 Business Information on Community Engagement

Business innovation refers to the introduction of new ideas, strategies, processes, products, or services that bring about positive changes and create value within a business context (Evans, 2018). In the context of community engagement, business innovation can have a positive effect by fostering stronger connections and collaborations between businesses and local communities. Business innovation has the potential to positively influence community engagement by fostering collaboration, creating economic opportunities, supporting community development initiatives, improving communication, and promoting social and environmental responsibility. When businesses actively engage with the local community and integrate their innovation efforts with community needs and aspirations, they can contribute to stronger and more sustainable community-business relationships delays in village annual development planning (Maikameng, Djani, & Toda, 2020), then we hypothesize:

H1: Business Information has a positive effect on Community Engagement

2.3.2 Social Entrepreneurship has a positive effect on Community Engagement

Participation: Social entrepreneurship promotes community engagement by actively involving community members in the decision-making processes, planning, and implementation of tourism initiatives (Dahles et al., 2020). Social entrepreneurs recognize the value of local knowledge, skills, and perspectives, and provide opportunities for community members to contribute their ideas and insights. This active participation fosters a sense of ownership and empowerment, as community members feel that their voices are heard and their contributions are valued (Cunha, Kastenholz, & Carneiro, 2020).

Collaboration: Social entrepreneurship encourages collaboration among community members as well as with external stakeholders, such as local businesses, e-business (Naab & Bans-Akutey, 2021), government agencies, and non-profit organizations. Social entrepreneurs often act as facilitators, bringing together different parties to work towards common goals and shared visions for tourism development. Collaborative efforts promote dialogue, cooperation, and pooling of resources and expertise, leading to more effective and sustainable outcomes. Community engagement through collaboration creates a sense of unity, trust, and shared responsibility for the success of tourism initiatives (Moayerian, McGehee, & Stephenson Jr, 2022).

Collective Action: Social entrepreneurship can inspire collective action within communities, mobilizing community members to work together towards common objectives (C. Meyer, 2020). By fostering a sense of shared purpose and addressing community needs and aspirations, social entrepreneurs motivate and empower individuals to take collective action to benefit the community. This can manifest in various forms, such as community-led initiatives, social enterprises, or grassroots movements, all of which contribute to the overall engagement and involvement of the community in rural tourism development, then we hypothesize:

H2: Social Entrepreneurship has a positive effect on Community Engagement

2.3.3 Community Engagement has a positive effect on Rural Tourism Development

Destination Planning: Community engagement in rural tourism development ensures that the voices and perspectives of local residents are considered in destination planning processes (Thetsane, 2019). By involving community members in decision making, local knowledge, insights, and aspirations can inform the development of tourism strategies that align with the needs and values of the community. Community engagement leads to more inclusive and participatory destination planning, resulting in tourism initiatives better suited to the unique characteristics, resources, and cultural heritage of rural areas.

Enhanced Visitor Experiences: Community engagement fosters the development of authentic and meaningful tourism experiences for visitors (Yanes, Zielinski, Diaz Cano, & Kim, 2019). Through community involvement, local residents can contribute their expertise, cultural insights, and storytelling to create immersive and genuine encounters (Kocaturk, Mazza, McKinnon, & Kaljevic, 2023). Community members may offer guided tours and cultural performances, or participate in homestay programs, providing visitors with opportunities to connect with the local community, learn about local traditions, and experience the local way of life. Enhanced visitor experiences contribute to positive word-of-mouth promotion, repeat visitations, and the overall attractiveness of rural tourism destinations (Malinka & Saragih, 2023).

Sustainable Tourism Outcomes: Community engagement plays a crucial role in promoting sustainable tourism outcomes in rural areas (Khalid, Ahmad, Ramayah, Hwang, & Kim, 2019). When local residents engage in tourism development, they become active stakeholders in preserving natural resources, protecting cultural heritage, and promoting sustainable practices. Community members are more likely to take ownership of their environment and actively participate in conservation efforts (Raimi et al., 2019). Community engagement also supports the diversification of the local economy, allowing for sustainable livelihoods beyond tourism, and reducing overreliance on a single industry (Dahles et al., 2020). This holistic approach to tourism development leads to long-term sustainability, resilience, and the preservation of the rural destination's authenticity and integrity and formative attitude, and synergizes with the development of Indonesian culture 5.0 (Kasmahidayat & Hasanuddin, 2022), then we hypothesize:

H3: Community Engagement has a positive effect on Rural Tourism Development

2.3.4 Community Engagement as mediating Social Entrepreneurship on Rural Tourism Development

Social entrepreneurship initiatives in rural tourism development often prioritize community engagement as a fundamental aspect (Vázquez-Maguirre, 2020). Social entrepreneurs actively involve community members in decision-making, planning, and implementation processes (Morales, Calvo, Martínez, & Martín, 2021). By providing platforms for community participation, social entrepreneurs empower local residents, encourage their active involvement, and foster a sense of ownership and responsibility towards tourism development. Social entrepreneurship positively influences community engagement by creating opportunities for collaboration, dialogue, and collective action among community members (Harima & Freudenberg, 2020).

Community engagement plays a crucial role in the success of rural tourism. When community members are engaged and actively involved, they contribute their local knowledge, cultural insights, and resources to shape tourism initiatives that align with their aspirations and preserve the authenticity of their destination. Engaged communities are more likely to support sustainable tourism practices, participate in local businesses, and provide visitors with authentic experiences. Community engagement leads to improved destination planning, enhanced visitor experience, and sustainable tourism outcomes in rural areas.

Community engagement acts as a mediator between social entrepreneurship and rural tourism development (Aquino, Lück, & Schänzel, 2022). Through community engagement, social entrepreneurship positively influences rural tourism development (Dahles et al., 2020). Social entrepreneurship initiatives foster community engagement, which leads to enhanced rural tourism development outcomes. Community engagement serves as a mechanism through which the benefits and

positive effects of social entrepreneurship are transmitted to the broader context of rural tourism development (Aquino et al., 2022), then we hypothesize:

H4: Community Engagement as mediating Social Entrepreneurship on Rural Tourism Development

2.3.5 Community Engagement as mediated between Business Information and Rural Tourism Development

In the context of rural tourism development, business information mediates the relationship between business initiatives and community engagement. Community engagement refers to active involvement (Gilmore et al., 2020), participation and collaboration among local residents (Vaughn & Jacquez, 2020), community organizations (Holmes et al., 2019), stakeholders in planning (Yanes et al., 2019), decision-making, and implementation processes of rural tourism initiatives (Gilmore et al., 2020). It facilitates knowledge sharing, transparent communication, the co-creation of initiatives, capacity building, and monitoring and evaluation processes. By effectively leveraging business information, businesses can actively involve the local community, foster collaboration, and empower community members to contribute to the development of sustainable and inclusive rural tourism initiatives.

H5: Community Engagement as mediated between Business Information and Rural Tourism Development

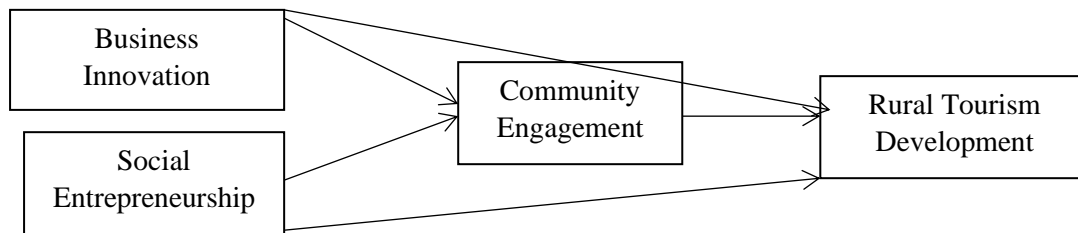


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

3. Research Methodology

The current study is a quantitative study that utilizes a survey-based approach and Smart PLS software for data analysis. The study followed a survey-based design in which data were collected through a structured questionnaire administered to the target participants. The questionnaire is designed to measure the variables of interest, such as social entrepreneurship (Carraher, Welsh, & Sviolokos, 2016; Sieger, Gruber, Fauchart, & Zellweger, 2016), business innovation (Bloch, 2007), community engagement (Di Napoli, Dolce, & Arcidiacono, 2019; Kumar & Kumar, 2020), and rural tourism development (Clark & Chabrel, 2007).

The study involved selecting a representative sample of participants who were involved in rural tourism development or had knowledge and experience in the field. The sampling method may vary, such as convenience sampling or stratified sampling, depending on the specific research context and the available resources. The sample size should be determined based on statistical considerations to ensure adequate power for data analysis.

The questionnaire was developed based on research objectives and theoretical frameworks identified through a literature review. It includes items that measure constructs of interest, such as social entrepreneurship (Carraher et al., 2016), business innovation, community engagement, and rural tourism development. The items were designed to be clear, concise, and reliable, following established guidelines for survey design.

Data Collection: The questionnaire was administered to selected participants either in person or through online platforms. The data collection process should provide clear instructions to the participants regarding the purpose of the study, confidentiality, and informed consent. Adequate measures should be taken to ensure the quality and reliability of the data, such as double-checking responses for completeness and consistency and Smart PLS Software: The data collected from the survey were analyzed using Smart Partial Least Squares (PLS) software. Smart PLS is a popular software tool used

for structural equation modeling (SEM) analysis, which allows for the examination of complex relationships between multiple constructs and latent variables (Hair Jr, Sarstedt, Hopkins, & Kuppelwieser, 2014; Sarstedt & Cheah, 2019). The software provides robust statistical analysis and graphical representations of the results (Hair, Hult, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2014). Research Conditions, Assumptions, and Theories: This study was conducted under the conditions of selected rural tourism destinations and the participants involved. It is assumed that social entrepreneurship and business innovation positively influence community engagement and rural tourism development, as suggested by the literature review.

4. Results and Discussions

4.1 Results

Data analysis techniques using SmartPLS involve assessing the outer model based on three criteria: Convergent Validity, Discriminant Validity, and Composite Reliability. Convergent Validity is evaluated in the measurement model through indicator reflection, which measures the correlation between item or component scores estimated using PLS software. The magnitude of the reflection was assessed. However, according to Sarstedt and Cheah (2019), the acceptable range for loading values in the initial stages of research is considered to be between 0.50 and 0.60. For this study, a loading factor threshold of 0.55. was employed.

Table 1. Value of Outer Loading Factor

	Business Innovation	Community Engagement	Rural Tourism Development	Social Entrepreneurship
BI1	0.803			
BI2	0.858			
BI3	0.911			
BI4	0.86			
CE1		0.818		
CE2		0.893		
CE3		0.854		
CE4		0.557		
RTD1			0.845	
RTD2			0.862	
RTD3			0.739	
RTD4			0.607	
SE 1				0.805
SE 10				0.66
SE 12				0.699
SE 2				0.759
SE 4				0.783
SE 5				0.757
SE 6				0.819
SE 7				0.828
SE 8				0.7
SE 9				0.836
SE11				0.647

The table above indicates that the loading factors generally surpass the recommended threshold of 0.5, signifying the validity and convergent validity of the indicators used in this study. Additionally, the

reliability and validity of the constructs can be evaluated by examining their reliability value and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value. A construct is deemed highly reliable if it possesses a value of 0.70 or higher, and the AVE should exceed 0.50. The forthcoming table provides the Composite Reliability and AVE values for all variables.

Tabel 2. Composite Reliability dan Average Variance Extracted

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Business Innovation	0.881	0.884	0.918	0.738
Community Engagement	0.787	0.806	0.867	0.626
Rural Tourism Development	0.772	0.838	0.851	0.593
Social Entrepreneurship	0.925	0.935	0.936	0.572

From the information provided in Table 2, it can be concluded that all constructs satisfy the reliability criteria. This is evident, as the Cronbach's alpha values are above 0.70, the composite reliability (CR) values exceed 0.70, and the AVE values are higher than 0.50, meeting the recommended criteria.

The evaluation of the inner model through the bootstrapping test produced several results, including the coefficient of determination (R-square), Q-square, path coefficients, and correlations between latent variables. The findings of the inner model evaluation are explained below.

Table 3. Direct effect test results

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
Business Innovation -> Community Engagement	0.305	0.315	0.164	1.863	0.063
Social Entrepreneurship -> Community Engagement	0.555	0.549	0.152	3.652	0
Community Engagement -> Rural Tourism Development	0.489	0.496	0.153	3.196	0.001

Table 4. Indirect effect test results

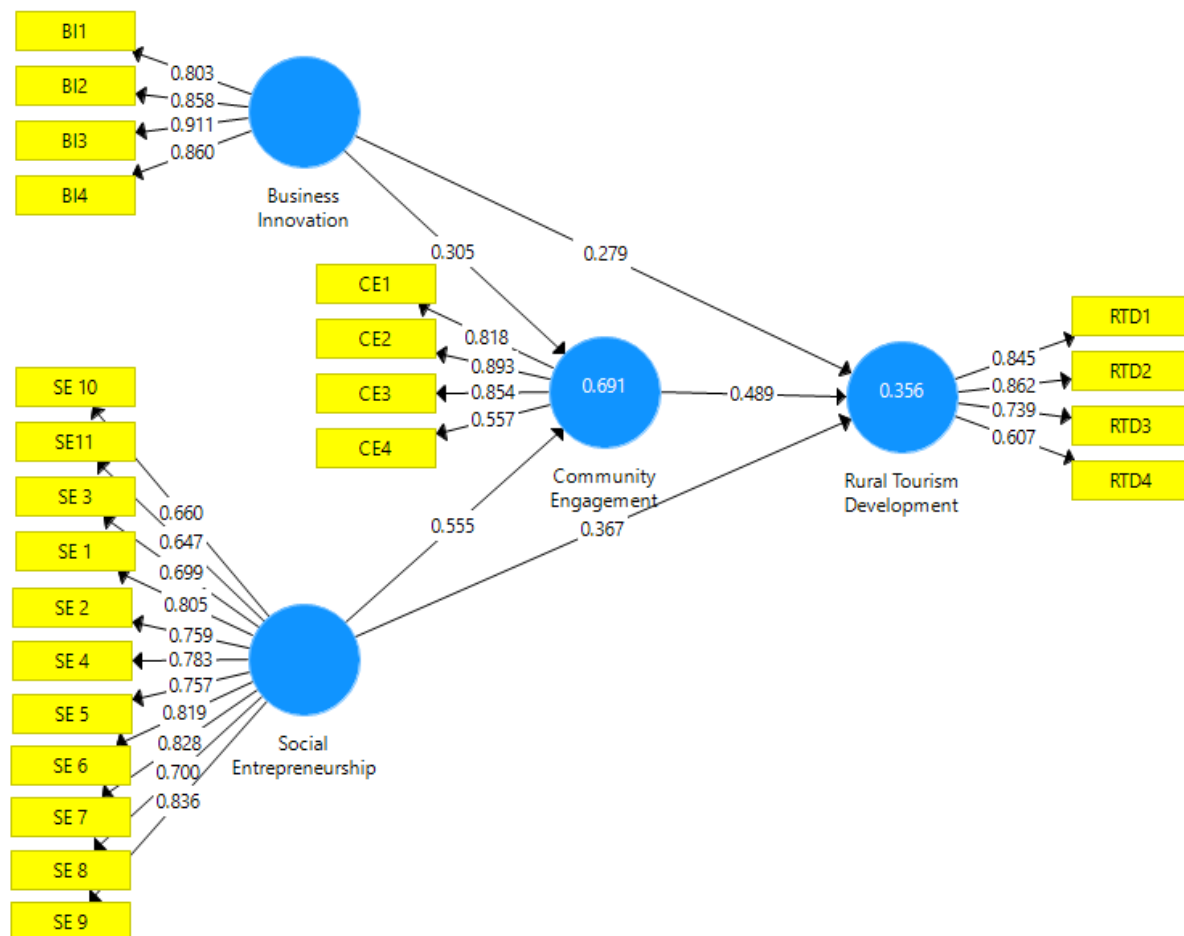
	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
Business Innovation -> Rural Tourism Development	-0.279	-0.285	0.183	1.525	0.128
Social Entrepreneurship -> Rural Tourism Development	0.367	0.378	0.207	1.777	0.076

Two R-squared values were calculated: the R-squared value for the mediating variable Community Engagement (Y1) and the R-squared value for the reliant variable/endogenous Rural Tourism Development (Y2). SmartPLS software was utilized to determine the R-squared coefficient from the model, and the resulting outcomes are presented in the subsequent table:

Table 5. Value of R Square

	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Community Engagement	0.691	0.684
Rural Tourism Development	0.356	0.335

The evaluation of the inner model using the bootstrapping test produces a coefficient of determination R-square, Q-square, path coefficients, and latent variable correlations. The results of the evaluation of the inner model are as follows:



4.2. Discussion

The positive effect of Business Innovation on Community Engagement is supported by previous studies, which highlight the importance of innovation in fostering community participation and involvement. Innovative business practices, such as involving local community members in decision-making processes, collaborating with them in product development, and incorporating cultural and traditional elements, have been found to enhance community engagement in tourism development projects (Thetsane, 2019). This relationship is also consistent with theories like the Social Exchange Theory, which posits that businesses that invest in innovative practices and engage with the community are more likely to receive support, cooperation, and active participation from community members (Mirzaei & Esmaeilzadeh, 2021).

Similarly, empirical evidence and theoretical perspectives support the positive effect of Social Entrepreneurship on Community Engagement. Social entrepreneurs are known for their ability to mobilize and empower communities, promoting their active involvement in decision-making processes and fostering a sense of ownership and responsibility (Thananusak & Suriyankietkaew, 2023) religiosity, service quality, and facilities owned (Luthfiana, Wiliasih, Irfany, & Haq, 2022). Social entrepreneurship initiatives that address community needs, promote social inclusivity, and create shared values have been found to enhance community engagement in various contexts (Dahles et al., 2020). This relationship aligns with theories such as the Stakeholder Theory, which emphasizes the importance

of engaging and empowering stakeholders, including local communities, for sustainable business and social impact (Dmytriiev, Freeman, & Hörisch, 2021).

Furthermore, the positive effect of Community Engagement on Rural Tourism Development has been well-documented in the literature. Community engagement is crucial for the success and sustainability of rural tourism initiatives, as it fosters a sense of ownership, local pride, and commitment to the development process (Gursoy et al., 2018; Williams & Hall, 2002). Engaged communities are more likely to actively participate in tourism activities, contribute knowledge and resources, and support the conservation of natural and cultural assets (Ryan et al., 2018; Timothy, 2006). The relationship between Community Engagement and Rural Tourism Development is in line with theories such as the Community-Based Tourism model, which emphasizes the importance of community involvement in planning, decision-making, and benefit-sharing for sustainable tourism development (Murphy, 1985).

The mediating role of community engagement between social entrepreneurship and rural tourism development is significant for enhancing the impact of social entrepreneurship within the local community. Community engagement acts as a mechanism by which the benefits of social entrepreneurship are realized and translated into positive outcomes for rural tourism development.

One specific finding of this study is that social entrepreneurship initiatives that actively involve and engage the local community lead to a greater sense of ownership and empowerment among community members. For example, through qualitative interviews conducted in selected villages, community members expressed their increased involvement and participation in decision-making processes related to tourism development. They felt a sense of pride and responsibility towards the development of their community, resulting in a stronger commitment to the success of tourism initiatives.

Community engagement also facilitates the co-creation of tourism experiences that are authentic, culturally relevant, and responsive to the needs and aspirations of local communities. This study revealed that when community members are engaged in the planning and development of tourism products and services, they contribute their local knowledge, traditions, and resources, thus enriching tourism offerings. This leads to enhanced visitor experience and a unique selling proposition for rural tourism destinations, ultimately contributing to their competitiveness and attractiveness.

Furthermore, community engagement plays a crucial role in ensuring the sustainability of rural tourism. Social entrepreneurship initiatives can foster a sense of environmental stewardship within a community by involving community members in conservation efforts and promoting responsible tourism practices. This study found that community engagement led to increased awareness and active participation in the preservation of natural resources and cultural heritage, resulting in the long-term preservation of rural tourism destinations.

To illustrate, in one of the case study villages, a social entrepreneurship initiative focused on ecotourism. Through community engagement, the local community actively participated in reforestation projects, established sustainable farming practices, and organized educational programs on environmental conservation for visitors. This not only enhanced the attractiveness of the destination, but also contributed to the overall sustainability and resilience of rural tourism development.

In summary, community engagement acts as a mediator between social entrepreneurship and rural tourism development by fostering a sense of ownership, enabling the co-creation of tourism experiences, and promoting sustainability. The findings demonstrate that when community members are actively engaged in social entrepreneurship initiatives, they play a crucial role in realizing the benefits and positive impacts of these initiatives within the local community.

5. Conclusion

5.1. Conclusion

This study demonstrated the positive effects of social entrepreneurship on community engagement and rural tourism development. Social entrepreneurship, when combined with business innovation, can lead to enhanced community engagement, which contributes to the development of sustainable rural tourism

initiatives. The findings support the notion that social entrepreneurship and community engagement play crucial roles in fostering inclusive and participatory tourism destinations, aligned with the objectives of Village Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

5.2. Limitation

Despite the valuable insights gained from this study, certain limitations should be acknowledged. First, it focused on a limited number of case study villages, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other contexts. Additionally, the qualitative interviews conducted in this study may have been subject to potential biases or subjective interpretations. Further research is needed to validate these findings and explore the applicability of these concepts across diverse rural tourism contexts.

5.3. Suggestion

Based on the findings and limitations of this study, several suggestions can be made for future research. First, future studies should include a larger sample size and more diverse range of rural tourism destinations to ensure the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, quantitative research methods can be employed to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the relationships among social entrepreneurship, business innovation, community engagement, and rural tourism development.

Furthermore, there is a need for continued collaboration and knowledge sharing among policymakers, community leaders, and practitioners to develop effective strategies for integrating social entrepreneurship, business innovation, and community engagement within the SDGs Desa framework. This collaboration can help in designing policies and programs that support social entrepreneurship, foster business innovation, and encourage community engagement in rural tourism development. It is important to provide training and capacity-building programs for local communities to enhance their entrepreneurial and business skills, enabling them to actively participate and benefit from rural tourism initiatives.

Moreover, stakeholders should prioritize the collection and dissemination of business information to the local community. This can be achieved through the establishment of information centers, online platforms, and training workshops that provide access to market research, industry trends, and best practices in rural tourism. By ensuring that community members have access to relevant business information, they can make informed decisions, contribute to the development of tourism initiatives, and enhance their engagement with the tourism sector.

Policymakers and practitioners should also promote collaboration and partnership between businesses and local communities. By fostering relationships based on trust, transparency, and shared goals, businesses can effectively engage community members in planning, implementing, and evaluating rural tourism projects. This collaboration can lead to the co-creation of tourism initiatives rooted in the local culture, environmental sustainability, and economic viability.

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