

Article

# Implementing State Defense Strategy to Achieve Sustainable Tourism in Sleman Regency

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**Abstract:** This study aims to analyze the role of the State Defense (Bela Negara) strategy in achieving sustainable tourism in Sleman Regency. Sleman Regency possesses significant tourism potential, which necessitates sustainable development to ensure the preservation of its natural and cultural resources, improvement of service quality, and empowerment of local communities. This research employs descriptive qualitative methods, including interviews, observations, and literature studies, to explore these issues. The findings reveal that the Bela Negara strategy significantly contributes to sustainable tourism through enhanced environmental awareness, increased community participation, and multi-stakeholder collaboration in protecting natural resources, culture, and the environment. Tourism actors also continuously work on improving service quality and strengthening local communities through training, job creation, and cultural preservation. These efforts lead to the betterment of service quality, environmental conservation, and cultural preservation, ensuring the overall sustainability of tourism in the region. This study provides a deeper understanding of the importance of the Bela Negara strategy and highlights the need for increased cooperation among stakeholders for sustainable tourism development. The results underscore the critical role of a well-planned Bela Negara strategy that integrates social, economic, and environmental aspects to achieve sustainable tourism development in Sleman Regency.

**Keywords:** State Defense Strategy, Sustainable Tourism, Sleman Regency, Environmental Awareness, Community Participation, Multi-stakeholder Collaboration

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## 1. Introduction

Tourism is essential in the Indonesian economy, especially in Sleman Regency, Special Region of Yogyakarta (DIY). According to data from the Central Statistics Agency (2021), this sector significantly contributes to Regional Original Revenue (PAD). However, tourism development must also be carried out sustainably and responsibly so as not to damage the environment and social life of the local community. Sleman Regency is known for its natural beauty, cultural sites, and unique tourism charm. Tourists from home and abroad visit Sleman Regency to enjoy its natural and cultural wealth.

Along with the rapid growth of the tourism industry, a number of challenges need to be overcome so that tourism development remains sustainable. Previous studies in Sleman Regency and surrounding areas have identified several problems, namely that Sleman Regency has natural wealth that needs to be maintained and preserved. However, the rapid growth of tourism hurts the natural environment, including natural degradation, waste, and climate change (Prayogo et al., 2018). Local community participation is significant to ensure that local people feel the economic benefits of tourism and are involved in decision-making related to tourism development (Yuniarsih et al., 2019). In addition, education and environmental awareness of the community play an essential role in maintaining the sustainability of tourism. Previous research has shown

that education and ecological awareness are lacking in some communities in Sleman Regency (Widianto et al., 2017).

The national defence strategy in Indonesia, defined in Law Number 23 of 2019, concerning the Management of National Resources for Defense, including its use in tourism management, is an important topic to be researched. The national defence strategy emphasizes the importance of all sectors and communities in defending the country, including, in this case, maintaining and advancing the tourism sector (Law No. 23/2019).

However, Bela Negara's strategy for supporting sustainable tourism in Sleman Regency has not been thoroughly studied. The concept of State Defense that involves public awareness and participation in protecting the environment is an essential factor (Nugroho et al., 2016). There needs to be a well-planned strategy to realize sustainable tourism that considers social, economic, and environmental aspects. One crucial aspect that needs to be considered is the role of "Bela Negara" in supporting sustainable tourism development in Sleman Regency.

Many experts have recognized the importance of Bela Negara's role in sustainable tourism development. According to Soemarno (2017), the concept of Bela Negara includes understanding, awareness, and community responsibility towards environmental sustainability. This aligns with the views of Yustika and Sulistyanto (2015), who emphasize the importance of involving the community in environmental conservation to support sustainable tourism.

Using the national defence strategy to realize sustainable tourism is relevant to Indonesia's national efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Sustainable tourism can help maintain and strengthen local cultural and natural values and promote sustainable local economic development (Buckley, Zhong, Ma, & Chen, 2017).

In addition, integrating the value of defending the country and realizing sustainable tourism is also vital in the context of security. Hall (2017) explained that tourism can contribute to national security by supporting socio-economic stability and increasing intercultural understanding and tolerance.

However, until now, few studies have comprehensively investigated how the Bela Negara strategy can be effectively implemented to support sustainable tourism in Sleman District. Therefore, this study aims to dig deeper and analyze the role of the Bela Negara strategy in realizing sustainable tourism in Sleman Regency. In this context, the main issue is how the Bela Negara strategy can be implemented and contribute positively to sustainable tourism in Sleman Regency.

## 2. Materials and Methods

Descriptive qualitative research methods were used to explore a deep understanding of how Bela Negara's strategy supports sustainable tourism development in Sleman District. This method allows researchers to explain and analyze phenomena in detail without limiting themselves to statistical measurements. Data collection techniques include interviews, observations, and literature studies.

In-depth interviews with various stakeholders, such as government officials, tourism business owners, local communities, and tourists, will provide a rich understanding of how Bela Negara's strategy is implemented. Interviews can be used to identify their views, expectations, and experiences related to sustainable tourism. Analysis of discussions can help identify the role of Bela Negara's strategy in solving tourism-related problems.

Field observations can provide valuable insights into the practice of State Defense in a natural context. Through observation, it can examine how the Bela Negara strategy is implemented and whether there are concrete efforts to protect the environment and involve the community in sustainable tourism management. Field notes and photographs can be used as evidence in the analysis.

A literature study is an important step to support research findings. It involves a comprehensive literature review of the concept of Bela Negara, sustainable tourism, and relevant previous research in Sleman District.

### 3. Results and Discussion

#### 1. National Defense Strategy and Sustainable Tourism

Before we get into how the bela negara strategy can contribute to sustainable tourism in Sleman Regency, it would be nice first to understand the state defense strategy and sustainable tourism.

The state defence strategy, as defined in Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 23 of 2019, is an effort made by every citizen and resident to maintain, protect, and defend state sovereignty, the territorial integrity of the unitary state, and the safety of the entire nation from threats and disturbances to the integrity of the country and state (Law No. 23/2019).

This strategy emphasizes the importance of active participation of all elements of society in defending the country, including, in this context, maintaining and advancing the tourism sector.

According to the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO, 2004), sustainable tourism "meets the current needs of tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing future opportunities. It aims to manage all resources to meet economic, social and aesthetic needs while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life support systems."

This is affirmed by Choi and Sirakaya (2006), who state that sustainable tourism's primary goal is to balance economic benefits, environmental conservation, and social justice.

Understanding the definition and objectives of the national defense strategy and sustainable tourism can be started by looking at how these two concepts can complement and support each other in the context of tourism development in Sleman Regency. In other words, the State Defense Strategy in the context of sustainable tourism in Sleman Regency is an effort to involve local communities, entrepreneurs, and other stakeholders in protecting the environment, culture, and natural resources. This is consistent with academic and practical views, where Bela Negara becomes a form of solid environmental awareness (Soemarno, 2017).

#### 2. Management and Maintenance of Natural and Cultural Resources

Sleman Regency has various unique and valuable natural and cultural resources, which can be a significant attraction for the tourism sector. The management and maintenance of these resources in a sustainable way is critical to ensuring that they can continue to be an asset for tourism in the future.

A national defence strategy can contribute to this goal by promoting equitable and sustainable resource management. For example, this strategy can encourage local community participation in natural and cultural resource management, as Richards and Hall (2000) suggested. They argue that local community participation in tourism resource management can help ensure that the benefits of tourism are spread equitably among local communities and that these resources are managed sustainably. Mr. Sugeng, a farmer and homestay owner in Sleman, spoke about the importance of sustainable natural resource management. He stressed that good management of natural resources, such as farmland and forests, is essential for local tourism. He said, "We must keep our natural resources sustainable because these are our main assets."

In addition, the state defence strategy can also help protect and preserve cultural sites and heritage in Sleman Regency. According to Timothy and Boyd (2006), preserving cultural heritage is the key to sustainable tourism because cultural heritage sites and objects can be a significant attraction for tourists. Nurcahyani (2017) revealed that the local community of Sleman Regency has an essential role in preserving and managing cultural sites. In this case, the local community plays an active role in

maintaining the cleanliness and authenticity of cultural sites and educating tourists about the importance of preserving these sites.

Through several mechanisms, the Bela Negara strategy can influence the management and maintenance of natural and cultural resources in the Sleman Regency. *First*, the Bela Negara strategy is a framework to encourage education and environmental awareness among local communities. According to Tisdell and Wilson (2002), education and ecological awareness are crucial to promoting sustainable natural resource management. In this context, the Bela Negara strategy can help promote education and environmental awareness through various programs and initiatives, such as training and workshops, awareness campaigns, etc.

*Second*, the Bela Negara strategy can strengthen existing laws and regulations to protect natural resources and local culture. According to Eagles et al. (2002), applying environmental laws and regulations effectively is essential to protect natural and cultural resources from overexploitation and damage. The State Defense Strategy can play a role in strengthening the application of these laws and regulations through increased supervision and enforcement.

*Finally*, the Bela Negara strategy can promote collaboration and partnership between various stakeholders in natural and cultural resource management. According to Bramwell and Lane (2000), cooperation and collaboration between multiple stakeholders, such as government, local communities, and the private sector, are essential for effective and sustainable management of tourism resources.

It can be said that local people and tourism actors in Sleman Regency understand and appreciate the importance of managing and maintaining natural and cultural resources in the context of sustainable tourism.

### 3. Improving the Quality of Tourism Services

Improving the quality of tourism services is another essential aspect of sustainable tourism development. It covers various elements, ranging from infrastructure and facilities and quality of service at tourist attractions to improving the skills and knowledge of workers in the tourism industry.

According to Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1985), service quality can be measured from five dimensions: reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and physical elements (tangibles). Applying this concept in the context of tourism in Sleman Regency, here are some ways that can be done.

#### Reliability

Reliability refers to the ability to deliver the promised service consistently and accurately. For example, this could include consistency in the quality of facilities and services at tourist attractions. In this case, tourism actors in Sleman have committed to providing consistent and accurate services. For example, Prambanan Temple, managed by the Borobudur Temple Management Board, Prambanan, and Ratu Boko, routinely performs maintenance and restoration to ensure that the site remains in the best condition for tourists.

#### Responsiveness

Responsiveness refers to the willingness of staff to help customers and provide prompt service. This can be enhanced through staff training to ensure they have the necessary skills and knowledge to respond quickly and effectively to travellers' needs and concerns. Responsiveness has become the main focus of many tourism actors in the Sleman Regency. For example, in Pulesari Tourism Village, the village tourism staff proactively offers tour guide services and strives to answer questions and resolve any issues tourists face as quickly as possible.

#### Guarantee

Assurance involves the knowledge, courtesy and ability of staff to create a sense of trust and trust. This can be achieved by ensuring that staff have a good understanding of tourist

attractions and local culture and that they can communicate this politely and effectively to tourists.

Tourism actors in Sleman strive to provide quality assurance to tourists. For example, at Hyatt Regency Yogyakarta Hotel, hotel staff are trained to have a good knowledge of hotel facilities and local attractions. They are empowered to provide courteous and professional service to guests.

### **Empathy**

Empathy refers to the individual and personal attention given to customers. In the context of tourism, this could involve providing information tailored to the needs and interests of tourists or giving advice on exciting places to visit.

Based on observations, empathy is often seen in how tourism actors in Sleman Regency interact with tourists. For example, in Desa Wisata Pentingsari, village staff strive to understand the needs and interests of tourists and provide customized recommendations on activities and places to visit.

### **Physical Elements**

Physical elements include all physical aspects that customers can see, such as facilities, equipment, personnel, and communication materials. In the context of tourism, this could involve things like the quality and cleanliness of facilities, the availability of adequate equipment and facilities, and the appearance and professionalism of staff.

Tourism actors in Sleman Regency also place physical education as very important. For example, in Kaliurang Park, tourism players invest in improving the quality of facilities and equipment, such as children's play facilities and sports equipment, and ensuring that they are always in good condition and easily accessible to tourists.

By paying attention to and implementing all aspects of this service quality, tourism actors in Sleman Regency can provide memorable and valuable experiences to tourists.

## **4. Strengthening Local Communities**

Strengthening local communities is an essential component of sustainable tourism development. It involves empowering local communities through training and education, job creation, and participation in tourism-related decision-making. Strengthening local communities can also help maintain and promote local culture and traditions. At least there are several ways to support local communities that tourism actors have implemented in Sleman Regency, namely:

*First*, Training and Education. This is one of the most effective ways to empower local communities. For example, in 2020, the Sleman District Tourism Office collaborated with various local organizations and universities to organize a series of trainings and workshops on sustainable tourism management for tourism actors and local communities.

*Second*, job creation. Tourism can also be a significant source of job creation. For example, Flory Tourism Village, famous for its flower gardens and organic farming, creates many jobs for local people, whether as farmers, tour guides, or staff at the village's various tourist facilities.

*Third*, involving local communities in the decision-making process is also very important. For example, in Brayut Tourism Village, local communities are involved in decision-making through regular meetings and discussion forums that discuss various tourism-related issues.

*Tourism* can also be a *platform* to preserve and promote local culture and traditions. For example, in Gamplong Tourism Village, local people use tourism to promote their traditional arts, such as shadow puppets and traditional dances.

Thus, through various initiatives such as training and education, job creation, participation in decision-making, and preservation of local culture and traditions, tourism actors in Sleman Regency have actively contributed to strengthening local communities.



## 5. Collaboration and Strategic Partnership

Collaboration and strategic partnerships are essential elements in sustainable tourism development. Through cooperation with various parties at the local, regional, national, and international levels, tourism players can utilize diverse resources and expertise to promote destinations, improve service quality, and achieve other strategic goals.

The following are some examples of how tourism actors have carried out collaboration and strategic partnerships in Sleman Regency. *First*, Cooperate with local governments to support tourism development. For example, the Sleman Regency Tourism Office has collaborated with various tourism villages, such as Brayut Tourism Village and Gamplong Tourism Village, to develop tourism infrastructure, organize events and festivals, and implement training programs.

*Second*, to develop tourism, actors often partner with the private sector. For example, Hyatt Regency Yogyakarta Hotel has partnered with travel companies and tour operators to promote tour packages that include hotel accommodations and visits to various tourist attractions in Sleman and its surroundings.

*Third*, Collaborate with local communities. For example, Pulesari Tourism Village has collaborated with local communities in managing *homestays* and other tourism activities, such as batik training and organic farming, allowing tourists to learn more about the local culture and lifestyle.

Tourism actors in Sleman district and collaborating with local, regional and national partners. It also turned out to be doing international partnerships. For example, Prambanan Temple, managed by the Borobudur Temple Management Agency, Prambanan, and Ratu Boko, has collaborated with UNESCO and various other international organizations to preserve and promote this world heritage site.

Thus, through various forms of collaboration and strategic partnerships, tourism actors in Sleman Regency can contribute to sustainable tourism development and benefit many parties.

## 4. Conclusion

Based on the description above, several important points can be drawn that can be concluded: The State Defense Strategy can contribute positively to sustainable tourism in Sleman Regency through increasing environmental awareness, community participation, and sustainable natural resource management.

Tourism players in Sleman continue to strive to improve the quality of service to provide a memorable experience for tourists. All dimensions of service quality must be considered. In addition, various efforts to strengthen local communities through training, job creation, and cultural preservation must be continuously improved.

In this case, collaborating with various parties, both government, private, and international organizations, is very useful for sustainable tourism development in the Sleman district.

First, this research will provide a deeper understanding of the critical role of Bela Negara's strategy in sustainable tourism development in Sleman Regency. *Second*, analyze various efforts and challenges tourism actors face to improve quality. *Third*, Reveal the participation and benefits local communities feel from tourism activities. *Finally*, encourage increased multi-stakeholder collaboration in tourism development in the future.

In addition, there are several suggestions, namely the need to increase the socialization of the State Defense strategy among tourism actors and the community, Support the capacity building of tourism human resources through continuous training, Strengthen regulations to protect natural and cultural resources and benefit local communities; Increase multi-stakeholder cooperation in integrated management of tourist destinations; Conduct constant monitoring and evaluation to measure sustainable tourism performance.

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