



Exploring the development of paragliding sport tourism: A comparative case study in Bali and Central Java

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Abstract

One of Indonesia's top priorities still is tourism, which helps to boost regional development, employment, and the national economy. Among its developing sub-sectors, sport tourism, especially paragliding, has become increasingly popular because of Indonesia's varied and breathtaking natural surroundings. Still, differences in the evolution of tourism locations make it difficult to reach fair and sustainable tourism expansion. This paper attempts to investigate the main elements affecting the growth of paragliding sport tourism by means of a comparative case study of RIUG Paragliding in Bali and the Kemuning Paragliding Community in Central Java. Using a qualitative descriptive-comparative approach, the study thoroughly investigates tourism development strategies from several regional settings. Six key informants, three from each site who directly oversee tourist management, were used in a purposeful sampling process to gather data. Under the direction of the 4A tourism framework (Attractions, Accessibility, Amenities, and Ancillary Services), the study used in-depth interviews, structured observations, and document analysis. Data were transcribed, coded, categorized, and triangulated to guarantee validity and dependability. The results expose several methods of development: Whereas the Kemuning Paragliding Community stresses local resource use and volunteer involvement, RIUG Paragliding Bali uses a corporate-based model with contemporary facilities, integrated promotion methods, and stakeholder collaboration. The study comes to the conclusion that efficient development of paragliding sports tourism calls for cooperative governance involving corporate businesses, local communities, and government institutions to support sustainable and inclusive tourism expansion.

Keywords: Sport tourism, paragliding development, comparative study, community-based tourism.

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INTRODUCTION

Through foreign exchange generation, job possibilities, and regional development, tourism is a critical sector in Indonesia that significantly supports national economic growth (Darsiswanti, 2022). Driven by the

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tropical temperature, varied topography, and plenty of natural resources of the country, sport tourism has arisen among its several disciplines as a potential niche (Amar et al., 2021). Unlike traditional tourism, sports tourism includes activities including paragliding, mountain climbing, diving, horseback riding, and surfing, many of which are becoming increasingly popular both domestically and internationally and calls for physical skills and endurance from its participants (Ayazlar, 2015; Masrurun, 2020). The geographical variety of Indonesia, particularly its mountainous terrain ranging from Sabang to Merauke, presents great possibilities for the growth of paragliding tourism (Indardi & Sahri, 2020), further improved by suitable weather conditions all year long in nations with significant seasonal fluctuations.

Recent strategic papers from the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy and international organizations like WTTC and UNWTO highlight the growing demand for high-quality, sustainable, technologically driven tourist destinations in the post-pandemic period. These results underline the need to create creative tourism products that not only satisfy consumer needs but also support local culture, guarantee long-term sustainability, and increase destination competitiveness by means of not only market demand but also their creation. Therefore, appropriate infrastructure, public education, and environmental consciousness help to foster sustainable tourism development. In this sense, the Indonesian government has developed national policies using Government Regulation No. 50 of 2011 (RIPPARNAS 2010–2025) to direct regional tourist development and raise industry competitiveness (Ghani, 2017). The capacity of local governments, investment strategies, and community involvement significantly impact the success of sports tourism destination development (Bazzanella et al., 2023; Chepkemei, 2023). Not all regions have effective leadership, sufficient funding, or engaged citizens, which causes implementation to vary. For instance, government backing and focused investment are more likely to find locations with sufficient facilities and professional services (Giango et al., 2022; Rangkuti et al., 2024). However, even when there is inherent

promise, obstacles such as a lack of community involvement and inadequate support might still stand in the way. In order to decrease regional differences, sports tourism development initiatives should be customized to the local environment and involve all stakeholders actively.

This study reacts to such differences by means of a comparative investigation of two paragliding sites: RIUG Paragliding Bali and the Kemuning Paragliding Community in Central Java. Representing a corporate-led growth approach marked by high-quality facilities, active digital marketing, and stakeholder alliances targeted at international visitors, RIUG Paragliding Bali Though it suffers from infrastructure constraints, weather unpredictability, and inconsistent coordination with travel agents, the Kemuning Paragliding Community uses a community-based approach that stresses local participation, volunteerism, and partnership with grassroots stakeholders. These different management approaches expose a significant knowledge vacuum in how corporate rather than community-based policies influence regional tourism competitiveness, sustainability, and destination expansion. Using the 4A framework of Attraction, Accessibility, Amenities, and Ancillary Services (Ghani, 2017), this study structures the analysis since every element is essential for forming the visitor experience and obtaining a healthy tourism ecosystem (Napitupulu & Rosita, 2021).

Extending on this basis, the study intends to investigate how variations in strategic management approaches affect the evolution of paragliding sport tourism in Indonesia. It especially aims to (1) pinpoint the development projects carried out by every site, (2) examine the supporting and discouraging elements affecting success, and (3) evaluate the methods applied to raise sustainability and tourism competitiveness. By directly comparing corporate and community-driven sport tourism approaches, this paper adds to the body of knowledge going beyond broad debates of tourist behavior or cultural preservation. To guarantee inclusive and sustainable tourism development in adventure sports, including paragliding, it emphasizes the requirement of cooperative governance between private

players, local communities, and governmental agencies. Ultimately, the research offers information that might guide policy, enhance practice, and help Indonesia's profile in the worldwide sports tourism scene to become stronger.

METHOD

This paper investigated the development methods and influencing elements of paragliding sport tourism at two well-known sites, RIUG Paragliding Bali and the Kemuning Paragliding Community in Central Java, using a qualitative technique with a comparative case study design. The qualitative method was chosen to capture the complexity of stakeholders' perceptions and contextual reality typically disregarded in quantitative research (Nurdin & Hartanti, 2019). By means of a comparison framework, the two tourist models have both parallels and variations. Targeting people with key responsibilities and in-depth expertise in tourist planning and management, informants were chosen by means of purposeful sampling. Six key informants in all three from each site represent many viewpoints, including site managers, tourism operators, and local stakeholders (Jamaliah et al., 2024).

The main approaches were data collecting using in-depth semi-structured interviews and documentation analysis. Based on the 4A tourism framework Attraction, Accessibility, Amenities, and Ancillary Services, the interview guide was enhanced by concepts connected to supporting and inhibiting elements in sport tourism development. Questions were meant to probe in-depth the features of every paragliding site, including physical infrastructure, marketing plans, stakeholder cooperation, legal systems, and local community involvement. Apart from the interviews, secondary data was gathered via institutional records, activity reports, images, and event logs, improving contextual knowledge and data diversity.

The approach of data analysis was a descriptive qualitative one. It started with the exact transcription of interview recordings and then open coding to find trends and themes starting to show. These codes were then arranged according to the 4A paradigm, which made a methodical

comparison between the two sites possible. Synthesizing trends across the sites allowed one to interpret the data by stressing common and different approaches to tourism growth. By combing through data from several informants and validating it with supporting documentation, source triangulation was used to guarantee reliability (Nurdin & Hartanti, 2019). This methodological strictness sought to improve the validity and profundity of the investigation's conclusions.

There were four methodically sequential phases of the investigation. Drafting the research proposal, getting required licenses, creating the interview guide, and locating possible informants comprised the initial preparation stage. Over one month, fieldwork in the second stage gathered documentation and interviews at both study locations. Data processing, including transcription, coding, classification, and interpretation, involved the third step. Under the direction of continuous interactions with academic supervisors, the fourth stage concentrated on report writing and integration of findings. Reflexivity, openness, and methodological integrity qualitative research norms were maintained throughout all phases to guarantee the academic and ethical rigor of the study (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

RESULT

This study randomly selected six interviewees from two research locations: RIUG Paragliding in Bali and the Kemuning Paragliding Community in Karanganyar, Central Java. Each site was represented by three principal individuals with different roles: director or community leader, administrative staff, and pilot/operator. The informants were selected due to their direct engagement in the management and daily operations of paragliding sports tourism, their strategic roles, pertinent experience, and thorough comprehension of tourism development techniques in their regions.

Table 1. Descriptive analysis of tourist attraction aspects

Informant Code	Position	Affiliation
N1	Director	Riug Paragliding Bali
N2	Administrative Staff	Riug Paragliding Bali
N3	Operator (Pilot)	Riug Paragliding Bali
N4	Community Leader	Kemuning Paragliding Community
N5	Administrative Staff	Kemuning Paragliding Community
N6	Operator (Pilot)	Kemuning Paragliding Community

Table 1 presents the six informants chosen from two paragliding tourism locations: RIUG Paragliding Bali and the Kemuning Paragliding Community. Each location is represented by three informants in essential roles: leader, administrative staff, and operator, providing a comprehensive perspective on management and operational practices. Informants from RIUG embody a corporate-based structure, whereas those from Kemuning exemplify a community-based model. Their varied roles offer important insights into the tourist attraction dimension, especially regarding how each site utilizes natural features, service design, and visitor engagement to improve destination appeal.

Table 2. Descriptive analysis of tourist attraction aspects

Code	Category	Theme/Subtheme
DTW1	Natural Beauty and Geography	Influence of natural beauty on tourist interest
DTW2	Location Differentiation	Distinctive factors of paragliding tourism appeal
DTW3	Promotion Strategy	Effectiveness of promotion in enhancing attraction
DTW4	Special Events	Impact of events on destination image

Table 2 shows theme coding for paragliding sport tourism's "Attraction" component. Data showed four main groupings. Scenic vistas and good flight conditions were regularly cited as key elements attracting tourists (DTW1). Second, location distinction (DTW2) shows each site's appeal RIUG. Paragliding Bali has coastal views and global renown, whereas Kemuning is a rural, culturally rich setting. Third, promotion strategy (DTW3) emphasizes how digital marketing and social media boost site visibility and appeal. RIUG's online presence contrasts with Kemuning's localized reach. Finally, festivals and flying competitions (DTW4) boost destination image and seasonal tourism. These findings show that strategic positioning and promotion shape attractiveness and natural assets.

Table 3. Descriptive analysis of accessibility aspects

Code	Category	Theme/Subtheme
A1	Transportation Conditions	Influence of transport accessibility on tourist visits
A2	Road Infrastructure	Availability of public transportation facilities
A3	Government Role	Efforts to improve accessibility
A4	Accessibility Challenges	Solutions to overcome accessibility barriers

The analysis revealed four primary themes concerning accessibility. Transportation conditions (A1) significantly influence tourist visits, as ease of access directly impacts travel decisions. Secondly, road infrastructure (A2), which comprises the availability and quality of public transport, differs across locations; RIUG enjoys superior connectivity, whereas Kemuning depends on private vehicles due to restricted public transport options. The government's role is evident through infrastructure projects designed to enhance access, though implementation varies by region. Finally, accessibility challenges encompass remote locations and insufficient signage, with suggested solutions involving enhanced coordination between local authorities and tourism stakeholders. These factors underscore accessibility as a crucial element influenced by logistics and policy in developing sports tourism.

Table 4. Descriptive analysis of facilities and services aspects

Code	Category	Theme/Subtheme
FP1	Facilities	Equipment and accommodations supporting tourist comfort
FP2	Service Quality	Influence of service quality on tourist experience
FP3	Training and Development	Effectiveness of staff training on service quality
FP4	Security	Efforts to ensure facility safety

Table 4 highlights Four themes that were used to identify amenities. Facilities (FP1) that are more advanced in RIUG than Kemuning, such as appropriate equipment and restrooms, improve visitor comfort. Tourist satisfaction is impacted by service quality (FP2), and RIUG exhibits greater consistency as a result of its set service standards. Training and development impact professionalism (FP3); RIUG regularly provides staff training, whereas Kemuning offers informal training. Finally, security (FP4) is important; Kemuning depends on pilot expertise, while RIUG uses rigorous safety procedures. These variations demonstrate how facilities influence service quality and visitor confidence.

Table 5. Descriptive analysis of additional elements (Ancillary)

Code	Category	Theme/Subtheme
EA1	Supporting Facilities	Role of restaurants, souvenir shops, and information centers
EA2	Insurance and Guides	Impact of additional elements on tourist decisions
EA3	Challenges	Barriers to providing additional elements
EA4	Partnerships	Collaboration with private and government sectors

Four themes emerged from the ancillary services study. RIUG has more eateries, souvenir stores, and information centers, improving visitor experience. In high-risk activities like paragliding, which was formerly offered in RIUG but not in Kemuning, insurance and guide services (EA2) influenced tourist decisions. Budget limits and stakeholder collaboration are EA3 challenges, especially in community contexts. Finally, RIUG improved promotion and infrastructure with increased private-government partnerships (EA4). These studies demonstrate that strong ancillary services boost destination appeal and safety.

Table 6. Descriptive analysis of supporting and inhibiting factors

Code	Category	Theme/Subtheme
FD	Supporting Factors	Role of Geographic Beauty in Attracting Tourists Contribution of Local Culture to Tourism Appeal
FPB	Inhibiting Factors	Transportation barriers affecting tourist visits and funding challenges in facility development

The findings indicate that although RIUG Paragliding Bali and the Kemuning Paragliding Community contribute to advancing paragliding sport tourism, their methodologies differ markedly regarding management strategy, service quality, accessibility, and supporting infrastructure. RIUG implements a corporate-driven approach characterized by systematic investment in infrastructure, collaborations, and marketing, leading to enhanced tourist attraction and operational uniformity. Kemuning employs a community-based paradigm that prioritizes cultural authenticity and local involvement, although it encounters difficulties related to accessibility and resource constraints. The disparities illustrate that the efficacy of sport tourism development hinges on the congruence of strategic planning, stakeholder participation, and the improvement of the 4A components: Attraction, Accessibility, Amenities, and Ancillary Services. Consequently, enhancing paragliding tourism in Indonesia necessitates amalgamating business efficiency and community involvement to attain sustainable and inclusive tourism development.

DISCUSSION

Three research topics covering (1) tourism development elements adopted by company- and community-led paragliding sites, (2) supporting and inhibiting factors influencing tourism performance, and (3) development techniques applied at each site were investigated in this paper. Two different but complimentary forms of sport tourism development are shown by comparing RIUG Paragliding Bali and the Kemuning Paragliding Community: a corporate-led, branding-oriented, and community-based, participatory model. Paragliding is a relatively new kind of adventure tourism popular among thrill-seekers and ecotourists. [Br. Sipayung et al. \(2022\)](#) argue that paragliding has all the characteristics of adventure tourism: physical exercise, a connection to nature, and an element of risk. Paragliding is an exciting and novel way to explore beautiful landscapes without using a powered aircraft. The expansion of this industry in coastal or mountainous areas significantly impacts local tourism growth, drawing in visitors from all over the world ([Tangkudung & Tangkudung, 2021](#)). Though with differing objectives, tourist attraction techniques at both sites stress the need for natural beauty. RIUG appeals to international visitors more by using its gorgeous seaside views, strong international branding, and internet marketing than by other factors. Kemuning uses its hilly terrain, mild temperature, and peaceful surroundings to draw home guests at the same time. Its environmental appeal and geographical uniqueness greatly influence the competitiveness of a tourism destination. In addition, the integration of geographical potential with sustainable management and appropriate promotion can enhance the image of a destination and strengthen its competitive position at the national and global levels ([Prasetyowati et al., 2014](#); [Tangkudung & Tangkudung, 2021](#)). Therefore, in the development of sports-based tourism, the strategic utilization of natural advantages is key to enhancing the competitiveness of destinations.

Further differentiating the two are promotion and event-based travel. To improve legitimacy and awareness, RIUG runs high-profile events, including those connected to the G20 Summit, and disciplined digital efforts.

Kemuning, on the other hand, promotes stronger place loyalty and community pride by depending on locally coordinated competitions and neighborhood alliances. This reinforces [Tzoumaka's \(2022\)](#) perspective that recurrent events not only boost local economies but also create an enduring destination image.

Though sought via distinct channels, accessibility and infrastructure were both shown to be very vital for both sites. While Kemuning's internal transportation system, such as jeep and motorbike services, highlights flexible community-based solutions, RIUG gains from better government-supported road access. Government-community cooperation is needed to guarantee the development of sustainable infrastructure ([Nabila et al., 2024](#); [Purwanto et al., 2022](#)). The efficacy of paragliding tourism is intricately associated with location appeal, which includes natural scenery, accessibility, safety protocols, and the presence of certified instructors and equipment. Research by [Julianti P et al. \(2023\)](#) highlights that effectively maintained paragliding locations must reconcile the pursuit of adventure with risk mitigation and ecological sustainability. Regions that allocate resources to training programs, certification frameworks, and promotional initiatives generally observe enhanced growth in paragliding tourism.

Customer happiness is highly influenced by amenities and service quality. While Kemuning stresses the tourist experience with locally managed cottages and SME involvement, RIUG provides more complete amenities, including insurance coverage and well-maintained facilities. Adventure activities like paragliding naturally include risk, making perceptions of safety and security crucial in tourists' engaging decisions. Tourist confidence is enhanced when adventure locations exhibit elevated safety standards via teacher certification, routine equipment inspections, explicit emergency protocols, and the provision of travel insurance ([Wijaya et al., 2024](#)). In contemporary society, public trust is significantly shaped by technological systems and professional organizations that ensure safety. In the tourism sector, this trust directly influences loyalty, contentment, and word-of-mouth promotion among visitors who perceive a sense of security.

Consequently, safety constitutes not merely an operational requirement but also an essential approach for enhancing the reputation of adventure destinations and fostering sustainable market expansion. For long-term sustainability, paragliding must be incorporated into sustainable tourism policies. Adventure tourism businesses need to reduce their environmental impact while positively impacting their communities (Jamaliah et al., 2024). When controlled appropriately, paragliding can be a low-impact sport that promotes conservation and generates revenue without harming natural ecosystems. Because of this, it is especially well suited for national parks or conservation regions where the flying conditions are adequate.

Better established at RIUG are auxiliary services, including food sellers, souvenir booths, and information centers, which add to the whole tourism ecosystem of the city. Though still expanding, Kemuning has great local economic integration and community involvement. Sport tourism, encompassing paragliding, bolsters area economies via tourist expenditure, employment generation, and the advancement of ancillary sectors such as hospitality and transportation (Nopriana et al., 2024; Prasetyowati et al., 2014). Elviani et al. (2023) contend that sport-oriented tourism events and attractions can serve as catalysts for infrastructure enhancement and destination branding. In rural or underdeveloped regions with appropriate landscapes for paragliding, this sport presents a sustainable tourism option that utilizes natural resources while fostering ecological consciousness.

Attracting visitors depends much on supporting elements, including, not least, natural landscape, cultural uniqueness, and weather compatibility. On the other hand, location-specific difficulties arise from restricting variables, including limited funds, transit restrictions, and environmental damage. While Kemuning deals with the effects of infrastructural development, RIUG deals with cultural misinterpretation and navigation problems. These reflect worries expressed by Donaire et al. (2024), who warn that, should environmental thresholds be disregarded, unbridled expansion could endanger sustainability.

Strategically, RIUG's independence lets it make consistent branding and nimble decisions. It does not, however, have the degree of community integration seen in Kemuning, which gains from inclusive governance and economic spill-off to local players via Village-Owned Enterprises (BUMDes). This analogy reflects the opinions of [Bazzanella \(2023\)](#), who underlines that sustainable sports tourism has to find a balance between business efficiency and community involvement. The development of paragliding sport tourism is confronted with numerous obstacles despite its potential. These consist of seasonal constraints, regulatory concerns, safety concerns, and a scarcity of competent human resources. According to research conducted by [Harahap and Kartika \(2020\)](#), adventure tourism activities such as paragliding frequently lack standardization in developing countries, resulting in variability in service quality. Consequently, fostering responsible tourism and establishing guidelines through collaboration among local governments, tourism organizations, and sports federations is imperative.

This research generally emphasizes the importance of mutual learning between both models. While Kemuning might increase its competitiveness through digital marketing, streamlined service methods, and more extensive insurance offers, RIUG could boost its sustainability by more actively including the local community. Combining both abilities would create a hybrid development paradigm with an ecologically mindful, inclusive, and market-responsive character.

CONCLUSION

This study found that RIUG Paragliding Bali and the Kemuning Paragliding Community have excellent tourist strategies based on their contexts. RIUG promotes international branding, digital promotion, and operational efficiency, while Kemuning emphasizes community participation, cultural integration, and local relationships. Both emphasize natural attractiveness, safety, and infrastructure, while RIUG is more corporate and regimented, and Kemuning is more participative and adaptive. This study adds to the adventure and community-based tourism

literature by showing how the 4A framework can link different approaches to sustainable development. It also shows how digital strategies may empower local communities.

RIUG could increase community involvement through CSR, whereas Kemuning should promote digitally and seek international certifications. Policymakers should foster private-community partnerships through incentives and training. For long-term sustainability, future research should include different destinations, mixed techniques, and environmental implications.

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