The Protection of Natural and Cultural Landscapes through Community-Based Tourism: The Case of the Indigenous Kamoro Tribe in West Papua, Indonesia

Timika Aryani Anindhita 1, Seweryn Zielinski 1,*, Celene B. Milanes 2 and Young-joo Ahn 1

1 Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management, Sejong University, 209 Neungdong-ro, Gwangjin-gu, Seoul 05006, Republic of Korea; dhita.timika@gmail.com (T.A.A.); yjahn@sejong.ac.kr (Y.-j.A.)
2 Facultad de Ingeniería, Universidad del Magdalena, Carrera 32 #22-08, Santa Marta 470004, Colombia; cmilanes@unimagdalena.edu.co
* Correspondence: zielinski@sejong.ac.kr

Abstract: Community-based tourism (CBT) aims to offer responsible travel to natural areas, conserving the environment, sustaining local communities’ well-being, and promoting environmental and cultural education. The long-term sustainability of CBT depends on its ability to enhance local livelihoods while protecting natural landscapes. For the Kamoro indigenous tribe in Papua, Indonesia, CBT offers a way to engage with the capitalist world on their own terms while preserving their customs, traditions, and ecocentric worldviews, and sharing them with tourists interested in their culture. However, as evidenced by many failed CBT initiatives, it is not always a desirable or viable path for development due to numerous barriers faced by communities and the potential negative impacts of tourism. Therefore, this study aimed to determine the Kamoro people’s attitudes towards tourism, the barriers to engaging in tourism, and their concerns about its impacts. Semi-structured and in-depth interviews were conducted with community members and local organizations. The results show that although local people view tourism as a viable economic alternative, they face significant challenges, including lack of trained human resources, infrastructure, financial support, tourism knowledge, government backing, and cooperation among local stakeholders, among others. While tourism development does not always guarantee the protection of natural and cultural landscapes, a community-led initiative supported by the government can serve as a barrier against the engagement of less sustainable industries controlled by external agents, which could have far more serious negative consequences.

Keywords: tourism development; indigenous; community; barriers; perception; attitude; tourism impact

1. Introduction

After the Rio Summit in 1992, the concept of sustainability appeared on the political agendas of most countries worldwide. Following the principles of sustainability, sustainable tourism emerged alongside other new forms of tourism developed to meet specific conservation and development objectives [1]. Community-based tourism (CBT) is regarded as a tool for conserving natural and cultural resources while fostering community development, and it has been implemented globally as a viable alternative for the development of rural and remote areas [2].

Research highlights CBT’s role in protecting natural landscapes and the environment, which might otherwise face pressures from less sustainable development driven by local populations [3,4] or external stakeholders such as multinational mining, logging, or palm oil companies [5,6]. In this context, ecological landscapes emerge as key sites in economic transition, creating an opening for opportunistic development that is extremely difficult for local communities to resist or control [7]. As governments prioritize expanding economic investments, activities like mining and logging are often considered national interests. This
type of development has frequently led to the political, economic, and cultural marginalization of indigenous peoples and minority cultures [8]. Due to the small size of these communities and their relative remoteness, the lack of government interest in protecting them and establishing a presence in rural areas is motivated by the high effort required, limited government capacity [9,10], and low perceived economic interest [11].

Indonesia is a developing country with abundant natural resources that offer significant potential for tourism development. The nation is also home to various unique ethnic groups dispersed across different provinces. The Kamoro indigenous tribe resides in parts of the Mimika Regency in Papua Province, consisting of an estimated 15,000 to 18,000 people settled in over 40 villages typically located near riverbanks and forests [11]. The Kamoro have a deeply ecocentric worldview and possess traditional knowledge in the environmental management of natural resources [12]. The coastal environment they inhabit is characterized by high biodiversity and extraordinary landscapes that support important coastal and estuarine habitats, including beaches, mangroves, and seagrass meadows.

However, since the early 1990s, the livelihoods of the Kamoro people have been significantly impacted and transformed by the mining industry operating on their customary lands. This has led to considerable environmental degradation, urban development, accelerated immigration, and the imposition of a capitalist economic system that the local people have struggled to adapt to, leaving them with few economic alternatives [13].

CBT promises to enhance human welfare and protect the environment and natural landscapes. This approach aims to reduce the likelihood of a further expansion of logging and mining on customary lands while emphasizing local culture and the conservation of natural landscapes. CBT, managed by local communities and supported by public institutions and NGOs, legitimizes their opposition to encroachment on their land and grants them greater control over the involvement of external stakeholders [14,15]. In this way, a community might be even able to influence or renegotiate public policy [16]. For governments, CBT led by local people with traditional ecological knowledge in sustainable natural resource management offers a preferable alternative to employment by multinational mining corporations. It provides economic benefits to local communities while conserving nature. This issue is not unique to Indonesia, as similar situations have been reported in many developing countries. If feasible, CBT may also serve as an argument against the expansion of extractive activities on indigenous lands, which have significant negative environmental and social impacts [17]. However, it is crucial for the community to control tourism and all decisions affecting their livelihoods [18]. CBT is thus viewed as an alternative for the Kamoro people to engage with the capitalist world on their own terms, maintaining their ways of life, customs, and traditions to share with tourists interested in getting to know them.

Considering the potential benefits of CBT for the community and natural environment over the expansion of other externally led industries in the area, tourism appears to be a more attractive path for local development. Its feasibility, however, is not only a question of desirability by the Kamoro people but also of technical viability, which is a fundamental reason for the high failure rate of CBT initiatives reported globally [1]. Therefore, the main objective of this study was to determine whether CBT is a desirable and feasible strategy for the Kamoro indigenous communities to maintain their livelihoods through economic activities that respect their cultural traditions and conserve their natural and cultural landscapes. Specifically, we investigated the level of understanding of the tourism phenomenon among the interviewees, including their expectations from tourism development, expectations of tourism potential, perceived impacts of tourism, tourism ownership, and control, and perceived barriers to CBT development.
Semi-structured and in-depth interviews were conducted with informants from the community and Kamoro people working for local non-governmental organizations. Case study research is often described as a versatile form of qualitative research suitable for a comprehensive, holistic, and in-depth investigation of complex issues with many variables [19]. Qualitative case study research was chosen because it provides a comprehensive, in-depth set of information that can be triangulated with multiple sources of information, such as observations, interviews, audiovisual material, and documents and reports [20]. The method was deemed to provide a better understanding of the community’s perceptions of tourism, barriers to CBT development, and the Kamoro people’s concerns about the impacts of tourism development.

The barriers and potential solutions identified and discussed in this paper are relevant to any CBT initiative in indigenous, ancestral, or rural contexts. Published cases documenting obstacles to CBT development using a methodological approach adapted from actual CBT experiences are scarce. This research tests this approach in conjunction with interviews, contributing to the understanding of the conditions that facilitate and inhibit CBT development. The study demonstrates how CBT can serve as a tool for cultural and natural landscape protection, providing a viable alternative to further industrial expansion. Additionally, this paper contributes to the limited body of research on the Kamoro tribe in West Papua, particularly in the context of tourism development.

1.1. The Significance of Community-Based Tourism (CBT)

Early definitions describe community-based tourism (CBT) as tourism where visitors engage with the local landscape and people who live in a defined space for a tourism experience [14]. Later, more emphasis was placed on community engagement [21,22], community management, ownership, and the generation of direct financial benefits [23]. Some definitions also include aspects of conservation and pro-poor strategies [23]. In this vein, Walter [24] (p. 160) defines four characteristics of CBT: “(a) principles of local participation, control, or ownership of ecotourism initiatives; (b) a focus on environmental conservation and local livelihood benefits; (c) the promotion of customary and indigenous cultures; and to some extent, (d) the promotion of local and indigenous human rights and sovereignty over traditional territories and resources”.

The generation of economic benefits is perhaps the most frequently cited positive impact of CBT, particularly for communities newly engaging with capitalism and struggling to find viable sources of income. Tourism contributes to the creation of direct and indirect employment in community-owned accommodations and related micro-enterprises, generating additional individual benefits through the multiplier effect and linkages [25], and helping to retain younger populations who do not see opportunities in their communities [26]. There is also a significant underestimation of direct benefits from CBT, often counted solely as direct family income without considering substantial improvements in living and working conditions, such as access to clean water and sanitation [27].

The main issue with direct employment is the uneven distribution of benefits from activities carried out by only a fraction of the community [28]. In this context, the literature provides numerous examples of initiatives implementing solutions ranging from collectively owned businesses, such as lodges or restaurants, with worker rotation to distribute benefits [29], to the reinvestment of tourism profits to reach more families (e.g., [25,29,30]).

The generation of benefits that also reach those who do not participate in tourism is crucial, especially if small-scale CBT fails to generate sufficient community engagement to meet their needs. Noticeable improvements in the community’s quality of life through collective economic benefits play a significant role in fostering residents’ support for tourism [30,31]. These benefits range from better access to formal education and basic facilities such as clean water and sanitation to improved healthcare and connectivity to the outside world, which is essential for the commercialization of community-made products [27]. Such benefits reach many individuals in remote and rural regions supporting
economic development and diversification, as communities should not rely on tourism as their sole source of income in the early stages of CBT [28].

Although all definitions identify community benefits as a key aspect, not all define the meaningful participation of communities. In this respect, Mansuri and Rao [32] (pp. 1–2) make an important distinction between community-based and community-driven initiatives, stating that “community-based development is an umbrella term for projects that actively include beneficiaries in their design and management, and community-driven development refers to community-based development projects in which communities have direct control over key project decisions, including the management of investment funds”. In both cases, the best result of participation is achieved when a community is involved in the destination development process from design to maintenance [18,33]. This approach to planning by the community, rather than for or with the community, has been advocated not only in the context of CBT but also as a modern approach to planning more broadly. It emphasizes a process that seeks to understand a place and its potential futures, includes unconventional participants, and forms coalitions around ideas rather than adopting a problem-focused approach [34]. This trend of localizing decision-making to the lowest level and building local interrelationships among people, place, ecology, and all living things has been termed a ‘local turn’ in tourism [35]. Instead of merely being hosts, local people are seen as custodians of a place, with rights and obligations, who may or may not choose to welcome tourists [36].

The essence of CBT extends beyond simple capacity building for the community, moving towards the development of political knowledge, skills, and activism [37,38]. CBT can offer a path to greater political self-determination, but only if local control is maximized [39]. Indeed, local communities need empowerment to decide on their priority projects, facilities to be built, activities to be offered, and methods of benefit sharing among participants [40]. Participation, in this context, is an empowering process driven by a collective need to solve community problems or improve environmental or socio-economic conditions by identifying issues, planning and managing solutions, or seeking adequate support from external stakeholders able to assist.

1.2. CBT as a Tool for Protection of Natural and Cultural Landscapes

CBT offers not only economic benefits but also non-monetary benefits related to environmental and natural landscape protection with its natural, cultural, and scenic value influenced by socio-historical conditions [41]. If desired, CBT can also reduce local communities’ pressures on natural resources [3,42,43]. However, the long-term sustainability of nature-based tourism in natural areas strongly depends on its ability to improve local community livelihoods [44,45].

Neoliberal reforms have shifted economies from protectionism to global economic integration based on ideologies of competitive advantage and free trade [46,47]. Dependency theory illustrates how developing states are often forced into dependent positions, focusing on the heavy exportation of a single commodity to earn foreign exchange [48]. As a consequence of this approach, indigenous people and minority cultures have been politically, economically, and culturally marginalized by capitalist economic development and resource exploitation [8].

There are many examples of multinational companies specializing in mining copper, gold, and silver [6], commercial logging [49], and oil palm plantations [7,50], which have received land use rights for their extractive activities on customary lands or in biodiverse areas near indigenous, ancestral, or rural settlements. Although under certain circumstances, industry and tourism can coexist [47], for many communities, this means that culturally and economically important territories have been subjected to various forms of external influence and control [51], often exposing vulnerable communities to new forms of structural violence under the guise of economic development [7]. Access to places and resources is often seen by privileged parties as an opportunity for investment. State-sponsored developments, including commercial mining and logging, are regarded as national interests in
many countries, including Indonesia, where laws consider all land not actively utilized for industry, housing, or farming as state property [8]. This type of opportunistic development is extremely difficult for local communities to resist or control [7].

Due to the small size of these communities and their relative remoteness, there is often a lack of government interest in protecting them and maintaining a presence in rural areas [9,10]. Frequently, the lack of government support is intentional. In many developing countries, multinational companies are regarded as national interests and thus enjoy tax breaks and favorable legislation [11]. At both national and local levels, resource distribution to those in need is further constrained by the power of the privileged, who prefer to sustain dependent relationships because their own interests align with those of dominant states [52]. The consequences are often severe. Case studies report the loss of customary land rights, the destruction of socio-economic systems, significant ecosystem changes, environmental degradation, and even acts of violence that could be categorized as prolonged human rights violations [6,11,53].

In the case of the Kamoro tribes, the negative impact on their livelihoods has been significant. A multinational mining company has been dumping tailings into the Ajkwa River, resulting in millions of tons of mining residues, along with natural sediments, contaminating its waters and mangrove forests, making the primary source of water unusable for consumption [11]. In 1991, millions of tons of tailings led to flooding and the subsequent contamination of forests used for gathering plants, fruits, medicines, wood, and sago for food staples and construction material [13]. Huge amounts of mine disposal containing dissolved mercury, lead, arsenic, and other harmful metals have destroyed approximately 26 square miles of rainforest [8]. To compensate, the company has been contributing 1% of its annual profit to a fund designed to support all indigenous communities in the area of influence [13]. Although this has had some positive effects, it has not significantly improved local livelihoods [6,11].

The company brought workers from outside the region rather than training local people, under the pretense that locals were uneducated and culturally unfit for modern working conditions [11]. Consequently, immigrants, culturally different from the local people, now outnumber the indigenous people three to one, which has been caused by marginalizing local communities and accelerating development and colonization processes. The economic system imposed by the company cannot accommodate different ideas about social relations, community, or ownership, and in fact, fundamentally contradicts many indigenous values [54]. Therefore, Kamoro people, forced into the capitalist system, have found it hard to adapt quickly to the significant changes demanded of them and are often left without many economic alternatives and without any right to appropriate compensation [8].

It is important to note, however, that a community must control tourism. Only then can they decide whether to accept external businesses such as tour operators and accommodation providers, and under what conditions. In the absence of regulations protecting community rights to control local activities, external investors gain control over tourism development in the area [55]. The influence of external stakeholders on tourism development is usually very high as they look at potential target markets based on their own knowledge, resources, networks, and values [27]. The loss of ownership of the means of production results in the inability to decide which social relations defining culture and place are commodified and how [56], often leading to the imposition of different values on local people, which is more likely to create conflicts [57]. The Kamoro themselves are clear that not all traditional rituals, customs, or stories should be shared outside the community, believing that breaking this rule will invoke the anger of their ancestors [53].
1.3. Barriers to CBT Development

Despite the potential of CBT, not every initiative succeeds. Many initiatives in natural areas fail due to barriers encountered during the process [58]. There is a range of operational, structural, and cultural conditions that should be accounted for [33,38,59,60]. Research demonstrates that many CBT initiatives fail due to unfavorable conditions that could have been detected and either avoided or addressed in the early stages [1,61]. As noted by Collins and Snel [62], each specific site requires an evaluation of its socioeconomic context, and more importantly, of the community’s capacity to run and operate a tourism enterprise. Since each community presents unique circumstances, there is no single set of suitable conditions that apply universally for CBT to flourish [37,63–65]. However, several critical conditions can define the success or failure of an initiative [1,33,59,60,66].

A number of scholars have identified success factors, barriers, drivers, and enabling conditions for tourism development that are applicable to CBT [38,59,67–72]. All of these studies used qualitative methods to identify and describe the barriers based on the authors’ experiences and previous research. The sets of barriers ranged from 11 [68] to 40 [72]. Other studies identified success factors and barriers [59,67,69–71] using the same qualitative methods based on scientific and grey literature. Building on this existing body of research, Zielinski et al. [1] employed a content analysis of 68 mostly qualitative case studies based on interviews published in peer reviewed journals and books and identified 151 factors that facilitate and inhibit CBT in developing countries. The external barriers most frequently found in the analyzed case studies were related to weak performance in the following areas: technical cooperation, the provision of capacity building, financial support, the involvement of community stakeholders in the tourism planning stage, co-management, healthy and equal relationships and coordination with institutions providing assistance, support for promotion, the recognition of the importance of community participation, regulation enforcement, the dissemination of information about planned tourism, political commitment to support CBT, and expertise among personnel. On the other hand, the most common internal factors were related to weak performance in the following areas: skills and expertise in tourism-related areas, independence in decision-making, an awareness of the importance of nature conservation, participative decision-making, community control over land and resources, a high level of control over tourism activities, community unity and an understanding of the importance of the collective over individual actions, mechanisms for profit distribution, a supply of activities based on traditions and local customs that attract tourists and strengthen the community’s role, and a low dependence on resource-consumptive activities.

Zielinski et al. [1] concluded that almost none of the 69 analyzed CBT case studies used a methodological approach to identify and/or evaluate barriers to tourism development. These studies did not utilize any framework or list of potential barriers extracted from previous research. Consequently, many case studies potentially excluded important barriers from their analysis, not because they were absent, but likely because they were not identified or their importance was not recognized. “Without a universal framework against which to evaluate CBT initiatives, it is not possible to rule out either of these two hypotheses” [1] (p. 724). This paper employed the framework developed by Zielinski et al. [1], incorporating the most frequent barriers to CBT. The framework was used in the interview design process to account for all common barriers, thereby testing its utility for qualitative studies of barriers to CBT.

2. Materials and Methods

2.1. Design

Semi-structured interviews were chosen as the primary means of data collection, allowing for the gathering of in-depth information while maintaining a structure informed by the study’s objectives. The interviewers created and used an interview guide consisting of a list of topics rather than specific questions to maintain the natural flow of the interviews and to allow respondents to elaborate on issues they deemed important [73]. Semi-structured
in-depth interviews encourage a back-and-forth dialogue, allowing the interviewer to react to the interviewee’s comments by changing the wording or order of questions, interjecting relevant probes for clarification, and/or changing the direction of the interview since it is a shared experience between the interviewer and the respondent [74]. However, the basic structure added a level of order to the interview. The interviews followed a specific process in order to address the main themes of the research (Figure 1). Further details about the themes and the interview questions can be found in Appendix A. Although the interviews did not always adhere strictly to the outlined questions, the guide was instrumental in gathering the information necessary to meet the research objectives.

The research was conducted in Mimika Timur Regency, Wania district (Figure 2), in Poumako and Kamoro Jaya villages, as well as in Mimika town in Mimika Regency. The villages settled by the Kamoro are only accessible by boat during high tides, requiring a trip of one hour by bus and a further three hours by boat. The interviews were conducted individually, lasting between 30 min to over an hour. All interviews were recorded and transcribed. Data collection took place over two months, in February and March 2022.
2.2. Participants

Purposive sampling, followed by snowball sampling techniques, was employed to select informants [75]. This approach was necessary because most Kamoro people were either unable to identify barriers to CBT or did not have a clear overview and understanding of local issues due to their lack of involvement in these matters. Additionally, the target population was difficult to reach without informants. The initial respondents were informants from an NGO that focuses on the Kamoro tribe and operates in the research area. The NGO facilitated entrance into the communities closest to Timika town (4 h away) and contact with the community organizations. To ensure diverse perspectives, the aim was to interview informants from different social groups who play various roles in the community. Interviews continued until saturation was reached—when additional interviews did not yield new or interesting information. In total, fourteen participants were interviewed (Table 1). Interviews were conducted in Indonesian.

Table 1. Profile of the participants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Tribe</th>
<th>Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>40s</td>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Kamoro</td>
<td>Secondary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>40s</td>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Kamoro</td>
<td>High School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>20s</td>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Kamoro</td>
<td>High School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>20s</td>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Kamoro</td>
<td>Primary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>20s</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Kamoro</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>30s</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Kamoro</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>40s</td>
<td>Community Org.</td>
<td>Kamoro</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>50s</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>Kamoro</td>
<td>College Diploma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>70s</td>
<td>Community Org.</td>
<td>Kamoro</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>50s</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>Kamoro</td>
<td>Primary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>30s</td>
<td>Community Org.</td>
<td>Kamoro</td>
<td>Primary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>50s</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Kamoro</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>50s</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>50s</td>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.3. Data Analysis

Content analysis, both inductive and deductive, was used to analyze data. For the topics that were explorative in nature, such as community knowledge, ownership and control, potential and expectations from tourism development, inductive content analysis was deemed more appropriate. The researchers systematically analyzed transcribed interviews categorizing excerpts to determine whether certain themes occur. The codes were developed during the analysis without preconceived notions of what the codes should be [76,77]. This allowed for a better exploration of the topic. Once codes were finalized after analyzing roughly half of the transcripts, the researchers reanalyzed all of the transcripts once more to make sure that no codes were missed.

On the other hand, directed content analysis was used for the identification of the barriers for CBT. The aim was to identify the basic, non-overlapping (mutually exclusive) units of analysis (barriers for CBT). The process was largely deductive. Directed content analysis was deemed the most appropriate, which is more reliable than other approaches because it is guided by a more structured process [76,78]. Codes used in the initial analysis were based on a growing body of research. The barriers for CBT development were identified by Asker et al. [67], Blackman et al. [68], Dangi and Jamal [69], Dodds et al. [70], Goodwin and Santilli [71], and Tosun [38], and further refined and reclassified into one large framework by Zielinski et al. [1,61] and Yanes et al. [79] with over 80 barriers identified through a review of a large number of real-life case studies. This framework was used to guide the coding of the barriers for CBT.

To validate the results, construct validity was tested using multiple sources of information, including the lead researcher’s observations during the visits to the community and consultations with NGO employees who specialize in working with the Kamoro communities. In this way, a coding scheme was developed that comprises a definition of each factor of analysis used for coding. A coding scheme constructed in this way is considered systematic and scientific, and can objectively guide multiple coders [80]. The objective was to narrow the degree of interpretation by various coders. To further increase the level of coding reliability, transcripts were used to ensure reproducibility—the probability of other researchers applying the same process of analysis using the same coding scheme and data to reproduce the same results [73,77]. Two coders worked independently on the content analysis. Intercooler reliability was determined as 0.91 following the practice advocated by Bryman and Bell [80]. Disagreements on the codes were resolved through evaluation by an additional researcher and consequently categorized based on statistical majority.

2.4. Kamoro Tribe in Mimika Regency

The Kamoro tribe is one of the indigenous tribes composed of between 15,000 and 18,000 people living in approximately 40 villages, each consisting of between 100 and 500 residents, in Mimika Regency, Papua Province, in eastern Indonesia [81]. These villages can be reached by boat or air, while some are accessible from the nearby city of Mimika by car or motorbike. However, villages located on the eastern coast are only accessible by boat.

The Kamoro speak their own language, although Indonesian is taught at schools [11]. Historically, the Kamoro people had limited access to and little desire for formal education. Recently, the Indonesian government has begun building elementary schools in Kamoro villages. Despite increased access to basic education, many Kamoro people only complete up to junior high school and rarely pursue higher education. Those who wish to continue their education often receive scholarships from the Amugme and Kamoro Community Empowerment Foundation (personal communication).

Kamoro people adhere to their own traditional ethics and morality, particularly in the field of the environmental management of natural resources. According to the cosmovision of large Papuan tribes, land is considered to be the Mother that gave birth to a variety of living things and cultures in Papua [12]. Land is seen as having a “soul” or “spirit” and is regarded with sacred value. Land and its resources are considered a source of life and
are central to the existence of indigenous Papuans. Their worldview is highly ecocentric, believing that humans belong to the land and are thus obliged to preserve it.

As a fishing tribe, the Kamoro typically settle near the coast, estuaries, or riverbanks, areas characterized by high biodiversity and unique natural scenery. Their lives are deeply connected to nature. In addition to fishing, the Kamoro engage in hunting and harvesting sago trees for food [53]. The tribe is known for the “3S”—sungai (rivers), sampan (traditional wooden canoes), and sago [81]. Economically, the Kamoro tribe is classified as lower to middle due to their reliance on natural resource extraction for self-subsistence. Conversely, some Kamoro members have moved to the city and lead much more modern lives.

The Kamoro tribe has many native traditions, arts, and crafts that can be leveraged to create unique tourism products. Various dances are performed during parties and traditional ceremonies [11]. The Kamoro are renowned for their carving skills, creating statues specific to each village that symbolize ancestors or revered spirits. The tribe’s women are also skilled weavers, producing mats and bags from fiber, bark, young sago leaves, pandan leaves, and other native materials. These bags are used to carry tubers, vegetables, clothes, and babies. In 2012, Kamoro weaving was recognized as Intangible World Cultural Heritage by UNESCO. The tribe also has a traditional musical instrument called the Tifa, a percussion instrument similar to a drum. The Tifa is typically decorated with carvings unique to each tribe [12].

3. Results

3.1. Understanding of the Tourism Phenomenon

The results from the interviews demonstrate that the Kamoro tribe is highly receptive to tourism and even enthusiastic about it. All interviewees stated that they would welcome tourists to their villages. They also displayed a clear understanding of tourism, explaining its purpose as including visiting their village, enjoying local places and culture for recreation, and going to the beach (Table 2). Interestingly, some interviewees described tourism with strong cultural connotations, such as “a place to showcase the arts and culture of the Kamoro people to be known by many people” (Informant 6, hereinafter abbreviated as Inf.) or “Kamoro people showing their culture to others... because the Kamoro are known for their arts, such as dance and carving” (Informant 8).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Knowledge about Tourism</th>
<th>Freq.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tourism is for recreation and refreshing</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism is about showing the culture</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism is about people coming to visit</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.2. Expectations and Understanding of the Impacts of Tourism

The Kamoro people believe that tourism development represents a significant opportunity for their tribe. They think that tourism can improve their livelihoods by supporting the local economy and introducing their culture to the world (Table 3). As Informant 4 stated, “For me, tourism is crucial for the Kamoro community because it can build or help the community, can rebuild Kamoro culture, and introduce it to the outside.” In addition to boosting the local economy and introducing culture to visitors, tourism is expected to revitalize traditions among the youth: “(...) many children from the Kamoro tribe are affected by technology, such as playing on cell phones. With tourism, we can invite them and teach them about the culture that they will later introduce to other people” (Informant 1).
The special relationship the Kamoro have with their land and natural resources was also highlighted by respondents: “In my opinion, tourism is essential for the Kamoro. (...) We can show our connection with nature, such as looking for crabs in the mangrove forests, fishing, or looking for seafood. For the Kamoro, nature is the mall because that’s where we find food and entertainment. Then, tourists can try to live this life” (Inf. 2). Respondents also proudly discussed the “3S” (Sungai, Sampan, Sago-River, Canoe, and Sago) philosophy of life among the Kamoro tribe that could be developed into tourism products: “We can use 3S (...) as a form of tourism, and many people will know about Kamoro’s way of life” (Inf. 5).

The Kamoro are also aware of the potential negative impacts of tourism development (Table 4). Many community members fear that their land will be lost to investors, forcing them to relocate: “(...) As tourism develops, it will bring in many investors who want to do business there so that people are tempted to sell their land, and they lose their homes” (Inf. 5). The Kamoro are also concerned that tourists might exhibit inappropriate behavior, such as excessive alcohol consumption, aggressive behavior, or even sexual harassment: “We are afraid of drunken tourists and sexual harassment if the guests who arrive are many and uncontrolled” (Inf. 7), “(...) Perhaps the entry of foreign culture will affect the Kamoro community, such as drunkenness; we plan to prohibit and monitor this” (Inf. 2). As for the environmental impacts, excessive littering was identified by most respondents.

### Table 3. Expectations about tourism development.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Expectations</th>
<th>Freq.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tourism fully managed by the community</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fostering the local economy and introducing the culture</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fostering youth involvement and their traditional knowledge</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introducing livelihoods of Kamoro tribe to outsiders (3S)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.3. Tourism Potential

This section describes respondents’ preferred types of tourism and their perceptions of tourism potential based on existing resources (Table 5). Most respondents identified cultural and nature-based tourism as most suitable, highlighting the pristine natural conditions and the presence of rivers, forests, and the ocean: “We have a river with clear water and an estuary that offers beautiful views” (Inf. 1), “There are mangrove forests, wide beaches, rivers, and the sea” (Inf. 3), and “(...) nature is also beautiful, such as mangrove forests” (Inf. 6). The interviews also revealed the Kamoro people’s understanding of the potential of their daily activities for tourism: “We can invite guests to see the way we gather food, such as going to the forest, chopping wood to find Tambelo [a type of mollusk], looking for crabs, shellfish, and fishing” (Inf. 2).

### Table 4. The impacts of tourism.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impacts</th>
<th>Freq.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economic benefits</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excessive littering</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative socio-cultural impacts</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of the land</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 5. Potential for different types of tourism.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tourism Potential</th>
<th>Freq.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nature-based tourism</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural tourism</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water sports tourism</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culinary tourism</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
All participants understand the strength of cultural activities for tourism development, giving examples of a wide variety of dances, festivals, traditional clothes, musical instruments, wood carvings, and traditional boats. When asked what products they can offer to the world, they pointed without hesitation towards the carvings: “(...) the Kamoro tribe is unequivocal with carving. If there are tourists visiting our village, most of them look for carvings. (...) It has become an important source of income for the community” (Inf. 11). Participants also identified heritage assets and historical relics from the period of Japanese occupation during the Second World War and the Dutch colonial era: “There is a cannon left from the Second World War in our village. (...) Sometimes people come to take pictures of it” (Inf. 8), and “(...) there were cannons, tanks, and planes that crashed in the mangrove forest. If tourism develops, this can be a cultural heritage” (Inf. 4). Some interviewees also mentioned the area’s suitability for water sports, specifically canoeing, jet skiing (Inf. 3), and rowing (Inf. 4 and 5).

In terms of preferred nationalities, all 12 participants responded that they would like to receive both domestic and international tourists. Some respondents justified their preference by stating that “foreigners are more interested in natural areas, want to know how the community carves wooden sculptures or how to make traditional clothes from leather and leaves (...)” (Inf. 6).

The potential for tourism development was also expressed in terms of the impacts that local people expect or anticipate. The economic impact is expected to deliver not only individual benefits in terms of income but, more importantly, collective benefits such as infrastructure and a reduction of dependence on external funds. Besides economic benefits, the community respondents expect their tribe to become better known to the outside world: “With tourism, the culture of the Kamoro people is getting better known, and people also learn about our villages (..)“ (Inf. 3). The Kamoro also think that tourism will allow them to exchange information and knowledge: “The community will meet new people from outside our village, where we can share information and knowledge that has not been known to the community in the village so that our insights widen” (Inf. 5).

3.4. Tourism Ownership and Control

Local ownership and control of tourism is one of the key factors in successful CBT development. Kamoro respondents voiced a strong preference for close cooperation between the community and external stakeholders, such as the government, NGOs, or private investors, as long as decision-making and control over tourism remain with the tribe (Table 6): “It would be great if we collaborated with the government or foundations. Their job would be to assist and supervise us, and let the community work. (....). After that, they can leave and let us work alone and monitor remotely” (Inf. 1). Other informants expressed similar ideas, stating, “(...) Let the residents work, and stakeholders guide us through training, financial management, or languages” (Inf. 2), and “(...) as long as what we ask for is given, and you are kind to us and do not violate our cultural traditions, we will accept” [cooperation with external stakeholders] (Inf. 5). An NGO working with the Kamoro also clearly supported the idea of community ownership: “We want the Kamoro people to be the tourism actors and the local village administrators. So, the raw materials come from outsiders, but to serve tourists who come, it must be the Kamoro people themselves. Our foundation can train them” (Inf. 13).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preferences for Tourism Ownership</th>
<th>Freq.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Owned by community and supported by stakeholders</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owned by community and administrated by villagers</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.5. Barriers to CBT Development

Almost all respondents identified the lack of trained human resources among the community and the leadership as the biggest challenge in tourism development (Table 7), stating that “Lack of training is a barrier. Until now, there has been no specific training for
tourism” (Inf. 3). Others added, “(...) Due to the lack of skilled human resources in tourism, the government places people who are not right for the task. As a result, tourism development is hampered” (Inf. 8). Another participant noted, “(...) We need people with strong characters who understand the conditions of the tourism area and the nature in which we live. So far, the people who come to our place are excited initially and then disappear, so we feel left without explanation” (Inf. 5), and “(...) There is potential for tourism in our village. Nevertheless, until now, no one has wanted to touch it and turn it into a tourist attraction” (Inf. 10). Informants 3 and 5 also mentioned the need for specialized training in hospitality and the English language.

Table 7. Barriers to CBT development.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Barriers</th>
<th>Freq.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of trained human resources</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of infrastructure</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of financial support</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of community knowledge</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of government attention</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of collaboration between stakeholders and the community</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No clarity about tourism</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coronavirus outbreak</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A lack of infrastructure was the second most frequently cited barrier. Due to the remoteness of Kamoro villages, infrastructure development is vital. Respondents specifically pointed to a port that would facilitate water transportation and fuel storage, stating that “Currently, there is no public transportation. Visitors have to rent a boat or arrange one with us if they want to come” (Inf. 2), and “(...) If there is transportation but no fuel, it will be difficult to travel” (Inf. 10). Informant 5 highlighted the lack of “(...) lodging, restaurants, public toilets, among others,” adding that “we only rely on a few residents’ houses... if needed.” Similar responses were given by NGO staff who emphasized the importance of infrastructure for water transportation, pointing out that currently, climate conditions such as high waves and tides hinder transportation.

A lack of financial resources is another barrier to CBT development. Currently, the government of Mimika district does not allocate any funds to the Kamoro tribe, and local communities do not have enough resources to initiate tourism. According to one interviewee, “(...) Because the allocation of tourism resources occurred recently, the government began developing eco-tourism in mangrove forests. However, there is no funding for tourism development in the area inhabited by the Kamoro” (Inf. 7). Another participant added, “In other districts, there is a budget prepared for local tourism, managed by local people themselves... budget from the local government. In contrast, the Mimika district government currently has not seen the opportunity for the Kamoro tribe to become a tourist attraction. There is no financial support for tourism” (Inf. 8).

Although the Kamoro people are used to meeting foreigners, the lack of community knowledge about tourism was identified as a barrier to CBT development. Respondents stated that even though some of their activities can be used as tourist attractions, many community members do not realize it. There is a clear lack of knowledge about tourism and an understanding of tourism activity in rural areas among people with low levels of education and experience in fishing rather than service sectors such as tourism. One interviewee stated: “The knowledge (...) about tourism is also a barrier because some people do not understand it. So when we go to the village, we call local figures such as traditional leaders to talk about what tourism is (...)” (Inf. 1). “I think the biggest obstacle is education. (...). We can manage nature and culture together, but this requires extensive knowledge to prepare competent human resources” (Inf. 12).

A lack of government attention and coordination with the community was recognized as an obstacle. According to the informants, sometimes the government makes development decisions and implements programs unilaterally, without prior coordination with the community: “For example, if someone want to build a tourist spot, the government must inform
the community and not come right away and say it will make it there and bring people from outside” (Inf. 4). This sentiment was echoed by NGO staff who stated that “actually, the Kamoro people are ready to show their culture to tourists. (…) The government should provide training for them. Nevertheless, currently the government only focuses on buildings [built elsewhere], not local human resources” (Inf. 13).

A lack of internal collaboration between stakeholders operating in the area and the community was also identified as an obstacle to tourism development. Respondents lamented that although there is an NGO working to support the community, there is no real cooperation as they choose to work individually: “Our foundation asked Kamoro Tribal Council to cooperate but received a negative response” (Inf. 2). Kamoro people perceive a lack of clarity about the future of tourism: “There is no future planning for tourism. For example, when developing tourism, the government or investors tend not to think long-term… they only believe that it is enough to create [tourism in the destination] and many people will come, but they do not think about the next ten years’ impact” (Inf. 5). One informant explained that “many people want to build tourism but do not explain to the community who the tourism targets are, what the future objectives for the Kamoro community are, and what benefits will be obtained. If it is explained and people understand it, it will help us” (Inf. 9). Finally, due to the timing of the interviews, the outbreak of COVID-19 was also identified as a major obstacle: “(…) The community cannot do anything” (Inf. 1), “(…), everything will be delayed because the government forbids foreigners from coming to our village” (Inf. 7).

4. Discussion

4.1. Understanding of the Tourism Phenomenon

The informants from the Kamoro tribe were all aware of some basic concepts of tourism, but each respondent emphasized slightly different aspects, indicating varied views on tourism’s meaning for the community. Tourism is a Western phenomenon, and its core ideas are much less understood by indigenous people, as the notions of tourism and mobility for leisure usually do not exist in their cultures [9,44,82,83]. This was confirmed by the respondents, who stated that although they are familiar with these concepts, many people in the community are not. A lack of understanding of tourism phenomena has been identified as one of the barriers to tourism development [1].

4.2. Expectations and Understanding of the Impacts of Tourism

Positive attitudes towards tourism are usually held by communities based on their expectations of its potential contribution to improving their quality of life. The Kamoro respondents focused on the benefits and paid less attention to more complex potential negative impacts, indicating a very narrow understanding of the issue. Social exchange theory [84,85] and dependency theory (see [86]) explain this, stating that residents’ attitudes towards tourism and their support are based on the balance of costs and benefits. When costs are not well understood or felt, community support for tourism in the initial stage of the destination life-cycle, or even before tourism development, is usually high [87].

In terms of potential impacts, the loss of land was identified by a minority of respondents who linked economic development with the influx of external investors, which has had mostly negative impacts on community tourism development around the globe [1,88], largely due to their advantage over local people in terms of education, skills, and resources to invest in tourism [89]. Land ownership is a critical issue influencing the success of community-based tourism enterprises [58]. Secured land tenure and control give communities the ability to negotiate conditions for tourism development in their interest, including the acceptance of external businesses where the community has the upper hand, allowing for highly beneficial arrangements [15,90]. Hence, resistance to selling land to outsiders has been identified as playing a major role in maintaining control over tourism [79]. As is the case with most indigenous communities, the Kamoro have communal ownership of their ancestral land, making it far less prone to sale to external investors who must seek community approval even for operation in the area. Local control over inhabited land
is further strengthened by community cohesion based on relations of trust, making the entrance of external stakeholders difficult and unlikely.

On the other hand, some Kamoro respondents had a clear idea of how tourism could help maintain or even foster their traditional culture and lifestyle, especially among the youth. They also expressed excitement about the prospect of making their culture more known to the outside world. The enhancement of social, cultural, and place identity in people is one of the most important impacts of successful CBT [91]. Community pride increases when local people notice that foreign visitors are interested in their lives, traditional knowledge, food, activities, and natural assets [92]. In this way, local traditions and ways of life are not threatened by CBT; on the contrary, culture becomes the main anchor and asset for its development [90]. For example, the Mpondoland people embrace indigenous knowledge as a significant aspect in promoting their livelihoods [93]. Zapata et al.’s [27] review of 34 CBT projects in Nicaragua shows that CBT helped revalorize local knowledge for new generations of young people, who were proud of their parents’ work and foresaw a possibility to live and work in their communities, reducing emigration processes. Although the maintenance and exhibition of local culture and crafts to tourists bring pride to local communities, they also encourage cultural commoditization, commercialization, and the artificial proliferation of artists and groups eager to make a profit [94]. These negative effects were not recognized by the informants.

4.3. Tourism Potential

The compatibility of tourism products offered by a community with its traditional way of life and culture is an important factor for the success of CBT [95]. An ideal product or service should incorporate local values, concepts, limits, and cultural expressions, ensuring consumer satisfaction while seeking social, cultural, environmental, and economic benefits for the community [96]. Compatibility creates an acceptance of the tourism industry and often generates pride within the community about their culture, way of life, and traditional knowledge that they can showcase to visitors and receive praise for. Indeed, the Kamoro respondents expressed their willingness to share their culture and way of life with outsiders through tourism. They were fully aware of the importance of both natural and cultural tourism resources in their community that could be used in the development of tourism products. They were able to identify even some of the more obscure or secondary resources, suggesting that they have a good perception of aspects of their culture that are particularly attractive or interesting to tourists. These types of products, based on cultural or daily activities, are easy to develop by the community that uses that knowledge in their daily life and provide an outlet for locally produced arts and crafts [90]. On the other hand, the respondents also highlighted that the majority of people in the community do not have the same level of knowledge about tourism and resources, indicating that wider capacity building is required before the initiation of CBT.

4.4. Tourism Ownership and Control

All respondents were very clear that control over tourism should stay entirely in the hands of the community. However, the community-ownership model requires new skills that the community does not possess. The lack of those skills and expertise in areas required for the operation of tourism is one of the most commonly cited barriers to CBT [1,70]. Low levels of education also contribute to the lack of understanding of basic tourism concepts and the development planning process [44,83]. Therefore, the community advocates for a CBT model supported by other stakeholders such as the government and even private operators. However, training and capacity building are time-consuming, often taking years to achieve satisfactory results in bringing a community to a state where they can operate the initiative profitably without external support [15]. The lack of capacities imposes the need for external support and reinforces the community’s dependency on it [97].

It is clear that for CBT to develop in the long term, backing and collaboration are necessary, whether it be from NGOs, governments, or the private sector [63,65,93]. A
review of 68 case studies of CBT initiatives in developing countries showed that 78% were initiated with external assistance [1]. Technical support and cooperation do not focus only on capacity building and financial support but also include building infrastructure and institutional support when the external organization plays the role of a broker between the community and government or private stakeholders in the area. An external assistance organization, whether public or private, working at the community level can facilitate the process of local decision-making and implementation in ways that enable residents to adapt their plans to their priorities or to voice their priorities to others [98].

While tourism intermediaries are indispensable in supporting the development of CBT, their powerful role in controlling tourism development also warrants questioning [99]. There is evidence that community members tend to blindly rely on external stakeholders such as private investors or NGOs, which may or may not favor community interests [93]. External assistance may increase disagreements over the nature of the decision-making process when most decisions depend on the perceptions and proposals of external agents [100]. Governments often assume a dominating role, typically in highly patriarchal countries such as Indonesia. Even if communities do not agree with governments’ decisions about tourism, they believe these decisions cannot be challenged [92].

Cases of power dominance by private or public stakeholders wielding decision-making power about the scope and direction of tourism development are common in tourism development [25]. Therefore, the main worry of the Kamoro respondents is that external stakeholders initially invited to support tourism development will gradually gain more control over it. Kamoro people are open to external stakeholders establishing their businesses, but with permission. If the program is beneficial and does not violate the customs of the Kamoro people, they will happily accept it. The risk of this approach is that the balance between community and external control may shift, leading to the slow deterioration of CBT and a gradual increase in external control of the tourism industry. The Kamoro people seem to lack an understanding of this mechanism and its dire consequences. This was the case in Taganga, Colombia [101], a community near Ao Phang Nga National Park in Thailand [102], Kimana Wildlife Sanctuary in Kenya [103], and two villages on Lombok Island in Indonesia [104].

4.5. Barriers to CBT Development

Without the capacity to manage tourism, a legitimate and authoritative facilitator is required to assist the community [14]. NGOs often become intermediaries between powerful stakeholders and rural, isolated area communities and capacity builders. Ideally, the government should carry out capacity building and skills development through local facilitators and already established local entities, with NGOs and the private sector playing a complementary role [90]. However, experiences suggest that many CBT initiatives never gain full independence and even collapse with the departure of the supporting organizations [105].

In terms of other barriers to CBT development, the most frequently identified were the previously discussed lack of technical capacities in tourism and the lack of infrastructure, both of which were perceived by the respondents to require external assistance. Although basic tourism infrastructure is either not required for the type of product the community plans to offer or can be provided by the community with limited support (e.g., homestay accommodation), the lack of water transportation infrastructure is critical for any tourism development in that area. In this context, the interviews revealed a lack of political commitment and inequality in the distribution of public resources to support tourism in Kamoro communities. In modern democratic governments, elected representatives have failed to represent the needs and aspirations of grassroots communities, and at least significant segments of communities feel alienated from governmental decision-making [38]. Inequities and injustices related to the distribution of government resources to tourism are commonly reported [106].
The vertical relationship with the community stems from the difference of power among different stakeholders and the attitudes of stakeholders that hold that power. In societies with heavily centralized political structures such as Indonesia, the government holds the power and makes all decisions, and it would not be appropriate for communities to take the initiative [107]. Those stakeholders that hold less power are treated with less consideration and are often exploited for the benefit of more powerful stakeholders. Because power is viewed as an instrument to be managed and balanced, it is possible to address the issue of power and authority by including legitimate stakeholders and an organization (government or an NGO) that could serve as a convener [14].

Reliance on local authorities to convene power relations assumes their neutrality, but in reality, governance institutions have their own agendas [108]. They wish to share benefits and listen to the inputs of the community, but they also wish to retain the power to decide how to share it and how much to share with the local community [33]. This was also voiced by Kamoro respondents, stating that they are the last ones to find out what decisions were made about developments in their territories. Within this sort of environment, collaborative decision-making simply cannot work because these stakeholders do not operate from an equal footing [109]. Experiences suggest that communities are much more likely to trust an NGO than the government, often because of their negative previous experience with the latter [33]. According to the Kamoro respondents, even the relationship between the local NGO and the community council is weak and not conducive to any coordinated development.

4.6. Limitations and Future Research

The main limitation of the study is the relatively low number of interviews, which may not encompass the full spectrum of views among the Kamoro people. The informants have had wider contact with outsiders than most Kamoro people living in the villages, and therefore, they possess more comprehensive knowledge about tourism, its impacts, and other associated issues. On one hand, this allowed researchers to gather information about CBT-related issues that were relatively well-understood by the respondents; on the other hand, it might have obscured views held by the wider community that were not addressed. Consequently, overall community support for tourism development could not be thoroughly assessed. Snowball sampling can also be considered a limitation as it narrows the circle of informants, potentially capturing those with similar views on the subject. However, due to the difficulty in reaching the villages and the necessity for a facilitator, this was considered an acceptable compromise.

Although this paper employed a methodological framework in the interview design based on previous studies identifying barriers to CBT, it should be recognized that the respondents did not always possess sufficient awareness or knowledge to discuss some of the less common or hidden barriers. Consequently, many barriers may have been unaccounted for in this study. This limitation indicates that the framework has constraints when used in conjunction with interviews. Therefore, it is advisable for future studies on barriers to CBT to use the framework as a checklist for experts’ qualitative evaluations or to adopt a quantitative approach encompassing a broad range of factors. Since this is the first study exploring the Kamoro community’s views on tourism development in their territory, future research could focus on designing a methodological framework for the implementation of CBT.

5. Conclusions

The research identified that Kamoro respondents have very positive attitudes toward tourism, which is typical for destinations in the early stages of tourism development. The respondents also demonstrated a high awareness of a wide range of unique local resources that can be utilized for tourism. They expressed that the Kamoro should be at the center of tourism development, although they did not rule out the involvement of external stakeholders under conditions specified by the community.
However, the results suggest that CBT in Kamoro communities faces many challenges and is feasible only if critical barriers are removed. The findings indicate a lack of awareness about many tourism impacts that are not easily apparent before tourism fully develops. The community also lacks knowledge about tourism management and markets, which is necessary to make fully informed decisions and to effectively control tourism development.

The research revealed that the main limitations lie in technical and financial capacities and infrastructure. Addressing these issues requires assistance from external private or governmental stakeholders and the empowerment of the community, which grants the Kamoro tribe more control over their affairs and the factors affecting their lives. This, however, can only be realized when power is decentralized from the national to the community level. This complexity explains the difficulties communities face while implementing CBT. Empowerment sought by community-based initiatives necessitates that a community develops the capacity to control the destination and influence decision-making. This, in turn, means that other stakeholders, namely the government, must relinquish some of their power and influence in terms of political, financial, and technical support. According to the informants, this has not been the case.

It is clear that each tourism initiative has its particularities, and no two destinations face exactly the same economic, social, and environmental conditions. Nonetheless, the study results reveal certain recurring patterns that are also observed in the literature. The issues faced by the Kamoro are not unique to their community; therefore, the findings and discussion presented in this paper are highly relevant to indigenous, ancestral, and rural communities worldwide that view community-developed, -controlled, and -run tourism as an opportunity to engage in the global economy on their own terms.

Local Implications and Recommendations

The local government in the area determines the urgency with which it addresses community needs for development and control over tourism activity. As reported, Kamoro have not received any support for tourism development thus far. For peripheral destinations, which are politically isolated, limited autonomy and a lack of political power hinder their ability to influence decision-making. In this situation, it is recommended to improve dysfunctional relationships or establish a new partnership with NGOs or private operators that offer greater potential for political influence, capacity building, and strengthening community organizational capacity. However, such arrangements pose the risk of losing community control over land and tourism in the area.

To minimize this risk, the external supporting organization, preferably an NGO with long-term community support capabilities, should act as an intermediary between the community organizations and private stakeholders allowed to operate under very specific conditions defined by the community. This approach maintains control and provides the community the time needed to build the capacities required for operating CBT. Besides capacity building, collaboration with private stakeholders is necessary due to the local lack of knowledge about demand factors and limited access to markets. Joint-venture partnerships between communities and tour operators are considered the most successful from a commercial standpoint [110]. This type of arrangement benefits all parties involved but requires a high level of trust between the community and the supporting organizations, which is currently not the case.

Author Contributions: Conceptualization, T.A.A. and S.Z.; methodology, S.Z.; validation, Y.-j.A., C.B.M. and S.Z.; formal analysis, T.A.A. and S.Z.; investigation, T.A.A., S.Z. and Y.-j.A.; resources, C.B.M.; writing—original draft preparation, T.A.A. and S.Z.; writing—review and editing, Y.-j.A. and C.B.M.; visualization, C.B.M.; supervision, S.Z. and Y.-j.A. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Funding: This research received no external funding.

Data Availability Statement: The original contributions presented in the study are included in the article, further inquiries can be directed to the corresponding author.
Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

Appendix A The Content of Interviews

Theme 1: Background of the Individual
1. Can you please introduce yourself? (Note: Place of birth and place of current residence.)
2. What is your educational background? (Note: Establish whether education affects the way respondents think about tourism and Kamoro’s future.)
3. What is tourism to you? Can you explain it in your own words? (Note: establish understanding of tourism, including its costs and benefits)
4. How long have you been working in this job/organization?
5. What is your organization’s role in the tourism industry?

Theme 2: Perception about Tourism Development
6. What is the role of tourism in your community right now? (Note: Establish the current level of engagement in tourism and general attitude towards tourism.)
7. Describe the current development of tourism in this area. (Note: Establish what has been done so far, including government support.)
8. What attractions have the potential to draw tourists to Kamoro communities? (Note: Establish awareness about potential attractions that they believe have sufficient power to sell CBT in the area.)
9. What kind of tourism would be best for the community? (Note: Establish the respondents’ ideas about the type of tourism they prefer; do they know what kind of tourism they favor?)
10. What are your expectations for tourism development in Kamoro territories? (Note: Establish the respondents’ attitudes towards tourism and whether they have realistic expectations.)
11. What fears, if any, do you have about tourism development?

Theme 3: Opinion on the Barriers to Tourism Development in Kamoro Communities
12. What are the barriers to tourism development? Is there anything that prevents the Kamoro from engaging in tourism?
13. What is or could be the role of the government, NGOs, or private tour operators in tourism development? (Note: Establish whether assistance or cooperation is deemed necessary or desirable; establish respondents’ attitudes towards other stakeholders in the area and their expected roles.)
14. What kind of interactions and relationships does your community have with people/organizations outside your area? (Note: Establish respondents’ attitudes towards other stakeholders in the area and their expected roles; identify any hostilities, conflicts, and previously established working relationships.)
15. What is the current situation in relation to financial and technical resources, such as abilities to operate businesses, market, communicate with tourists, and other aspects required to offer tourism? (Note: Establish respondents’ views on financial situation and the community’s abilities to operate tourism.)
16. According to you, what would be the best arrangement to bear the cost of tourism development? (Note: Establish respondents’ views on how tourism development could be financed.)
17. What type of tourism training, if any, has your community received? Currently, is there anyone who could do that job? Can they deal with and serve foreign tourists? (Note: Establish respondents’ views on community preparedness for CBT operations.)
18. In terms of the territory, is the land owned by the community? Who decides about tourism development? (Note: Establish land ownership structure and decision-making mechanisms.)
19. What do you think about the current infrastructure for tourism? (Note: Establish respondents’ views on infrastructure needs for tourism and the adequacy of the current infrastructure.)
20. Would you have the time required to participate in tourism development as a guide, accommodation owner, or food provider/restaurant owner? How would you divide your time among different tasks required for your daily job or duties?

Theme 4: The Impacts of Tourism on the Community

21. What do you think about the good and bad things that tourism brings to the community? (Note: Establish respondents’ general views on impacts; determine whether those views are optimistic or pessimistic; and identify whether respondents are aware of basic or more complex impacts.)

22. What kind of impact would tourism have on the environment?

23. What kind of impact would tourism have on people and culture?

24. How do you feel about sharing your daily life or your environment with tourists? (Note: Establish respondents’ attitudes towards sharing space and their culture with tourists; find out whether communities are willing to share/commodify certain cultural aspects such as rituals.)

25. Do you have any further thoughts or suggestions about tourism in your community?

References

2. Park, S.; Zielinski, S.; Jeong, Y.; Kim, S. Factors Affecting Residents’ Support for Protected Area Designation. *Sustainability* 2020, 12, 2800. [CrossRef]


4. Sisriany, S.; Furuya, K. Understanding the Spatial Distribution of Ecotourism in Indonesia and Its Relevance to the Protected Landscape. *Land* 2024, 13, 2300. [CrossRef]


98. Ashley, C. The Impacts of Tourism on Rural Livelihoods: Namibia’s Experience; Overseas Development Institute: London, UK, 2000; p. 34.

Disclaimer/Publisher’s Note: The statements, opinions and data contained in all publications are solely those of the individual author(s) and contributor(s) and not of MDPI and/or the editor(s). MDPI and/or the editor(s) disclaim responsibility for any injury to people or property resulting from any ideas, methods, instructions or products referred to in the content.