

Tourism-Based Economic Empowerment Gunungsari Tourism Village, Madiun Regency

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Abstract

Today's tourism industry is one of the foreign exchange-producing sectors for developed or developing countries; by utilizing natural resources and good management, this industry is one of how the State or region introduces their respective potentials. Tourism has its charm because it brings income to local communities and can improve the community's economy. Community participation is a form of public awareness to build economic sectors in each region; community participation is the essential factor in planning or economic empowerment programs determined to improve the local community's economy itself. In connection with this, the author is interested in researching economic empowerment based on tourism in the village of Gunungsari in Madiun Regency. This study uses a qualitative method sharpened by descriptive analysis. Research results show that community-based tourism is proven to improve the economy of local communities by empowering the potential around them. One form of tourism-based economic empowerment in this study is to develop cultural tourism villages using empowerment strategies that include human resource development, group institutional development, community capital fertilization, productive business development, and generating return to the entrepreneurial spirit of the community.

Keywords: *Economic Empowerment; Tourism, Community Participation, Cultural Tourism Village.*

INTRODUCTION

Empowerment can be defined as the process of acquiring power, strength, or capability from those in positions of authority to others who are less or not yet authorized (Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Pires et al., 2006). Empowerment is a process of improving a community's ability by encouragement, motivation, raising awareness of their potential, and transforming it into action (Forrester, 2000; Ergeneli et al., 2007). Empowerment is a process as well as a goal. Empowerment is a collection of activities designed to increase the power or empowerment of vulnerable groups in society, such as persons experiencing poverty (Fuchs et al., 2010; Ansari et al., 2012). Empowerment as a goal is defined as "those who have the power or ability to meet their physical, economic, and social requirements and may express their goals, have a livelihood, participate in social activities, and are self-sufficient in carrying out their life chores" (Bowen & Lawler, 1994; Wright et al., 2006).

Economic empowerment refers to the process of developing a robust, large, modern, and highly competitive economy within the appropriate market system (Hausmann & Rodrik, 2003; Ponte et al., 2007). According to the definition, empowerment is a sequence of activities aimed at enhancing the power or empowerment of vulnerable groups in society, such as persons experiencing poverty. The state of community wellbeing is deteriorating. The community's unemployment rate is quite high; low education levels and insufficient competence contribute to a lack of interest, which is referred to as poverty (Weingast, 1995; Amin, 2017). Poverty is a negative consequence of the emergence of complicated poverty problems that demand coordinated action by all stakeholders. In general, poverty refers to a situation in which an individual's or group's income is insufficient to cover fundamental needs (Kingdon & Knight, 2006; Greer & Thorbecke, 1986).

Related to this, a more optimal role is needed from the State through the government by issuing policies that can meet the community's various needs to reduce community poverty (Holzmann & Jorgensen, 2001; Tosun, 2000). With tourism-based community economic empowerment activities it is expected to make positive changes in society to reduce poverty with planning and strategies in poverty alleviation (Kim et al., 2016; Ramukumba et al., 2012). Many systems in poverty alleviation are offered to overcome the problem of poverty, such as providing jobs and vocalization skills programs for the community, but with minimal skills and experience, it becomes an obstacle so that competitiveness in the world of work is considered very difficult (Vanegas et al., 2015; Dwyer et al., 2015). Poverty reduction policies cannot be separated from the context of community empowerment; community empowerment implies a natural action system that offers alternative models of community problem solving; in essence, community empowerment is a driving force for community interest so that it is empowered to make a systematic and directed creative society that aims to change people's standard of living in a better direction. (Emery & Flora, 2006; Aquino et al, 2018).

Tourism is an industry that generates a lot of foreign exchange for the country, so the government is trying to improve this sector by taking tourism development policy steps (Heung et al., 2011; Lee & Chang, 2008). Tourism is now an alternative that plays an essential role in economic development in an area because tourism in a room will be able to open up new opportunities or jobs for the surrounding community. The potential of tourism comes from relying on the uniqueness, locality, uniqueness and authenticity of nature, and culture, which runs and grows in the community (Mosbah & Saleh, 2014; Xiao, 2006).

Tourism should be able to encourage people to participate actively to achieve the desired welfare goals. This opinion was expressed considering that in Indonesia's social life, the interpretation of various activities is dominated by a view that is only development-oriented, so it is not uncommon for development that emphasizes the community's interests to be neglected. Human values (humanism) are ignored. (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2008; Gilbert, 1989). The development of the last decade shows that no matter how confident the developed mentalists are in the ability of tourism as a foreign exchange engine, at the same time as the era of globalization, a series of negative consequences always follow, for example, a decline in the quality of the natural, social and cultural environment, inequality economic relations between local communities and investors. In addition, the widespread expansion of tourism and the intervention of foreign capital in rural areas and areas has resulted in the marginalization of the socio-economic position of the local community (Gao et al., 2019).

One of the empowerment of the people's economy in the tourism sector is developing tourist villages. With the development of tourist villages, the economy of rural communities is raised through tourism activities, where tourism development is based on elements of activities that already exist in the countryside and local cultural characteristics. In other words, the development of tourism activities cannot be separated from existing rural community activities, both economic and socio-cultural aspects (Irwan et al., 2021; Sutawa, 2012).

The tourist village is one of the alternative tourism developments where sustainable rural development in the tourism sector aims to identify the type of tourism that is appropriate and complements the lifestyle that the local population likes, empowering local communities to be responsible for planning and environmental management. , strive that local communities can play an active role in making decisions about forms of tourism that utilize their ecological areas so that they are guaranteed a fair share of income from tourism activities, encourage local community entrepreneurship and develop village tourism products (Bulatović & Rajović, 2016; Hamzah & Irfan, 2018). This is inseparable from the participation of the community as one of the development stakeholders who, in principle, have the authority and responsibility for tourism management in their respective regions. The involvement of community participation in tourism development and management is an essential factor because it is the people who understand and control the area (Simmons, 1994; Nyaupane et al., 2006).

Gunungsari Village is a cultural tourism village based on Javanese Culture. This tourist destination in Gunungsari Tourism Village is relatively new and different compared to other tourist villages in Madiun Regency. Not only new and different, but Gunungsari Tourism Village is a pioneer in officially establishing tourism on a village scale in Madiun Regency and other tourist villages, namely Brumbun Tourism Village, Wungu District, Madiun Regency. After these two tourist villages officially declared themselves as tourist villages in Madiun Regency, then other towns were followed so that in total, there are 13 Tourism Villages in Madiun Regency under the guidance of the Tourism Awareness Group Communication Forum (Forkom Pokdarwis) of Madiun Regency in synergy with the Department of Tourism, Youth and Sports, Madiun Regency.

Based on this background, the authors are interested in researching tourism-based economic empowerment in the tourist village of Gunungsari, Madiun Regency. It is hoped that this research work is expected to become one of the scientific contributions in the field of community economic empowerment.

METHOD

In qualitative research, problem solutions is based on social reality and data is used to accomplish this (Moleong, 2019). Qualitative research, according to Moleong, aims to understand phenomena about what is experienced by research subjects, such as behavior, perception, motivation for action, and so on, in a holistic manner and through description in the form of words and language, in an extraordinary natural context. In addition, by employing a variety of scientific methodologies. The results of this study are expected to provide a thorough explanation of the approach of tourism-based economic empowerment in Gunungsari Village, Madiun Regency, Indonesia.

This research is descriptive in nature, which means that it depicts circumstances or occurrences, the character of a particular population or area by finding factual information, explaining the viewpoint, and making evaluations in order to acquire a clear picture of the situation or event (Anggito & Setiawan, 2018). This research is descriptive in nature in that it seeks to create a systematic, factual, and accurate description/image or painting of the facts, qualities, and relationships between the phenomena under consideration. In this study, all of the information gathered is examined and structured in order to draw conclusions that are presented in written form.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Community participation in the economic empowerment of the cultural tourism village community is the most critical aspect of its empowerment, but community participation is not comprehensive in all aspects of empowerment; community participation is more in the part of implementing tourism activities, even though the reference for participation includes planning, implementation and evaluation (Cole, 2006).

The community participates in the empowerment of tourist villages if factors influence a person's tendency to experience, such as age, occupation, education, length of stay, and environment. The movement of one's participation must also be supported by moral encouragement, motivation, needs, expectations, facilities and infrastructure, and the existence of both formal and informal institutions. For the tour packages offered to attract tourists so that they can develop, community participation becomes an essential factor in tourism (Scheyvens, 1999). Community economic empowerment following its tourism potential is a way to direct the community better. The empowerment is carried out following the possibilities that are indeed owned by local tourism, and then the community can develop tourism so that the community can be empowered.

Tourist Village Concept

Community-based and sustainable tourism development can take several forms, one of which is the creation of a tourist town. It is envisaged that the notion of sustainable tourism development will be achieved through the creation of tourist communities. In addition, the growth of tourist communities has cultural value without diminishing rural cultures by increasing the value of tourism products. The term "village tourism" refers to the practice of allowing a small group of tourists to live and study village life and the surrounding environment (Molera & Albaladejo, 2007).

'Rural tourism' is defined by Macdonald and Jollif (2003, p. 3) as a distinct rural community that has maintained its customs and ideals through the generations. Travelers to these regions are well-versed in the local culture and have had the opportunity to take in the local folklore, customs, landscapes, and historical sites. Nature, adventure, sporting events, festivals, crafts, and general sightseeing can also be enjoyed in a rural setting. To put it another way, "rural tourism" is a term used to describe a tourist destination that focuses on rural communities that have passed down their traditions and artistic legacy as well as their way of life, places and values to the next generation.

According to Roberts and Hall (2001) in Rural Tourism, rural tourism encompasses a variety of different forms of tourism, including agritourism, farm tourism, wilderness and forest tourism, green tourism, and ecotourism:

Rural Tourism is a broad term that encompasses all tourism operations conducted in rural areas. The tourism village component is divided into three distinct categories, including (Nurhayati 1993):

1. Accommodation: Several dwellings and units for inhabitants were constructed around the concept of residential zones.
2. Attractions: The people's everyday lives and the physical setting of the village enable tourists to participate actively in dance, language, and other specialty courses.
3. The natural beauty, uniqueness and scarcity of the tourist village itself.

In this approach, several criteria are needed, namely:

1. Tourist attractions, which include natural, cultural, and man-made creations. The chosen interests are the most appealing and appealing in the village.
2. Mileage; is the distance between the tourist region, particularly the tourist dwellings, and the provincial capital and district capital.
3. Village size; issues relating to the number of houses, population, characteristics, and size of the village. This criterion pertains to a village's tourism carrying capacity.
4. Belief system and society; This is critical in light of the fact that a village community operates under its own set of laws. What must be evaluated is the majority religion and the existing social system.
5. Infrastructure availability; this includes transportation facilities and services, electricity, clean water, drainage, and telephone.

Things a tourist village must have:

1. Uniqueness, authenticity, distinctiveness (Local Genius);
2. Having/adjacent to the area/ extraordinary nature;
3. Relates to cultural groups or communities that attract visitors (empowerment);
4. Have the opportunity to develop, both in terms of basic infrastructure and other facilities.

Community economic empowerment based on tourism development

One of the development models that is receiving a lot of attention from many groups and will become a crucial agenda in tourism development in the future is the empowerment of local communities in tourist destinations through tourism economic operations. According to Sinclair (1998), the benefits of tourism include foreign exchange, additional money for the community, and job opportunities that can be taken advantage of by the local population. It is possible for the tourism industry to have a positive impact on the local, regional, and national economies. As a result, tourism involves a wide range of parties and their activities.

According to global tourism experts, the necessity of community empowerment in tourism development is critical. According to Dwyer et al. (2011), tourism development should be a community-based endeavor. With the primary criteria being the local community's resources and distinctiveness, both in terms of physical and non-physical characteristics (traditions and culture) associated with the community, tourism must be the primary driving force.

According to Han et al. (2006), the critical factor in ensuring the success and management of tourism development is facilitating broad community participation in the development process and maximizing the value of social and economic benefits from tourism activities for the local community. Local communities, along with the government and private enterprise, play an equally significant role in tourism development.

According to the concept of community empowerment in tourism development, community empowerment efforts should primarily focus on the following:

1. Strengthening the tourist development community's capability, roles, and actions.
2. Increased position and quality of involvement/participation in the community.
3. Increasing the economic value of tourist development's good effects on the community's economic well-being.
4. Improving the community's mobility.

As mentioned further by Sofield (2003), the present tourism development strategy prioritizes the growth of tourism that is geared toward empowering the community's economy. This method is referred to as community-based tourism in tourism science (CBT). In general, this CBT design is one of the foundational and crucial concepts in the development of conventional tourist development theory (growth-oriented model), which frequently faces criticism for neglecting rights and marginalizing local communities in the process of tourism development.

According to Amerta (2017), tourism growth cannot be divorced from the local community's resources and distinctiveness, both physical and non-physical (tradition and culture), which are the primary driving forces behind tourism operations. Tourism should be regarded as a communal endeavor. The following is a definition of community-based tourism:

1. A kind of tourism governance enables local people to exercise control over and participate actively in the administration and development of existing tourism.
2. Tourist governance models that create opportunities for those directly involved in tourism enterprises can also benefit from existing tourism.
3. A kind of tourism necessitates systematic and democratic empowerment, as well as an equitable transfer of benefits to the destination's disadvantaged communities.

Community-based tourism is inextricably linked to the certainty of the local community's active participation in existing tourism development. Community involvement in tourism takes two forms: Participation of the community in the decision-making process and in the sharing of benefits derived from tourism development.

Community Economic Empowerment through Gunungsari Tourism Village, Madiun Regency

The empowerment carried out by the Gunungsari Cultural Tourism Village is with a bottom-up approach which, based on the community's initiative, is a model of empowerment carried out by the Tourism Village management and the community. First, by building community economic awareness. The role in this awareness stage is through the Tourism Awareness Group Communication Forum (Forkom Pokdarwis) of Madiun Regency. To provide motivation and direction to the community, Forkom Pokdarwis held a meeting as an initial process to introduce to the community that its potential can be developed, namely through socialization with residents.

Furthermore, by building capacity, it is done to give power or power to the community, but they already have the ability first. In this case, the people of the Kebondalemkidul Cultural Tourism Village were given capacity strengthening in training to improve their skills to become independent and improve the community's economy.

The next empowerment model that is carried out is to provide power to the community, or called empowerment. In community empowerment, they are grouped based on existing potentials. Gunungsari Cultural Tourism Village has tourism potential: culinary, arts, nature, and crafts. This potential by Forkom Pokdarwis is grouped into small community groups and then given empowerment in the form of capital assistance to develop their potential. However, capital provision is not from Pokdarwis but by building partnerships through the surrounding community institutions.

The strategies that can be applied in Community Economic Empowerment Through Cultural Tourism Villages can be done by:

1. Human Resource Development

The development of human resources carried out in the Gunungsari Cultural Tourism Village is one of the empowerment strategies to increase various skills and potentials that the community has. This is done through pieces of training that receive support and assistance from community institutions engaged in tourism, such as language training and guiding techniques, homestay training, dance training, and culinary training. The parties that helped with the training were Forkom Pokdarwis and the Tourism Office.

2. Productive Business Development

Based on research, empowerment strategies through productive business development have been implemented in Gunungsari Cultural Tourism Village to increase household income. The story of effective businesses also invites the community to participate optimally by opening various productive businesses, including companies in the culinary fields, crafts, and service businesses in the form of tourist guides. Types and types of productive enterprises in the Gunungsari Cultural Tourism Village include that processed food, traditional food, handicraft businesses and fiberglass.

3. Provision of Appropriate Information

The provision of information is made through good publications so that tourist villages will also be easily recognized by tourists so that many visit. The number of tourists who visit increases tourist demand for various destinations characteristic of the town to increase income for the community around the tourist village. Gunungsari Cultural Tourism Village conducts marketing and provides information to outsiders and tourists through print media in brochures and social media in the form of websites, blogs and Facebook. Tourism village administrators also publish and provide information through tourism village forums throughout East Java.

4. Community Capital Development

For a tourist town to be successful, one of the most important techniques is establishing community capital. According to the findings of the study, which included interviews with a number of people, the Gunungsari Cultural Tourism Village's community capital development was still not at an optimal level. NGOs and the Tourism Office, as well as the Regent of Madiun and other outside parties, provide the community with capital for the construction of tourist settlements. The community receives both monetary and material resources for the development of a tourist village.

5. Re-awakening the entrepreneurial spirit of the community

The community's economic activity in the Gunungsari tourism village was previously not seen as part of a source of income by the community. Still, with the continued education of the community about the benefits of tourist villages for the community, slowly but surely, the community has made tourist villages a source of additional income in their lives (the primary source is farmers). As a result of the pandemic, their hopes, which have been painstakingly built, are fragile again. Therefore, to revive the community's entrepreneurial spirit, tourism activists have scheduled significant events that bring in many guests and visitors; of course, this will open more opportunities for the community to rerun business. With the scheme of providing visiting infrastructure facilities arranged in such a way by the tourism manager, the community is invited to participate in delivering these infrastructure facilities so that the community gets income from these activities.

CONCLUSION

The model of community economic empowerment is carried out in the Gunungsari Cultural Tourism Village through building community financial awareness, namely by holding socialization to increase community motivation, then carried out by building capacity strengthening for economic business actors in tourist villages to be given training and assistance by the Pokdarwis Forum and other community institutions. Furthermore, the community economic empowerment model is carried out by providing empowerment in the form of funds or capital to the community, divided into small groups of people based on their respective potentials. Empowerment strategies carried out by tourism village administrators together with local communities are 1) human resource development, 2) group institutional development, 3) community capital fertilization, 4) productive business development and 5) Re-awakening the entrepreneurial spirit of the community.

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