

TOURISM VILLAGE AS AN ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT ASSET TO REDUCE POVERTY AND INCREASE JOB OPPORTUNITIES IN EAST JAVA

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ABSTRACT

Tourism villages in East Java provide an alternative to reduce poverty and improve the quality of life of local communities through local economic development. However, there are challenges such as limited infrastructure and lack of skills in managing tourism businesses. Efforts are needed to empower the community and support from the government and private sector to develop sustainable tourism villages. One solution is through training and education programs to improve the skills and knowledge of the community in managing tourism businesses.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Poverty remains a complex and pervasive issue worldwide, particularly in developing countries such as Indonesia. One way to address the problem of poverty is by improving the quality of life for communities through empowerment and local economic development. The development of tourist villages as a new source of income for communities has become an attractive alternative, particularly in Java, Indonesia. Pramono, S., & Kristiani, A. (2017). *The Potential of Economic Empowerment through the Development of Tourist Villages in East Java*.

Tourism villages in East Java provide opportunities for local communities to directly engage in the tourism industry, which in turn can increase income and reduce poverty levels. In recent years, empowerment and development programs for tourism villages in East Java have shown positive results in reducing poverty and creating job opportunities in rural areas (Hasanuddin, L., 2018; Indrawati, D., 2019; Widayati, N., & Wulandari, R., 2020).

However, there are still many challenges that must be faced in developing tourism villages as a source of income and community empowerment. Several factors that can affect the success of this program are limited infrastructure, lack of access to markets, and lack of skills and knowledge in managing tourism businesses. Therefore, collaborative efforts from the government, community, and private sector are needed to facilitate the development of sustainable tourism villages that have a positive impact on local communities. This is in line with previous research by Masyhuri, A. (2021). *Community Empowerment Strategies through Tourism Village Development in East Java*.

In this article, we will discuss how the development of tourism villages can be a solution to reduce poverty and create job opportunities in rural areas in East Java. This is in line with previous research by Raharjo, A. (2019). *Developing Tourism Villages as a Solution to Alleviate Poverty in Rural Areas*. We will also discuss some of the supporters and contributions of the tourism village empowerment program to the local community. It is hoped that this article can provide a better understanding of the importance of tourism village development and how this program can help improve the welfare of the community in East Java.

Although Village Tourism can be a source of economic empowerment and poverty reduction, there are still issues that need to be addressed. One of them is the lack of support and understanding from the community regarding the tourism potential in their villages. In addition, inadequate infrastructure such as difficult road access, inadequate health and sanitation facilities, and a lack of trained human resources in the tourism industry, are obstacles to the development of Village Tourism in East Java.

To address these issues, efforts are needed to empower communities by increasing their understanding of the tourism potential in their villages and developing trained human resources in the field of tourism. In addition, the government and relevant stakeholders also need to provide support in the form of adequate infrastructure, such as building access roads and providing adequate health and sanitation facilities.

By improving community empowerment and developing adequate infrastructure, it is hoped that the Village Tourism can become an alternative in reducing poverty in East Java. By increasing income and

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opening up job opportunities in the tourism sector, it is expected to help improve the welfare of rural communities and reduce the socio-economic gap between urban and rural areas.

According to data from BPS (Central Statistics Agency), in 2020, the Gross Regional Domestic Product (GRDP) of East Java was Rp 1.352 trillion with a growth rate of 2.54% compared to the previous year. The manufacturing and trade sectors were the largest contributors to East Java's GRDP, accounting for 31.58% and 19.19%, respectively. However, the poverty rate in East Java is still relatively high, at around 11.62% in March 2021, according to BPS East Java. The poverty rate in rural areas of East Java is also higher compared to urban areas, at around 14.43% compared to 7.96%.

The development of tourism villages in East Java can be an alternative to reduce poverty in rural areas. According to data from the East Java Tourism Office, there were around 488 tourism villages in East Java in 2019, most of which are located in rural areas. The development of tourism villages is expected to improve the local economy and reduce poverty rates in the region. Additionally, the tourism sector can make a positive contribution to East Java's PDRB and create job opportunities in the tourism sector.

However, efforts are still needed to improve access to infrastructure and availability of skilled human resources in the field of tourism in rural areas. According to BPS data, road access in East Java is still inadequate, especially in rural areas. In addition, the number of trained workers in the tourism sector is still limited in rural areas. Therefore, efforts are needed to improve access to infrastructure and training for local communities in the tourism sector to support sustainable development of tourism villages.

Table I. Data on PDRB and Tourism Department Contribution in 2019

Number	DESCRIPTION
1	Jawa Timur's PDRB in 2020 amounted to Rp 1,352 trillion with a growth rate of 2.54% compared to the previous year.
2	The manufacturing industry sector contributed 31.58% to Jawa Timur's PDRB, while the trade sector contributed 19.19%
3	The poverty rate in Jawa Timur was around 11.62% in March 2021
4	The poverty rate in rural areas of Jawa Timur is higher than in urban areas, at around 14.43% compared to 7.96%
5	There were approximately 488 tourism villages in Jawa Timur in 2019, mostly located in rural areas
6	Developing tourism villages is expected to improve the local economy and reduce poverty rates in those areas
7	The tourism sector can have a positive contribution to Jawa Timur's PDRB and create job opportunities in the tourism sector.
8	Road access in Jawa Timur is still inadequate, especially in rural areas
9	The number of trained workers in the tourism sector is still limited in rural areas
10	Efforts are needed to improve infrastructure access and provide training for local communities in the tourism sector to support sustainable tourism village development.

2. METHOD

The suitable research method to examine the contribution of Desa Wisata in reducing poverty in East Java and the challenges in its development is qualitative research. Qualitative research is an approach used to explore data in the form of experiences, perceptions, values, and attitudes of research subjects through interviews, observations, and document studies. The theory underlying the use of qualitative research method to examine the contribution of Desa Wisata in reducing poverty in East Java and the challenges in its development is not specific to one particular theory. However, the qualitative research approach itself has been developed by social research experts such as Anselm Strauss and Barney Glaser in the book "The Discovery of Grounded Theory" published in 1967. Meanwhile, the case study approach used in this research can be traced back to Robert K. Yin's theory in his book titled "Case Study Research and Applications: Design and Methods" first published in 1984.

In this research, the researcher can use a case study approach to focus the observation on several selected Desa Wisata in East Java. The data obtained from this research can be used to gain a deeper understanding of the contribution of Desa Wisata in addressing poverty and the challenges in its development in East Java.

Some data collection techniques that can be used in qualitative research are in-depth interviews with relevant stakeholders, direct observation in the field, document analysis, and focus group discussions with local communities. The data obtained from these techniques can be analyzed descriptively to generate findings that are in line with the research objectives.

In the end, qualitative research can provide a deep understanding of the contribution of Tourism Villages in addressing poverty in East Java and the challenges in its development. This can be used as a basis for designing more effective and sustainable strategies for the development of Tourism Villages.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Developing Village Tourism as a Solution to Alleviate Poverty in East Java. Tourism villages in East Java have become one of the alternatives to tackle poverty by improving the quality of life of the community through empowerment and development of local economy. The empowerment and development program for tourism villages in East Java has shown positive results in reducing poverty and creating job opportunities in rural areas. However, there are still many challenges that must be faced in developing tourism villages as a source of income and community empowerment.

Robert Chambers in 1994 defined community empowerment as a way to help improve quality of life and reduce poverty. In the context of tourism villages, community empowerment can be seen as an effort to strengthen the capacity and independence of the community in managing the tourism potential in their village. Almost all tourism villages are capable of generating local economy by developing economic opportunities based on local potential, which can help improve the welfare of the community and strengthen the regional economy. This theory was proposed by David Throsby in 2001. In the context of tourism villages, this theory can be applied by developing tourism products based on local knowledge and optimizing the natural and cultural potential in the village.

The theory of sustainable development was proposed by Gro Harlem Brundtland in 1987. This theory explains how development can be carried out sustainably to meet the needs of the current generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. In the context of tourism villages, this theory can be applied by developing environmentally-friendly tourism products and balancing economic development with the preservation of local environment and culture.

Several factors that can affect the success of this program are the limitations of infrastructure, lack of access to markets, and insufficient skills and knowledge in managing tourism businesses. Therefore, collaborative efforts are needed from the government, community, and private sector to facilitate sustainable tourism village development that produces positive impacts for the local community.

Although tourism villages can become a source of economic empowerment and poverty reduction, there are still issues that need to be addressed. One of them is the lack of support and understanding from the community about the tourism potential in their village. In addition, inadequate infrastructure such as difficult road access, inadequate health and sanitation facilities, and a lack of trained human resources in the tourism sector, are obstacles to the development of tourism villages in East Java.

To address these issues, efforts are needed to empower the community by increasing their understanding of the tourism potential in their village and developing trained human resources in the tourism sector. In addition, the government and relevant parties also need to provide support in the form of adequate infrastructure, such as the development of road access and adequate health and sanitation facilities.

By improving community empowerment and developing adequate infrastructure, it is hoped that Desa Wisata can become an alternative to reduce poverty in East Java. Through increasing income and opening up employment opportunities in the tourism sector, it is expected to help improve the welfare of rural communities and reduce the socio-economic gap between urban and rural areas.

Here are some recommendations, programs, and activities that can be carried out to support the development of tourism villages in the province of East Java:

1. **Training and Education Programs** A training and education program focused on developing the skills and knowledge of local communities in managing tourism businesses is needed. The training can cover business management, marketing, customer service, and other technical skills needed to manage a sustainable and effective village tourism. In addition, the education program should also consider important aspects such as environmental conservation, local wisdom, and economic sustainability.

2. **Infrastructure**

The government needs to pay attention to adequate infrastructure in the tourist villages, such as roads, clean water, sanitation, and health facilities. Good roads and easy accessibility will help

improve access to markets and business opportunities for local communities. In addition, adequate health and sanitation facilities will help maintain the health and safety of tourists and local communities.

3. Tourism Promotion

To increase the number of tourists visiting the tourist villages, intensive and targeted tourism promotion is needed. Promotion can be done through social media, websites, exhibitions, and local festivals that are held regularly. In addition, more innovative and creative marketing strategies are needed to attract tourists, such as tour packages that offer unique and interesting tourism experiences.

4. Public-Private Partnership

The private sector can be a strategic partner in developing tourism villages in East Java. With good partnerships, the private sector can help develop innovative tourism products and services, as well as provide the necessary financial support to develop tourism businesses. In addition, the private sector can also help promote and market tourism products in local and international markets.

5. Empowering the Community

In developing a tourism village, sustainable community empowerment is needed. This can be done through training and skill development, as well as providing financial support for tourism business development. In addition, it is also important to pay attention to community participation in decision-making and tourism business management processes, so that they feel ownership and responsibility for the development of the tourism village.

With the recommendations, programs, and activities above, it is hoped that they can help improve the quality of life of the community and reduce poverty in the tourist villages in East Java. In addition, the development of tourist villages can also help improve welfare.

Table 2. Program and Activity Recommendations.

Number	Recommendation/Program/ Activity.	Explanation
1.	Training and Education Program	<p>Training and Education Program Focus on developing the skills and knowledge of local communities in managing tourism businesses, such as business management, marketing, customer service, and other technical skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business management and marketing training • Customer service and other technical skills training • Education on environmental conservation and local wisdom
2.	Infrastructure	<p>Infrastructure Ensure adequate infrastructure in the tourism village, such as roads, clean water, sanitation, and healthcare facilities.</p> <p>Ensure adequate infrastructure such as roads, clean water, sanitation, and healthcare facilities</p>
3.	Tourism Promotion	<p>Tourism Promotion Intensive and targeted tourism promotion through social media, websites, exhibitions, and regular local festivals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism promotion through social media, websites, exhibitions, and regular local festivals • Develop more innovative and creative marketing strategies
4.	Partnerships with Private Sector	<p>Partnerships with Private Sector The private sector can be a strategic partner in developing tourism villages in East Java, providing financial support and assisting in the promotion and marketing of tourism products in local and international markets.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form partnerships with the private sector to develop innovative tourism products and services • Obtain financial support from the private sector to

Number	Recommendation/Program/ Activity.	Explanation
5.	Community Empowerment	<p>develop tourism businesses</p> <p>Community Empowerment Sustainable community empowerment through training and skill development, as well as providing financial support for tourism business development. It is important to consider community participation in decision-making and tourism business management.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training and skill development • Providing financial support for tourism business development. • Increasing community participation in decision-making and tourism business management.

By implementing recommendations, programs, and activities above, it is expected to help improve the quality of life of the community and reduce poverty in the tourism villages in East Java. In addition, the development of tourism villages can also help improve economic welfare and strengthen regional cultural identity.

From the above description, it can be concluded that the development of tourism villages in the province of East Java requires several recommendations, programs, and activities such as training and education programs, attention to infrastructure, tourism promotion, partnerships with the private sector, and community empowerment. With the implementation of these programs and activities, it is expected to improve the quality of life of the community and reduce poverty in the tourism villages in East Java, as well as help improve economic welfare.

Regarding the development of tourism villages in East Java, there are still many efforts and activities that need to be done to achieve the desired goals. One of the things that can be done is to develop sustainable and environmentally responsible tourism products. This can be done by promoting eco-friendly tourism products such as trekking, birdwatching, and other nature-based activities that promote biodiversity and local culture. In addition, the development of tourism products based on local wisdom can be an alternative to enhance the tourism appeal of the tourism villages. For example, conducting workshops on batik making, processing local cuisine, and unique handicraft products that have high added value.

Furthermore, in developing tourism villages, it is also important to consider the safety and comfort aspects of tourists. This can be done by enhancing environmental security, such as monitoring criminal activities and preventing forest fires. In addition, it is also necessary to ensure the availability of adequate transportation and accommodation, so that tourists can feel comfortable and safe when visiting the tourism villages.

Regarding the management of tourism villages, it is also important to consider the participation of local communities in the decision-making process and tourism business management. This can be done by forming local community groups that are directly involved in the management of tourism villages, as well as providing training and support to develop their tourism businesses. In this way, the local communities will feel a sense of ownership and responsibility for the management of tourism villages, which can improve their quality of life and strengthen the bonds among local communities.

In order to improve the development of tourism villages in East Java, it is also necessary to strengthen the cooperation between the government, private sector, and local communities. By building good cooperation, it is expected to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of programs and activities carried out, as well as to strengthen financial and non-financial support for the development of tourism villages. This can be done through dialog forums and cooperation between the government, private sector, and local communities, as well as the development of programs oriented towards partnership and empowerment of local communities, which are supported by various policies outlined in the Guidelines for Tourism Village Development in Indonesia, Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, 2016, the Role of Stakeholders in Tourism Village Development, Scientific Journal of Tourism, Vol. 22 No. 2, 2017 and Partnership for Empowering Rural Communities in Tourism Development, Indonesian Journal of Tourism, Vol. 9 No. 2, 2014.

4. CONCLUSION

Developing Tourism Villages as a Solution to Reduce Poverty in East Java Tourism villages in East Java have become an alternative solution to alleviate poverty by improving the quality of life of the local community through empowerment and local economic development. The program of empowering and developing tourism villages in East Java has shown positive results in reducing poverty and creating job opportunities in rural areas. However, there are still many challenges to be faced in developing tourism villages as a source of income and community empowerment. Some factors that can affect the success of this program are limited infrastructure, lack of access to markets, and lack of skills and knowledge in managing tourism businesses. Therefore, collaborative efforts from the government, community, and private sector are needed to facilitate sustainable tourism village development that has a positive impact on the local community. Although Tourism Villages can be a source of economic empowerment and poverty reduction, there are still issues that need to be addressed. One of them is the lack of support and understanding of the tourism potential in their villages. In addition, inadequate infrastructure such as difficult access roads, inadequate health and sanitation facilities, and a lack of trained human resources in the tourism sector are obstacles to developing Tourism Villages in East Java. To overcome these issues, community empowerment efforts are needed by increasing their understanding of the tourism potential in their villages and developing trained human resources in the tourism sector. Additionally, the government and stakeholders also need to provide support in the form of adequate infrastructure, such as access roads and adequate health and sanitation facilities.

By empowering the community and developing adequate infrastructure, it is hoped that Village Tourism can become an alternative in reducing poverty in East Java. Through increasing income and job opportunities in the tourism sector, it is expected to help improve the welfare of rural communities and reduce the socio-economic gap between urban and rural areas. Here are some recommendations, programs, and activities that can be done to support the development of village tourism in East Java: Training and Education Programs Training and education programs focusing on developing the skills and knowledge of local communities in managing tourism businesses are needed. These trainings can cover business management, marketing, customer service, and technical skills.

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