

Developing Bonto Matinggi's Tourism Potential Through Village Community Assistance

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Abstract. *This study aims to analyze the community mentoring process in the development of the Bonto Matinggi tourist village, Maros Regency, as an effort to increase local capacity in managing tourism based on natural and cultural potential. Using a participatory approach, mentoring activities included identifying tourism potential, developing development plans, training the community, and evaluating the program's sustainability. The results showed that mentoring was able to increase community understanding of the importance of sustainable tourism management, particularly in destination management, sanitation, environmental management, digital marketing, and tourist services. The implementation of mentoring also encouraged community participation in decision-making and the management of tourist facilities such as the parking lot and the Sappana waterfall area. Although there were positive results in terms of increased village income and growing local economic opportunities, this study identified obstacles such as limited human resources, low involvement of the younger generation, and environmental issues such as waste management and infrastructure maintenance. The final evaluation confirmed that the program's sustainability requires ongoing capacity building, the formation of tourism management groups, and partnerships with various external parties. Overall, the village tourism mentoring had a significant impact on increasing community independence and the development of the tourism sector, while also emphasizing the importance of collaboration and structured management.*

Keywords: *Community Empowerment, Tourism Villages, Sustainable Tourism Development, Natural and Cultural Potential, Community Assistance*

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INTRODUCTION

Village tourism mentoring refers to a series of actions aimed at providing technical assistance, training, and guidance to village communities in developing and managing their tourism potential (Puspitasari, 2024; Fafurida et al., 2023). This mentoring involves empowering village communities so they can manage tourism villages independently, sustainably, and professionally, thus becoming tourist destinations and attracting wider public attention. Furthermore, this activity is expected to explore the potential of a region, both natural resources and human resources (Priskin, 2001; Zheng et al., 2023; Saleh et al., 2020).

With its abundant cultural and natural diversity, Indonesia has enormous tourism potential globally, attracting both domestic and international tourists (Siregar & Abdurrahman, 2021; Silver, 2007). One form of tourism development that is growing in Indonesia is the development of village tourism. Each region in Indonesia has unique tourist attractions that can be developed to improve the welfare of its residents.

One sector that can have a direct impact on the local economy is tourism. As a country with diverse tourist destinations, Indonesia has significant potential to generate economic benefits (Pradita et al., 2023; Bare et al., 2020; Zaini & Ismail, 2024). One rapidly growing sector is rural tourism, which offers unique experiences for tourists, nuanced by local culture, nature, and community. Recently, urban communities have made rural tourism their primary travel destination, as the hustle and bustle of work in big cities has led them to choose other destinations that take nature and the environment into consideration (Tisnawati et al., 2019).

Baitalik (2025) said that, the rise of social media has become a factor in promoting even untouched areas and villages to wider recognition. The slogan "back to nature" raises public awareness of the importance of returning to nature while synergizing with environmental preservation (Benyamin et al., 2021). However, many tourist villages have not been fully empowered to maximize their tourism potential. Village tourism is a tourism management concept that involves village communities as primary managers, with the goal of improving their welfare (Arismayanti et al., 2014).

Village tourism focuses not only on infrastructure development but also on empowering local communities (Khoiriya et al., 2024; Purnomo & Purwandari, 2025; Arida et al., 2019). In village tourism, communities are not merely passive beneficiaries or servants, but also participate in the management and development of the tourism sector (Tamianingsih & Eprilianto, 2025). This concept has a direct impact on the local economy by creating new job opportunities and increasing community income. Bonto Matinggi Village, located in Maros Regency, South Sulawesi, is one of the villages experiencing rapid growth in the nature and culture-based tourism sector.

With an area of approximately 23.67 km² and a population of 57.92 people per km² in 2021, this village has significant potential to be developed as a leading tourist village in South Sulawesi. If properly managed, this natural tourism potential can have a positive impact on the local economy (Azisah et al., 2025; Sandbrook, 2010). However, the lack of community knowledge and skills in managing tourist destinations and providing services to tourists is one of the challenges faced. Therefore, developing the potential of Bonto Matinggi village can be done through basic training for the village community on village management.

Through this community service, it is hoped that the community will understand the importance of tourism management based on local wisdom and improve their skills in providing services to tourists. Sulaiman et al. (2022) said that, the mentoring that will be carried out in this community service aims to improve community knowledge and skills in terms of tourism management based on local wisdom. This training covers various aspects, such as tourism destination management, services to tourists, destination marketing, and awareness of the importance of nature and cultural preservation. It is hoped that through this training, the Bonto Matinggi community will have adequate skills to manage their tourism destinations, so that it can increase the number of tourist visits and have a positive impact on the village economy.

In several expert views, it is stated that: the community is part of the stakeholders who have an important role in supporting the success of tourism development, starting from planning to implementation, every development effort must consider the position, potential, and role of the community as the main actors in the field. Community empowerment activities through tourism are an important step that must be implemented in a targeted and sustainable manner to increase the capacity and independence of the community so that they can play an active role in tourism development at the local, regional, and national levels or compete at the global level.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Tourism Potential

Tourism potential is one of the main factors that can increase the attractiveness of a region. A region's tourism potential can consist of two main elements: natural potential and cultural potential. Natural potential includes natural beauty such as mountains, beaches, lakes, waterfalls, as well as the flora and fauna found in an area (Ministry of Tourism, 2016). Meanwhile,

cultural potential includes various elements of local culture, such as art, traditions, traditional ceremonies, and culinary specialties that can attract tourists (Surata et al., 2024). Bonto Matinggi Village possesses both of these potentials, which can become major attractions in the development of the tourism sector.

The village's natural beauty can be an attractive tourist attraction for tourists seeking unspoiled, natural beauty. Furthermore, Bonto Matinggi's cultural diversity also has the potential to be developed into a cultural tourism destination that can provide a unique experience for tourists. However, the development of tourism potential should not only focus on the existing natural and cultural riches, but also on how this potential is managed. According to Pratama & Kurnia (2019), well-planned management can enhance an area's tourism appeal and help create a satisfying experience for tourists. Therefore, it is crucial for village communities to have the knowledge and skills to manage existing tourism potential to create sustainable tourism destinations and provide economic benefits for the local community.

Community involvement in tourism development is an approach aimed at increasing community capacity in managing and developing tourism potential. According to Mulyana (2018), mentoring based on active community participation can produce more sustainable and profitable results for the community. In the context of tourism development, mentoring involves skills training, managerial capacity building, and natural and cultural resource management. The mentoring conducted in this study encompassed various activities, including training in tourism business management, marketing, natural and cultural resource management, and information technology training to promote tourist destinations (Mayaka & Akama, 2007).

One method frequently used in mentoring activities is a community-based approach, which emphasizes empowering communities to become the primary managers of tourist destinations. This is in line with what Mellu et al. (2018) stated, stating that tourism managed with the involvement of local communities tends to be more sustainable and has a positive impact on the community. According to [author's name], mentoring that involves the community in every stage of tourism destination management can increase the community's sense of ownership and responsibility for the destination's sustainability. Furthermore, ongoing mentoring activities can also help communities overcome various challenges that may arise in managing the tourism sector.

Pioneer Village Community

Village communities play a crucial role in the development of the community-based tourism sector. According to (Wijayanti & Purwoko, 2022), village communities are not only beneficiaries of the tourism sector but also the primary managers who can provide an authentic and unique atmosphere to the tourist destination itself. Therefore, community empowerment is key to the successful management of community-based tourism destinations. Assistance to the Bonto Matinggi village community will focus on increasing their capacity to manage the tourism sector.

Some aspects that will be trained include tourism business management, such as accommodation, restaurants, and tourist attractions, as well as digital marketing to promote the village as an attractive tourist destination. In addition, the community will also be trained on how to maintain and preserve existing natural and cultural resources, so that the tourism development can run sustainably. Assistance to village communities also aims to foster community involvement in the decision-making process related to tourism management. Community involvement in every decision made will increase a sense of ownership and responsibility for the successful management of the tourist destination.

METHODS

In implementing these community service activities, the implementers employ methods such as conducting educational activities related to the activities, communicating directly with tourism development actors in the tourism villages, and providing opportunities for community

involvement, reaching out to more people through the community service activities. As explained by (Junaid, 2023), in developing community capacity, tourism training participants are tourism stakeholders who can contribute to the management of tourism villages. Furthermore, activities include providing suggestions and solutions to community complaints through direct communication to obtain feedback from the community. They also provide intellectual assistance in carrying out these activities, assisting in the preparation of programs for the community to gain useful insights, and providing services that provide training to the community so they understand and understand procedures that can improve community well-being. Community empowerment programs through tourism villages face various obstacles and challenges, but this is where mentoring and attention become a shared focus (Jaya et al., 2024). In addition to providing services that support communities to help them achieve their goals, they also provide up-to-date information on emerging issues within the community, particularly those related to tourism destination development, so that they can obtain accurate and timely information. They also provide services to assist communities in finding the best solutions to their problems. The method used in the process of implementing community service activities is carried out by conducting educational activities, counseling, training, and research, related to the concept of sustainability, in addition to providing insight into tourism and the impacts generated by the existence of tourism, also providing an understanding of sustainable tourism, so that this activity does not only stop at one expected result but also knows more deeply the needs desired by the community.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Several surveys have proven that sustainable tourism is more visible in its overall results if it involves the local community (Manaf et al., 2018). The following are some activities that will be carried out during the mentoring, namely:

Identify Tourism Potential

The first step undertaken was to identify tourism potential in Bonto Matinggi Village. This activity involved village residents in discussions and field observations to explore natural and cultural potential that could be developed into tourist attractions. Several points can be taken from several meetings with residents: the Bonto Matinggi village community hopes for adequate infrastructure to improve the quality of life of the village community. The construction of roads, water channels, bridges, and other public facilities can provide better access for the community to develop. Some of the village's hopes for this activity are that better village infrastructure improvements will increase the community's access to various basic services, such as education, health, and transportation, thereby boosting the village economy by facilitating the distribution of goods and services, and attracting more tourists. In this village, there is a waterfall often called Sappana, or Savana in the local dialect, which offers beauty and clear water. Meetings with several stakeholders in the village suggested that this tourist destination requires special management, from upstream and downstream security, especially during the rainy season when visitors are enthusiastic about vacationing.

Preparation of Tourism Development Plan

Rencana pengembangan potensi wisata melibatkan masyarakat dalam proses perencanaan, termasuk pengelolaan sumber daya alam dan budaya, serta pengembangan infrastruktur dasar yang diperlukan untuk mendukung sektor wisata.

Sanitation Management

Sanitation management is crucial because it impacts public health. Assistance in sanitation management includes training and education on the importance of proper waste disposal. However, the village officials' expectations here are more for residents to become more aware of the importance of good sanitation, through the establishment of clean water management and improved waste disposal systems. This will create a cleaner and healthier village environment, which will ultimately improve the quality of life for the village community.

Tourist Destination Parking

As the tourism sector develops, efficient and safe parking management is crucial to support the smooth flow of tourists and ensure visitor comfort. Some of the village community's expectations include the availability of sufficient parking facilities to accommodate incoming tourists, thereby reducing congestion and improving visitor comfort. Furthermore, providing well-managed and organized parking services will open new economic opportunities for the community. The team provides assistance to the community on parking lot utilization solutions and management, which utilizes a revenue-sharing system and village funds. This not only improves the community's standard of living, but also fosters collaboration and open, collaborative management, which are key to success and avoid conflicts of interest. In addition, tourism business management, digital marketing, and training on how to sustainably maintain natural and cultural resources are offered. This mentoring will also include training on managing accommodations, restaurants, and tourist attractions that can attract tourists.

Implementation of Tourism Development

Moving on to development plans, communities begin to develop and implement activity plans for tourism destination development. Communities begin managing tourist destinations, including marketing tourism products through social media, managing tourism facilities, and organizing tourism activities. The following are some things that can be done to strengthen community capacity in managing tourism potential, such as:

Training and Education for Local Communities

Training focused on tourism management, marketing, and tourism services should be introduced to local communities. This aims to provide the necessary skills so they can provide better services to tourists. Courses on tourism destination management, professional tour guides, and other training are essential to prepare communities to become key actors in this sector.

Skills Enhancement in Environmental Management

Capacity strengthening in environmental management is also crucial. Communities need to be provided with knowledge about effective waste management, nature conservation, and the use of renewable energy to support a sustainable tourism sector. Training programs on national park management, wildlife protection, and forest management would be particularly beneficial.

Developing a Sustainable Tourism Management Plan

Together with village communities, the government can develop a sustainable tourism management plan that takes into account economic, social, and environmental aspects. This plan should include infrastructure, sanitation, and parking management, as well as regulating visitor numbers according to the destination's capacity to avoid environmental damage.

Establishing a Tourism Management Group

Establishing a tourism management group comprised of local residents can help ensure that this sector is managed professionally. This group will be tasked with overseeing and managing tourist destinations, planning promotional activities, and ensuring the sustainability of infrastructure and environmental management.

Developing Networks and Partnerships

To strengthen village capacity in the tourism sector, it is important to develop partnerships with various external parties, such as local governments, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector. These partnerships can help provide the funding, technology, and knowledge needed for more sustainable tourism development.

Evaluation and Capacity Building

After implementation, an evaluation will be conducted to assess the success of tourism management and development in Bonto Matinggi. Based on the evaluation, community capacity

building will be carried out to continue managing and developing the tourism sector in a more sustainable manner. Several obstacles to this community mentoring program are:

Limited Resources

Despite a strong desire to develop and improve village conditions, human resources are often a major challenge. Today's younger generation has a different perspective, preferring to leave their hometowns to seek a living and work abroad rather than develop their villages.

Community Involvement

For the mentoring program to run successfully, active participation from the village community is essential. One challenge is raising community awareness and participation in every activity undertaken.

Maintenance and Sustainability

The program implementation needs to be accompanied by ongoing maintenance to ensure long-term benefits. This includes maintaining the infrastructure and facilities built, as well as efficient management. In addition to the inhibiting factors mentioned above, the evaluation reveals several findings that can be used as a basis for improving and strengthening capacity in tourism management in Bonto Matinggi, including:

Success in Increasing Village Income

One positive outcome of developing the tourism sector is increased village income. Based on financial data evaluation, the tourism sector contributes significantly to the village economy through revenue from entrance tickets, sales of local products, and services such as transportation and accommodation.

Environmental Management Issues

Although the tourism sector in Bonto Matinggi is growing, significant challenges remain in environmental management, such as waste management, efficient energy use, and environmental protection. Several tourist destinations experience cleanliness issues and suboptimal waste management, negatively impacting the quality of tourism.

Diverse Social Impacts

The social impacts of the tourism sector in this village are quite diverse. While some residents experience direct economic benefits, such as increased income from food sales or food stalls, others experience negative impacts, as these activities are still managed individually without structured management.

CONCLUSION

The positive impact on the community in implementing mentoring activities in Bonto Matinggi Village will provide significant benefits for improving the quality of life of the community, better environmental management, tourism management and administration so that ultimately there is an increase in the attraction and interest of visitors in visiting tourist destinations.

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